AMAZING
ENGINE
System

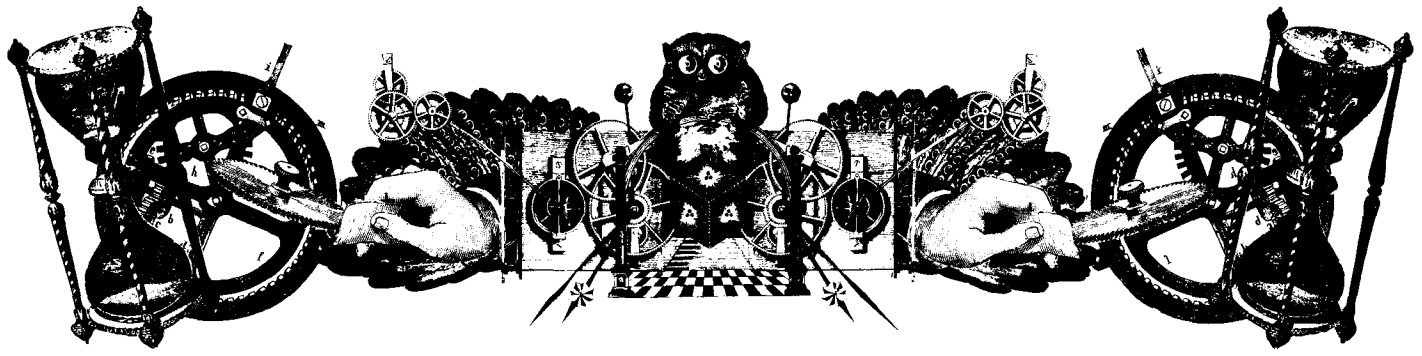# THE GALACTOS BARRIER

by
Colin McComb

An
AMAZING ENGINE ™
Universe Book

The
Galactos Barrier

Written by Colin McComb
Edited by Karen S. Boomgarden
Cover Art by Denis Beauvais
Black and White Art by Newton Ewell
Graphic Design by Dawn Murin and Sarah Feggestad
Typeset by Angelika Lokotz
Cartography by John Knecht
"System Guide" written by David "Zeb" Cook, developed and edited by Karen S. Boomgarden

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The AMAZING ENGINE™ Role-Playing System

Note: If you are already familiar with the basic rules for this game system, feel free to turn directly to the Universe Book portion of this product. Any rules modifications specific to this setting are included there.

The AMAZING ENGINE role-playing system is more than just a single role-playing game, be it fantasy world or science fiction universe. Instead, the AMAZING ENGINE system provides the basics for creating a wide variety of role-playing settings-anything from consulting detectives investigating fairy realms to deadly aliens stalking hi-tech space marines-and as much as can be imagined in between.

System Guide and Universe Books

To do this, the AMAZING ENGINE system consists of two parts. The first part comprises the basic rules for creating player characters and having those characters use skills, fight, and move: the System Guide, which you are reading right now. These rules are found in all AMAZING ENGINE products. This section also details how players and GMs can change settings while transferring benefits player characters have gained from previous play.

The second part of the system comprises the rest of each Universe Book. Each Universe Book is a complete role-playing game. It is not necessary to buy every Universe Book to play in the AMAZING ENGINE system. Game masters can run campaigns in just a single universe, choose only science fiction or only fantasy, or play in both according to their personal whims.

The AMAZING ENGINE system is more than a mere collection of universes. In this system, the advances a player character gains in one universe can be used to help PCs in other universes. Starting in a new setting does not call for starting over from the beginning; this means players and GMs can experiment with the wide range of universes.

The Player Core and Player Character

The heart of the AMAZING ENGINE system is the combination of the *player core* and the *player character*. The player core is the framework around which PCs are built. The same player core is used from universe to universe.

The PC is the actual collection of numbers, skills, and other abilities used to role-play in a given universe. A player will have a different character in each universe, but these characters may all be generated from the same core.

When creating player cores, the players must make certain decisions about the kind of characters they want. They can choose different emphases for the four different pools (see next page) that define a character: Physique, Intellect, Spirit, and Influence. These choices, made while creating the player core, reflect in all PCs created from that core. Each pool offers a pair of choices. Does a player want characters that are generally strong and influential, or ones who are intellectually superior and athletic? Physical characters can be either

muscular or quick; spiritual characters can possess great psychic potential or strong wills.

Of course, the same ability is not always the best in every universe. A muscular but psychically weak character who does quite well in the BUGHUNTERS™ game may be at quite a disadvantage in the MAGITECH game, where wizards needing strong psyches to manipulate magic are a common sight. Therefore, the same player character is not used in every universe. Instead, the player core allows each character to be tailored to the needs of each universe-within the limits of the player's original choices. Players who emphasized Physique will still have characters who are either faster or stronger than most others. Those who chose Intellect will have smarter characters, either in learned skills or intuitive understanding. The player core forms the archetype around which a single player's characters are all set.

The Ability Pools

The player core consists of four different ability pools: Physique, Intellect, Spirit, and Influence. Each pool has two attributes that define the player character. When creating the player core, only the ability pools are used. When creating a PC, or playing that PC in a single universe, only the attributes are used. Once the first character is generated, ability pools never affect the actions of a PC and attributes never affect ability pools. The ability pools' corresponding attributes are:

Fitness and Reflexes. These attributes of Physique measure all things physical about the character.

Learning and Intuition. These attributes of Intellect define the character's mental power for learning useful skills.

Psyche and Willpower. These attributes of Spirit are the sources of the PC's mystical potential and strength of will.

Charm and Position. These attributes of Influence generate the values affecting the character's social interactions.

The Attributes

As noted, the eight attributes are more precise breakdowns of the corresponding ability pools, and they define a specific character in a specific universe. Beginning characters' attributes have values from 3 to 50, with 25 being the approximate average score. (Characters generated from the core later in a campaign may have higher scores.)

Fitness. A measure of bodily strength, Fitness reflects the characters' muscles and their ability to use them effectively. Fitness affects the amount of damage characters can cause in hand-to-hand combat, and the amount of body damage they can take.

Reflexes. This attribute measures characters' reaction speed and hand-eye coordination. It is used for scoring a hit in combat, and (along with Willpower) determines the amount of stamina damage characters can take.

Learning. This measures characters' knowledge in areas requiring long training or study. In some universes, it may represent a degree or period of schooling. Learning affects the number and kind of, and chance of success at, skills characters can have.
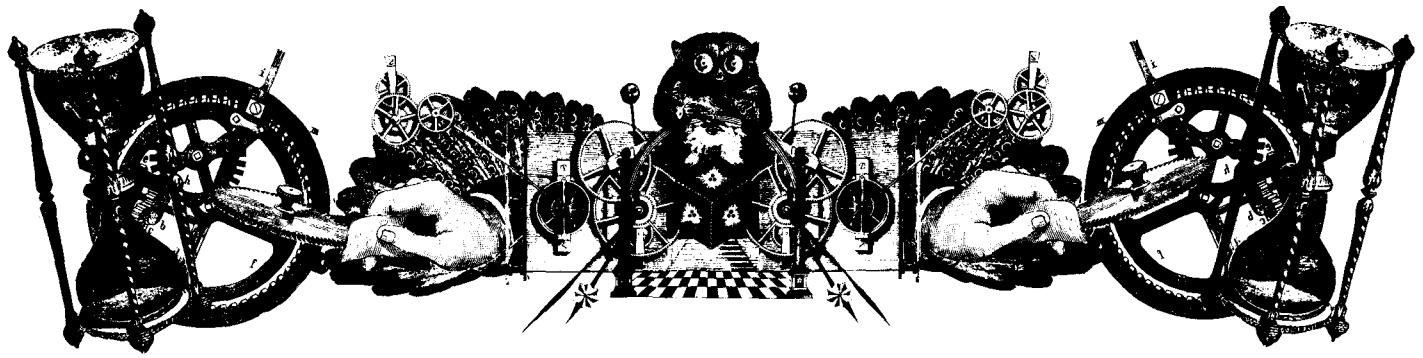
Intuition. This encompasses the characters' ability to remember random trivia, innate wit, street smarts, comprehension, and worldliness. Intuition is applied to skills picked up through observation and practice, without long periods of study. Like Learning, Intuition affects the number and kind of, and chance of success at, skills characters can have.

Psyche. The universe is filled with more things than can be measured or imagined by physical science-or at least an AMAZING ENGINE™ universe may be. Psyche represents the characters' potential to perceive and manipulate the spiritual and metaphysical world. In a given universe, this may determine the characters' magical ability, psychic powers, or plain old luck.

Willpower. As a measure of mental fortitude, this ability indicates how well the characters can endure pain (along with Reflexes, in the form of stamina points), block mental attacks, or resist psychic possession.

Charm. In RPGs, characters must interact. This attribute rates the characters' personalities and the way others are disposed toward them. Charm is used to influence reactions of NPCs and can affect the success of some magical and psychic skills.

Position. This attribute provides a rough rank for characters on the ladder of social advancement, whatever form the rungs take in a particular universe. Depending on the setting, Position may translate into military rank, fame (or infamy), wealth, title, class, or even occupation. Position is used to deal with officials, finance large purchases, and secure special resources, and also at special social functions.

Generating the Player Core and Player Character

The process of creating the player core is woven into the steps of creating the first player character. As you create this character, you will have to make a number of choices for the core that will affect the character. In later steps, numbers rolled for the PC's attributes will affect the final results of the player core. Thus, the procedure for creating your first PC (and player core) is slightly different from that used when creating subsequent PCs from the same core.

The first task in creating a character is to decide what kind of character you like. You can do this even before knowing what kind of universe your GM is going to use. Do you prefer strong characters, able and ready to fight; charmers who can talk their way out of any situation; ¡ntellectuals good at solving problems; or magically-charged wonder-workers? Think about your ideal character.

The next step is to translate your ideal into game form by ranking the four ability pools of the core from best to worst. Using a sheet of paper (or the Player Core Sheet on page 18), write the numeral 1 (best) next to the pool for which you want the best chance for high scores. Then rank the remaining pools (2, 3, and 4), remembering that the one ranked lowest will usually have the lowest scores. Later die rolls do not guarantee anything.

In the third step, begin creating your first actual PC by choosing four of the eight attributes and rolling four 10-sided dice (4d10) for each

one. Add the four results, and note the total in the space next to the attribute name. (Do this in pencil, since the attributes may be modified ¡n a later step.) The attributes chosen need not correspond to the ranking of attribute pools done previously. You can choose one, both, or no attributes of any given pool in this step.

Now, generate scores for the four remaining attributes by rolling 3d10 and adding the results. Note the totals in their appropriate places.

Once the basic numbers have been generated, modify the attributes based on the rankings you gave the ability pools (1-4). The rankings determine the number of points available to divide between the two attributes of that pool (15, 10, 5, or 0). You can divide these points however you wish, but no ability pool can have more than 50 total points.

Rank 1: 15 points
Rank 2: 10 points
Rank 3: 5 points
Rank 4: 0 points

The modified numbers are your PC's attribute scores.

With the PC attributes determined, you can now finish creating the player core by figuring your ability pools' dice ratings. Do this by adding the two attribute scores of each pool and dividing by 10. Fractions are rounded up to the next whole number. Write these numbers next to "Dice." Although this total has no effect on a PC during play, it is needed for creating other characters in other universes.

Creating Characters from the Player Core

Once you have created a player core, you are ready to create new characters for other AMAZING ENGINE settings. These characters are made using the player core, and follow different steps from those you used for your first (or "prime") character.

You build PCs from the core by assigning dice to the different attributes. Each ability pool has a dice rating (this was the last step you performed in creating your prime character). These dice are divided in whole numbers between each pool's attribute pair. In addition to these dice, all new PCs have 7 "free" dice the players can assign as they see fit. However, unless stated otherwise by the universe-specific rules, no attribute can have more than 5 dice assigned to it. Once all dice have been assigned, the appropriate numbers are rolled and totalled, just as before.

After the dice are assigned, rolled, and totalled, the next step is the same as for your prime character from this core. Using the same rankings you assigned to your ability pools, use the points each rank gives (15, 10, 5, and 0) to modify your PC's attributes. As before, no PC can have an attribute rating higher than 50.

Once the attributes have been modified, the character creation process stops. Do not recalculate the dice ratings for the player core. The dice ratings can only be altered by spending experience points earned by the PCs created from that core.
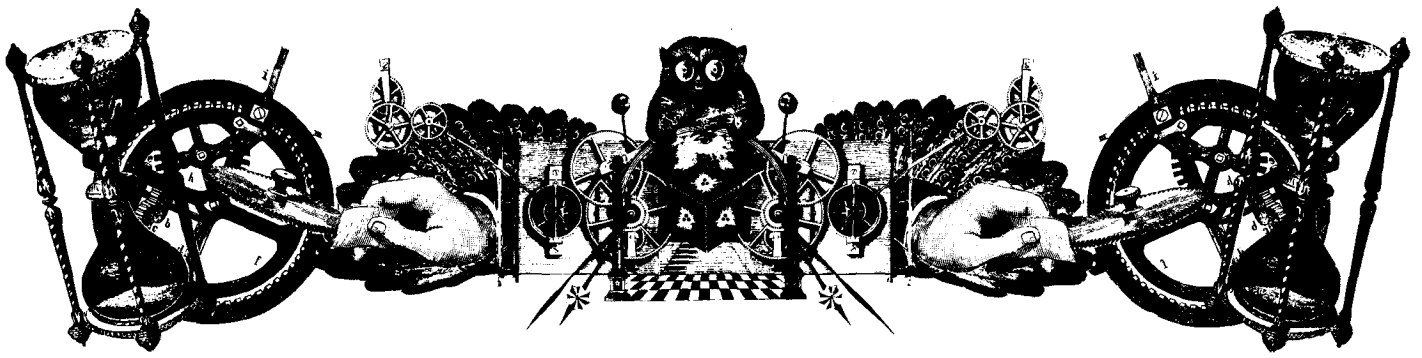
Multiple characters can be created from the same player core. However, you should have only one character from the same core per universe. Multiple characters per core in the same universe would give you an unfair advantage over players with only a single PC per core. You can create multiple cores, however, each with its own prime character; use the rules for "Generating the Player Core and Player Character."

A detailed, complete example of creating a player core and a prime character is given on pages 14-15.

Life and Death

A crucial part of any role-playing game is the risk of injury and death to the PCs. Every time a PC tries something dangerous or gets in a fight, she can suffer damage. This damage is measured in points, subtracted from a character's total. In the AMAZING ENGINE™ system, there are two types of damage: stamina and body.

Stamina damage is caused by the host of bruises, grazes, cuts, burns, jolts, and effort spent avoiding serious harm. A character who loses all her stamina points does not die-she falls unconscious. (This may result in her death, however.) Unconsciousness comes from the combined effects of blood loss, concussion, shock, pain, and just plain exhaustion. If an attack causes 10 points of stamina damage and your character has only 4 remaining, the excess points are ignored. Your character falls unconscious. However, all future attacks automatically cause body damage.

Body damage represents wounds and injuries that seriously threaten the health of your PC. These include bullet holes, stab wounds, broken bones, serious burns, bites, and other unpleasantries. When your character loses all her body points, she's dead.

Just how many stamina and body points your PC has varies from universe to universe. In some, such as that of the BUGHUNTERS game, combat is one of the main activities. Here, your PC will need lots of stamina and body points. In others, like For Faerie, Queen, and Country, combat is a last resort when all others have failed. Characters in such a universe have lower stamina and body point totals to discourage players' desire to solve every problem with guns.

In all universes, however, stamina and body points are calculated from the same attribute scores. Fitness is used to figure body points. Characters with high Fitness scores will always have more body points than those with poor Fitness scores, no matter the universe. Willpower and Reflexes combined are the base for stamina points, so that those with high scores in these attributes will have more stamina points than those with low ones.

Injuries and wounds do heal, allowing your PC to regain lost stamina and body points. Because the two types of damage reflect different causes, each heals at a different rate. Stamina is regained in two stages; 1 point in the first 10-60 minutes (1d6x10), then 1d10 points per eight hours of light activity (2d10 per eight hours of bed rest or sound sleep). Body points heal at the rate of 1 per week. Rest, nursing, and hospitalization can increase the rate of healing; to what extent depends on the universe. After all, the hospitals of a pseudo-Victorian London are nothing like the sickbay facilities of a 23rd-century starship!

Beyond the Player Core: Fine Tuning

In any AMAZING ENGINE universe, your PC is more than the sum of her attribute scores. There are many other choices to make; however, these depend on the universe in which your character is playing. While all the choices are defined for your character in the Universe Book section of this product, the range of options is explained here in general terms.

Base Adjustment

Every universe of the AMAZING ENGINE system is different, so a suitable starting character for one may not be right for another. Therefore, a given universe may apply a base adjustment to certain of your PC's ability pools. This adjustment increases every affected attribute by the same amount. (A base adjustment of +30 to the Physique pool means you add 30 to the base Fitness score and 30 to the base Reflexes score.) The adjustment must be made after calculating your PC's base attribute scores.

Species

Up to now, nothing has been said of just what your PC is, and from the examples it's easy to assume everyone's human. However, this need not be the case. In some universes, your may have the opportunity to create characters that are members of some other species. Your character could be an intelligent being evolved from dinosaurs, belong to an alien race from another star, be a combination of human and machine, or (comparatively simply) have fairy blood. The universes of the AMAZING ENGINE system have all of science fiction and fantasy to draw upon, so the possibilities are nearly endless!

Gender

There is nothing in the player core that determines your PC's gender. In most universes, you can choose it freely. However, in some cases there may be special restrictions or different choices, particularly when playing an alien (nonhuman) PC. The Universe Book describes any such rules additions.
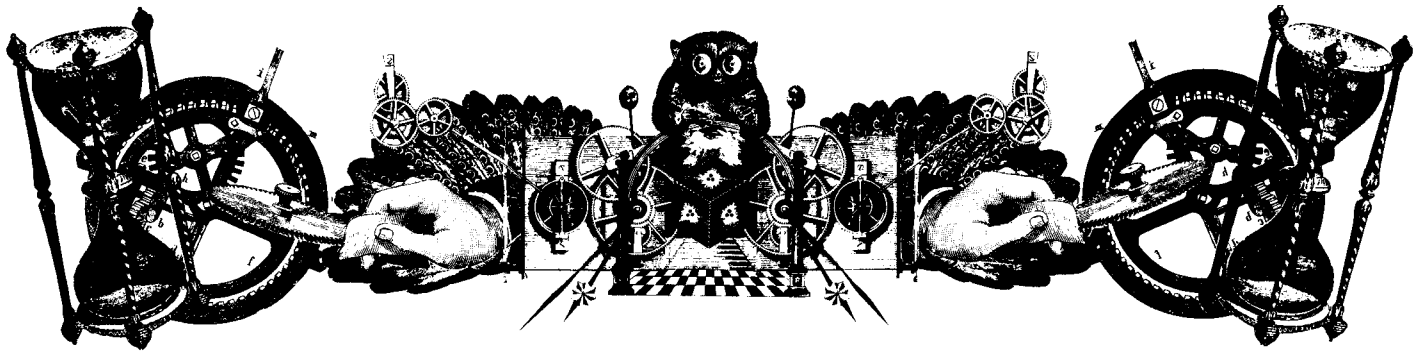
Handedness

For convenience, your character uses the same hand as you do in real life. Of course, if you're playing a four-armed g'rax, special rules may apply.

Appearance

Again, unless your PC is an alien, you can describe your character's looks however they please you. He could be tall and willowy, or she

could be short and blunt. It is recommended that you create a character description that matches the attribute scores. If your character has a miserable Fitness score, it doesn't pay to imagine him as strong and muscular.

Professions and Skills

At some point in her imaginary life, your PC probably went to school, learned a trade, or at least got an education on the street. In the AMAZING ENGINE™ system, what your PC knows is defined by her profession. No matter the universe, every character has a profession, varied though they are. In a Victorian fantasy setting your PC might be a consulting detective, consul of the Foreign Office, Oxford don, navy ensign, or medium. A completely different set of professions exist in a world of high space opera; space freighter captain, alien spy, smuggler, and psychic are only a few possibilities.

Likewise, the exact benefits of a profession can vary from universe to universe. The Victorian consulting detective might know material analysis, chemistry, fisticuffs, craniometry (measurement of people's skulls), heraldry, and fencing; his counterpart in a world of modern magic could well possess flying carpet driving, spell analysis, handguns, karate, and empathy.

When you create a PC for a campaign, your character must be given a profession from those offered in that particular universe. The Universe Book lists these. Choosing a profession does not determine what your PC is currently; it only tells what she was, and therefore what she knows at the start of the campaign. From this basis, you can make of your PC what you want.

Skill Groups

Note: Reference this Universe Book's skill listing as you read this section.

Every profession includes a listing of skill groups falling within that profession's purview. These skill groups form the basis of what a character can learn, given her profession. The skills categorized under each grouping are all related to that area of study or use, although the skills themselves may be quite different. For example, a scholarly character may have "Humanities" as a skill group. Checking the information in the Universe Book, you find the listing for Humanities. Under it are several different scholarly areas and skills that all have to do with the humanities (like Linguistics and Theology), though they are not always related to each other.

Certainly not every profession has the same skill groups. The scholar's studies in humanities would be ill-suited to the needs of a soldier in the 23" century. Her skill groups would include things like Sidearms and Comm-gear. The skills of the Sidearms group are vastly different from those of the Humanities group.

In addition to organizing skills, the skill groups also show the skills' order and relevant attributes, both important to using skills in play.

Skill Order: In each list, skills are arranged in ever-smaller steps of specialization. Before a skill can be learned, your PC must know all preceding steps. For example, look at the following list.

> Sidearms (R)
>> Coherent Beam (R)
>>> Laser rifle (R)
>>> Particle beam (R)
>> Projectile (R)
>>> Modem (R)
>>> Antique (R)
>>>> Blunderbuss* (R)
>>>> Rifled musket*(R)
>> Assisted (R)
>> Energized (R)
>> Flechette (R)
>
> General Medicine (L)
>> Xeno-biology (L)
>>> Arcturean medicine (L)

Each level of specialization is indicated by indentation, just as in an outline. Once your PC has learned a skill (Sidearms or General Medicine, in the above listings), she has a basic familiarity with everything grouped below it, allowing her to attempt any of those specialties. However, your PC's chance of success decreases when attempting things of greater specialization than her training level. The degree of penalty depends on what the PC knows and what she's trying to do. She cannot know the Rifled musket enhancement unless she knows Antique weapons, which she cannot have until she has taken the Projectile specialization. (She need not know Coherent beam weapons before she can know Projectile; these two are at the same level, and thus are unrelated.) The precise penalty varies from universe to universe. A typical penalty is -10 to the PC's chance of success per each level of difference. (In the above example, a PC familiar with projectile weapons trying to use a rifled musket does so at a -20 penalty: -10 for not knowing the Antique specialization, and -10 for not having the Rifled musket enhancement.)

Enhancements: Some specialized skills do not require your PC to gain new areas of learning or technique, but only call for the refinement of existing knowledge. Your PC doesn't "learn" anything new; she only improves what she can already do. These specialties are called **_enhancements,_** and are noted by an asterisk (*) on the skill groups.

For example, under Antique Weapons, **_Blunderbuss_** and **_Rifled musket_** are enhancements. The basics of loading and firing each are essentially the same, and the same goes for any other antique weapon (the larger skill category). The differences are that a character skilled in Blunderbuss is more familiar with the particular quirks of that weapon. The same does not apply when comparing Antique Weapons to Modern Weapons, or General Medicine to its specialty Xeno-biology. In these
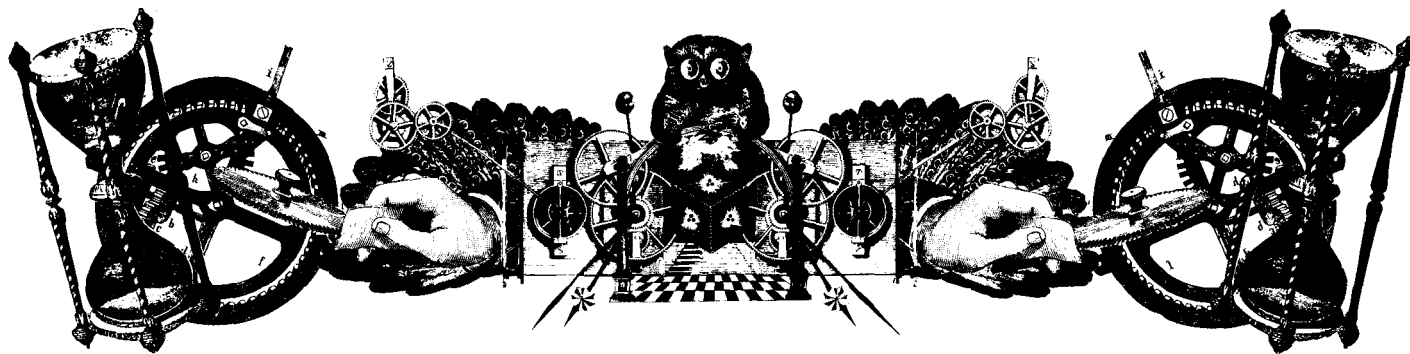
cases, the skills involve new learning, new techniques, and new facts that must be mastered in addition to the basic understanding of Sidearms or Medicine.

Knowing an enhancement gives a PC a bonus (typically +10) when using that particular skill-but only that skill. A PC who knows the Blunderbuss enhancement and uses that weapon gains a +10 bonus to her skill roll. She does not gain that bonus when using a rifled musket, however, even though both weapons require the Antique Weapons specialty.

The bonus for an enhancement does not accumulate across levels the way that penalties for lack of a specialty do. For instance, a character with the Blunderbuss enhancement gains only one bonus when rolling against the Sidearms skill, despite the fact that there are two levels between the skills.

Starting Skills: After you have chosen a profession for your character and noted down the skill groups, you can select skills for your PC. The number of skills your PC can have depends on her Learning and Intuition scores.

First, you must choose those skills dictated by your PC's profession: the things that allow her to operate effectively in whatever career she has chosen. You can choose any skills from the skill groups named by that profession. Your PC can have 1 skill for every 10 points of Learning (or fraction thereof, rounded up). Specialized and sub-specialized skills can only be chosen if the preceding skills are also learned.

After you have chosen those profession-based skills, you can pick other skills from any skill group regardless of the PC's profession. These skills represent your PC's general knowledge, interests, curiosity, and hobbies. Select one skill (from any skill group) for every 15 points of Intuition your PC has (ignore fractions in this case). Additional skills gained may be within the PC's profession or completely outside it. As before, your PC cannot learn specializations or sub -specializations unless all previous skills are known.

As you select skills, note the names and relevant attributes (noted in parentheses after each skill) on your character sheet.

Skill Checks

Although your PC may know how to apply a skill, this is still a long way from using the skill correctly and successfully. As a real person, you might "know" a foreign language, but could still make an error when talking to a native speaker. Furthermore, not everyone is equally adept; not every first-year French student speaks first-year French equally well. The same is true, of course, for your PCs.

Every time your PC attempts to use a skill, you must make a skill check to see if the effort succeeds. This entails rolling percentile dice, applying any bonuses or penalties as required, and comparing the result to one of your PC's attribute scores. The relevant attribute score is noted in parentheses after the listing in the skill group: Fitness, Reflexes, Learning, Intuition, Psyche, Willpower, Charm, and Position.

If the (modified) die result is less than the PC's attribute score, the

attempt succeeds. If the (modified) die result is greater than the score, the attempt fails. A skill check always fails on a roll of 95-00, but there is no corresponding chance for automatic success.

Easy and Difficult Tasks: Skills are applied to tasks of varying difficulty. For your PC with mechanical skill, fixing a stubborn lawnmower is just not the same as rebuilding the engine on a sub-orbital jet. The former is a task of basic simplicity, the latter a highly demanding and complicated job. Clearly, your PC's chance of success in each endeavor should not be the same.

A skill check is not required every time your PC does something skill-related. For example, driving to the supermarket does not require a skill check. A character trained as a spaceship pilot need not make a skill check every time he travels through space. It is assumed that every skill provides a level of basic understanding. Thus, skill checks can be ignored for simple and familiar tasks.

When the result is uncertain, a skill check must be made. Characters with Firearms skill can handle a gun without a skill check, but they may not hit the target-a skill check is required to find out. If the check succeeds, your PC performs the action successfully: hitting the target, whatever. If the check fails, the action fails with appropriate consequences.

Your PC can also attempt actions of even greater risk and skill, so much that a normal skill check is still too easy. She may want to shoot an item from a person's hand, or calculate an obscure scientific formula. Based on the situation, the GM can reduce the chance of success to reflect the difficulty of the action. Guidelines for the modifiers are given as appropriate in the Universe Books.

At other times, your PC may attempt something more specialized than she is trained for. In this case, even the simplest task requires a skill check (with the penalty for not knowing the specialty applied), since any specialized knowledge is assumed to be beyond your PC's basic understanding. Tasks that would require a normal skill check become extremely difficult for those without the proper background, while things difficult for a specialist become nearly impossible.

Unskilled Characters: No matter how well-rounded and prepared your PC is, there are always times when she is faced with a problem for which she is simply not trained. Faced with such a situation, your PC may have little choice but to try her best.

Whether your PC can even hope to succeed depends on the skill normally required to perform the task. If this is a Learned skill (one that uses the Learning attribute for skill checks), the task is impossible. Computer programming, biochemistry, and surgery are all examples of Learned skills. Without the proper training, your PC simply has no clue about what needs to be done. For example, she cannot repair a malfunctioning high-energy gas laser. The only thing she's likely to do, without the proper training, is increase the damage.

Actions based on nonLearning skills can be attempted by even those lacking the proper training. In this case, the PC has a default chance equal to half the appropriate attribute score. Even the most basic actions require a skill check (there is no automatic success), and the
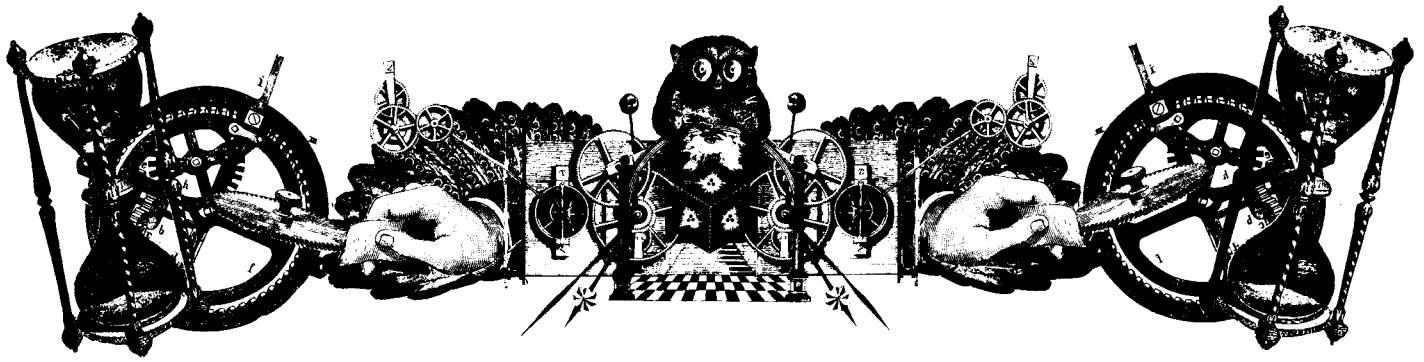
attribute score is halved for the attempt. The other penalties, for specialization and difficulty, still apply.

Margin Ratings

In most cases, the actual outcome of a skill check doesn't change, regardless of how well or poorly the PC did, so you can simply translate the skill check into story details. Roll well below the success number, and your PC did the task extremely well. Roll high-close to failing-and it was a struggle, but she succeeded. Roll drastically greater than the success number, and your PC botched things royally.

For example, your PC, Anya, and her companion, George, are trying to jump across a pit, with a villain in hot pursuit. You roll a 17 (needing a 54 or less), while George's player barely rolls below the necessary number (69 out of 71). Right behind your PCs, the villain attempts the leap. His roll is a 93, well over the 51 needed. In this case, the GM might say, "Anya, you clear the pit easily, then bend down and help George, who nearly failed and is clinging to the edge by his fingertips. The thug chasing you slips just as he starts the leap. There's a horrid scream as he falls out of sight." Both player characters succeeded and there was nothing gained by doing better, while the thug failed and would have fallen in any case. If Anya had not been there, George would have simply hoisted himself over the edge to safety.

At other times, you need to know not only if your PC succeeded or failed, but to what degree. These are known as critical successes or critical failures. Skills that require them are defined in the Universe Books. In For *Faerie,* Queen, and Country, Louis the forger is altering a will. A successful skill check results in a will that fools most people, but Louis needs a critical success to dupe the court's handwriting expert. In the BUGHUNTERS game, Harmon, the demolitions man, is faced with a complicated time bomb. Success obviously defuses the device, but there is the risk he pulls the wrong wire. This would be a critical failure, causing the bomb to detonate immediately.

Critical successes and failures are defined by margin ratings. Success margin ratings are noted as S#: S2, S5, etc. Failure margin ratings are noted as F#: F8, F7, etc.

In such instances, the success or failure margin is found by reading the is digit of the skill check roll. For a critical success, the skill check must be successful and the is digit must be equal to or less than the success margin. For a critical failure, the check must be failed and the is digit must be equal to or greater than the failure margin.

For example, Louis has a 45 on his attempt to forge a signature. The skill notes a success margin of 1 (S1) for a perfect forgery. Louis's player rolls the skill check, and the result is 40. Louis succeeds! Not only that, but it's a critical success, since 0 is less than 1 (the success margin rating). If Louis's player had rolled a 29, the forgery would have been successful but imperfect. On a roll greater than 45, the forgery would have failed completely.

Note that, statistically, margin ratings give characters with higher attribute scores a greater chance of amazing successes and a lower chance of horrible failures at any particular task than characters with lower attribute scores. In effect, success and failure margins serve as fractions of a character's skill, so as that skill increases, the margins become automatically more beneficial. Applying them to the is digit of a skill check simply makes it very quick and easy to identify them during play.

Movement

Character movement is divided into three speeds: walking, running, and sprinting. Each is defined by a speed in meters/turn and a duration of minutes or turns.

Measurements

To ease the transition from one universe to another, this game system uses a consistent set of measures for figuring game time, movement, and weight.

In this game system, all distances, volumes, and weights are given metrically. Although unfamiliar to some, the metric system is best suited to meet the needs of universes ranging from high fantasy to hard s-f. Distances are given in meters and kilometers, weights in grams and kilograms, etc.

Game time-the imaginary time spent by PCs to do anything, as opposed to the real time you spend describing your PC's actions, rolling dice, thinking, etc. while playing-is organized into turns, minutes, hours, and days. A turn is roughly equal to 10 seconds of action, and is used for combat and other time-important actions. Minutes, hours, and the rest are self-explanatory. A given universe may have weeks, months, and years equivalent to those of our Earth, or may use a quite different system (especially in s-f settings).

Speed

Walking is the slowest and most common movement. A person walking can cover up to 15 meters per turn. (In general, people unconsciously adjust their strides to those of their companions to walk at a uniform rate.) Characters can walk for an indefinite amount of time, although the hourly movement rate of 5,000 meters should be used if PCs travel for longer than 30 minutes at a time.

Running is a brisk jog or long, loping stride, good for covering considerable distances at a quick pace. It is not as flat-out fast as your PC can run, since your PC is trying to conserve some strength for the long haul. Most PCs run a distance equal to their Fitness in meters per turn. A character with a Fitness of 32 could run 32 meters in a single turn. Notably unfit characters (those with Fitness scores of 14 or less) run and walk at the same speed: 15 meters per turn. A character can run for a time in minutes equal to his or her Fitness rating.

Sprinting is a burst of speed, in which your PC tries to cover a short distance as quickly as she or he can. Each turn your PC can sprint a distance in meters equal to twice his or her Fitness score. (A PC with a Fitness score of 32 can sprint 64 meters in 10 seconds.) Sprinting can be maintained for turns equaling one-tenth the PC's Fitness score (Fit
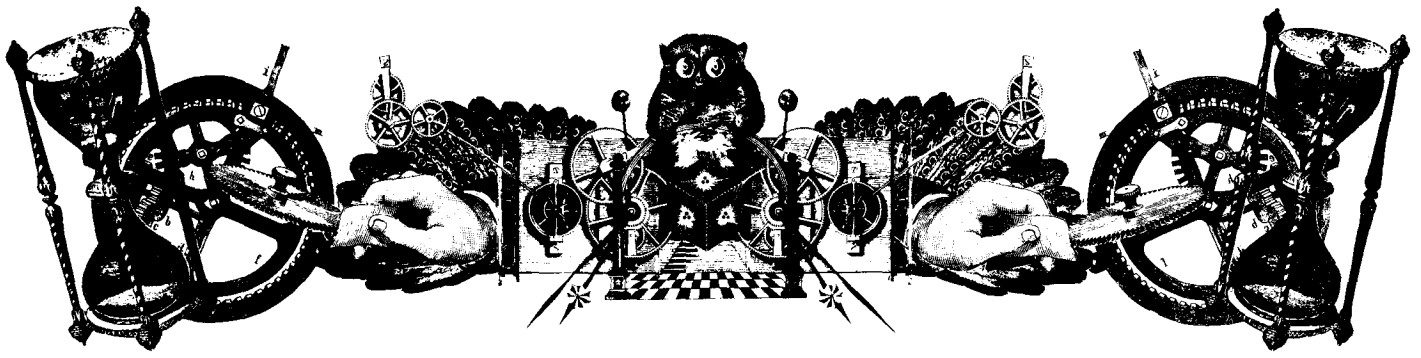
10), rounded down. Amazingly unfit characters (those with Fitness scores of 7 or less) cannot sprint or run, although they still walk at nor-malspeed.

Carrying Capacity

Another important. modifier for your PC's speed in any situation is the weight she is carrying. The movement rates given assume the PC is not loaded down with excess goods that would slow her pace.

Your PC can carry goods equal to her Fitness score in kilograms without penalty. A PC with a Fitness of 21 can carry 21 kilos (about 46 tbs.) of gear and supplies without significant difficulty. When carrying up to twice this weight, the PC's running and sprinting speeds are halved. At three times the base weight, the PC cannot sprint or run, and may only walk meters equal to her Fitness score before hav-¡ng to rest.

If a player tries to tax her PC's Fitness by spending experience points (so she can lift a greater-than-normal weight), the benefit lasts until the PC fails a Willpower check. Like an Olympic weightlifter, the PC puts her legs and back into a heroic effort to lift the great weight. Every muscle in her body strains until her Willpower finally gives out. When the PC fails this check, she suffers 1 point of stamina damage. Players can use experience points to tax their PCs' Willpower to improve their chances of passing this check, too.

Pushing the Limits

It is possible for PCs to run and sprint faster or farther than their nor-mal allowances by taxing their Fitness scores and making attribute checks.

Any PC can sprint faster than is normally allowed in a given turn by taxing his ability. The player must spend experience points to increase the Fitness score. However, a PC can never increase his speed by more than 50% in this way (he cannot add more than half his Fitness score). This increase is only effective for a single turn. The player must con-tinue to spend experience points to maintain the PC's pace on subse-quent turns.

Any PC can also try to exceed his duration. At the start of each turn, when sprinting, or minute, when running, during which the PC wants to run longer than his normal duration, the player makes a Willpower check with percentile dice. If the result is lower than the PC's Will-power score, he keeps going for that turn or minute; otherwise, he must stop since he's exhausted. PCs who fail the check suffer 1-2 points of stamina damage. Note that players can spend experience points to increase their PC's Willpower for this check.

For more information on taxing attributes, see "Taxing Attributes" in the "Experience" section of these rules.

Resting

Flat-out sprinting and long-distance running make for exhausting busi-ness, and your PC must rest at the end of any dash. PCs must spend time resting in minutes equal to the minutes spent running or turns spent sprinting. Sprinting three turns requires resting three minutes. Characters resting cannot run or sprint, but can walk up to 10 meters per turn.

Vehicles and Special Movement

Since the AMAZING ENGINE" universes can encompass anything from lizard-drawn chariots to anti-grav sky-sleds, rules for vehicle movement are part of the Universe Books. In addition, a Universe Book may present unique movement rules to reflect any special condi-tions of that universe. Heavy gravity, magical terrains, other dimen-sions, and weightlessness are all possible complications unique to specific universes.

Combat

Sooner or later, fighting becomes part of every role-playing game. The AMAZING ENGINE system is no exception, although the emphasis on fighting (and just how dangerous it is) will suit the story needs of the universe. For example, combat in For Faerie, Queen, and Country is an infrequent thing, and dangerous when it occurs. A character can be killed with a single shot. At the other extreme, battles are frequent and heroic (and often magical in nature) in The Galactos Barrier, a swash-buckling universe of high space opera. The BUGHUNTERS " game, where characters are the elite of the interstellar armed forces, is almost entirely combat-centered.

Because of the differences among universes, the things described herein are basic procedures that do not change from setting to setting, such as the differences between ranged combat and melee, and how to make an attack roll. Every *Universe* Book contains additional combat rules. At a minimum, these include weapons available in that universe; a maser rifle just won't be. found in a world of armored knights and dragons. It could appear in a world of cybernetic knights and chrome steel dragontanks, however.

Some universes, such as that of the BUGHUNTERS game, place a greater emphasis on combat than others. Accordingly, the combat rules for these universes incorporate detailed rules for things like special combat maneuvers, penetration, knock-back, and recoil. Other uni-verses may keep the combat rules to the barest minimum in favor of other role-playing aspects.

The Combat Sequence

Because combat can be a confusing event with six or seven characters to a side, each trying to do something different, the AMAZING ENGINE system (like most RPGs) organizes combat into a series of steps, each complete sequence taking one turn, each turn being roughly 10 seconds of time (allowing the GM flexibility in resolving combat actions). Each turn repeats the sequence of events until one side is defeated or manages to escape.
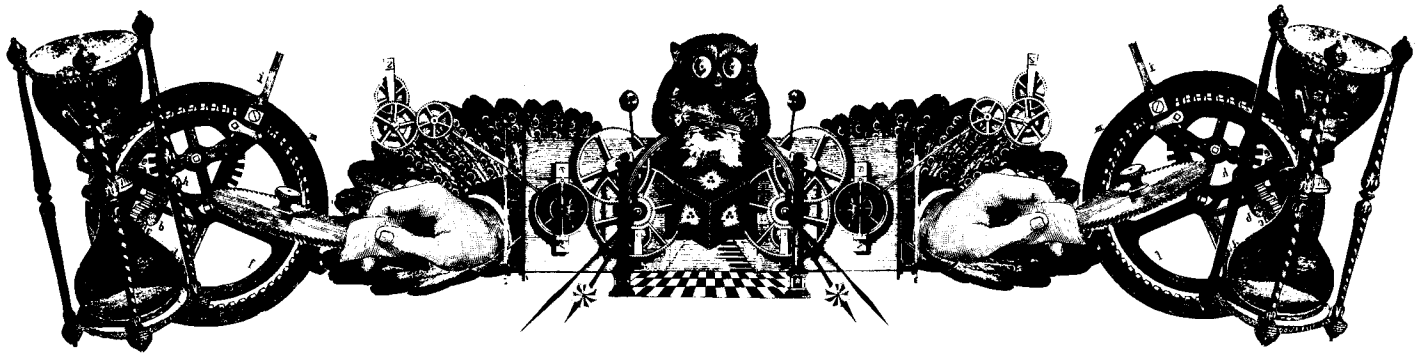
I. Determine advantage (1st turn only)
II. Players declare PC actions; GM decides NPC actions
III. Determine initiative
IV. Resolve actions

I. Determine Advantage: This is the "jump" one character or group might have on another when the encounter begins. It is used in situations such as two groups (friend and foe) stumbling onto each other unexpectedly, a group being betrayed by someone the members trusted, or the party walking into an ambush. The character or party who has the advantage automatically gets the first action and may have a bonus on chances to hit the targets.

Advantage is checked at the beginning of any encounter, before any actions are taken. After the first combat turn, advantage is normally no longer checked, since both sides are perfectly aware of what the other is up to-at least in general terms. In some instances, however, additional advantage checks may be called for: a new attacker appearing from an unexpected direction, or an event unanticipated by one or both sides.

The basic method for determining advantage is for both sides to roll percentile dice and compare the result to the highest Psyche score in each party. If the check passes, the group is forewarned, however slightly. If the check fails, the group is unprepared and the other side gains the advantage. I£ both sides succeed, no one is caught unprepared. If both sides fail, everyone is caught flat-footed. If either side rolls a 95-00, that group is *surprised-caught* completely off guard-and is particularly vulnerable. The "Advantage Outcomes" table appears on page 18. (The properties, equipment, and situations of different universes can modify a PC's check. Some possibilities include thermal sensors to spot what is normally unseen, or psionic powers to detect thoughts. Any such modifiers will be noted in the Universe Book.)

The side with the advantage automatically goes first on the opening turn of combat. Its members gain a +5 modifier on any attack or action opposed by the other group. The side without advantage goes second, and suffers a -5 modifier on any like action.

If one party is surprised, they essentially do nothing for an entire turn during which their opponents have the freedom to move, attack, talk, run away, or whatever (with the +5 modifier) without a reaction from the surprised group. In the next turn, the surprised group is considered unprepared while their attackers have the advantage (they act first and gain the +5 modifier, while their opponents act second and suffer a -5 modifier).

II. Declare Actions: Except for situations of advantage and surprise, you must declare what action your PC will take *before* knowing in what order both sides will act (the same applies to the GM). Tell your GM what action your character will take in the coming turn. Try to be as specific as possible, given that you don't know the intentions of the other side. For example, if your PC attacks, state her target in advance. The GM'has many things to track, so the more you can help, the quicker and more exciting the game will be.

In general, it is best to keep actions short, ideally things that can be

completed within 10 seconds. Not only does this help prevent confusion, it also means your PC is ready to react to new situations in the next turn. You should also be ready to say quickly what your PC will do, since the GM can penalize your PC for your hesitation. Combat requires snap judgments and you should be ready to play the part accordingly. Reasonable questions are allowed, but delaying the game while you try to make a decision is apt to result in your PC losing her action that turn.

III. Determine Initiative: If neither side has an advantage or surprise in combat, you need to know in what order everything happens. This is done by determining initiative at the beginning of every combat turn, unless one side has advantage over the other (because of die rolls or GM's ruling). A single initiative is normally determined for the entire group, although universes with detailed combat rules may require each individual to roll initiative.

Check initiative by rolling 1d10 and modifying the result. The modifier equals 10% (for simplicity, the 10s digit) of the best Reflexes score on each side. A character with a Reflexes score of 37 adds 3 to the die roll. Only those PCs present and active in the combat are considered in this initiative roll. The side with the higher modified die roll acts first.

In addition to PCs, any thing or event beyond the control of either group has its own unmodified initiative roll. If the enemy lobs a grenade at your PC's feet, at the start of the next turn the GM secretly rolls 1d10 for the grenade's initiative (to see when it explodes). Your PC may have a chance to throw it back, or dive for cover-or she may not.

Prepared actions, like holding a gun on someone and demanding surrender, are special initiative situations. Normally, the prepared PC (or NPC) automatically goes first ("Move and I shoot, you ugly bug."). However, your PC can try to beat out the opponent if you roll a successful Reflexes check. (The GM may apply modifiers to your chance of success.) If you succeed, your PC can take an action before her challenger reacts. Fail, and she just wasn't quick enough.

IV. Resolve Actions: Most often, this involves playing out some kind of combat. So, you'll need to know how you go about ...

Hitting Your Target. Whenever your PC attacks (or is attacked), actually hitting what she aimed at is no guarantee. Virtually all attacks require a die roll to determine a hit or a miss. Only the inescapable are exempt from this rule.

In melee and ranged combat, your PC's base chance to hit equals her Reflexes score. However, this chance is modified according to the target area and the mitigating circumstances. If the roll is equal to or less than your PC's modified Reflexes score, the attack hits the target and damage is determined. If the roll exceeds the score, the attack misses.

Target Areas. Anytime your PC (or anything else) makes an attack, you must specify one of three target areas: general, nonvital, or vital. Different chances to hit apply to each area, and successful hits result in different damage effects.
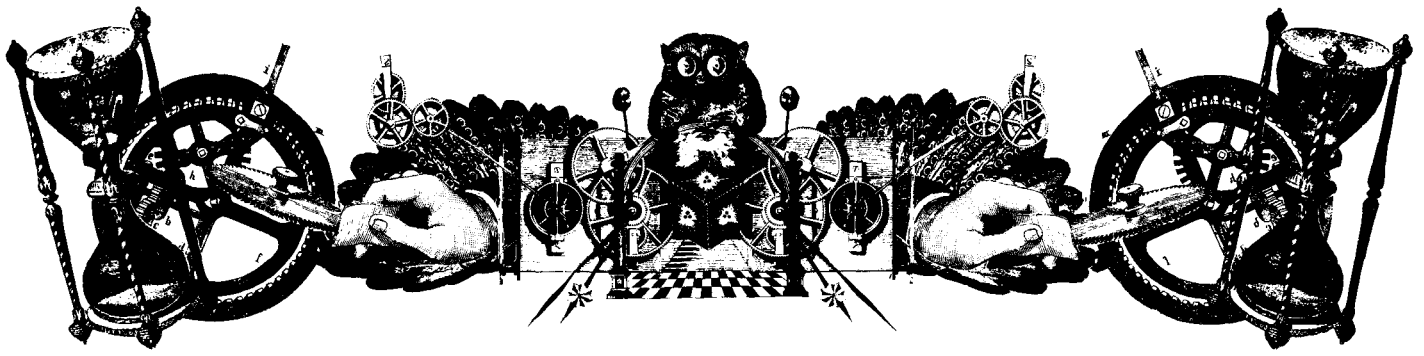
General targets are anywhere on the opponent's body; your PC is just trying to land a fist or make a shot without concern for pinpoint accuracy. General targeting allows your PC to use her full Reflexes score before other modifications, and does not alter the damage done by the attack.

Nonvital targets are those areas of the opponent that if hit will stun, wound, or injure, but are unlikely to result in a kill. Trying to knock someone out or wing him in the arm calls for a nonvital target. Your PC's Reflexes score is halved when making a nonvital attack, and the chance of body damage is reduced by 2.

Vital targets are just the opposite: vulnerable areas that could lead to sudden death if hit. On humans, for example, these include the area around the heart and the head. Attacks on vital areas are particularly difficult, and so the chance of hitting is only 10% of your PC's normal Reflexes score (rounded up). The chance for body damage, however, is increased by 3 on a vital attack.

The "Target Modifiers" table appears on page 18.

Ranged Combat. Ranged combat (attacking with a weapon that •hoots, flies, or is thrown) has special rules. While many of these depend on the universe (and its technology), certain features are common to all.

In each Universe Book, missile weapons (if any) are listed with their ranges and damage. Ranges are divided into short, medium, and long categories (some universes may also have extreme), measured in meters. When shooting at targets beyond short range, your PC suffers a penalty on her chance to hit. The exact penalty depends on the universe, since weapon effectiveness changes with each technology.

Furthermore, every character has a sighting range, normally 50 yards. Characters can see beyond this distance, of course, but when firing at targets beyond the sighting range, only general targeting can be used.

Combat Modifiers

Few battles are straight-up matches where heroes and villains duke it but toe-to-toe. Most are moving affairs with unique situations: things to get in the way, things to hide behind, and armor to wear. These situa--tions are handled by combat modifiers, which are given in the Universe Books. In general, things that modify combat include:

Movement. Movement affects ranged combat, making targets harder to hit. but has no effect on hand-to-hand (melee) combat.

Armor. Depending on the universe, characters may have some kind of armor, be it the leather and metal of fantasy or the spun-fiber body armor of s-f. Most armor reduces the amount of damage caused by a hit. However, a few types-particularly things such as magnetic force fields •r slippery suits-may make the PC physically harder to hit. These -types of armor modify the attacker's chance to hit.

Cover. The most common kind of protection is something to hide hind-preferably something solid, so your PC can't be hurt. Cover is divided into soft and hard types. Soft cover is anything your PC can shoot through that still conceals the target: tall grass, bushes, curtains, leaves, even smoke are all types of soft cover. Soft cover reduces the attacker's chance to hit. Hard cover is anything solid that conceals the target: tree trunks, sandbags, rocks, and walls, for example. Hard cover has modifiers like soft cover, and may limit the target areas that can be chosen. What can't be seen, can't be shot.

Damage

Every weapon in a given universe, be it accelerated magnetic field rifle firing depleted uranium flechettes, enchanted saber, or fist, is rated for damage.

Damage is given as two numerals: a die range for the points of damage caused, and a lethality rating. For example, in For Faerie, Queen, and Country, the service revolver's damage is 2d6/5. It causes 2-12 points of damage per hit and has a lethality rating of 5. Whenever a hit is scored, the dice are rolled and that amount is subtracted from the target's stamina or body points.

Lethality Ratings: It is possible to seriously injure someone with anything, but it is a lot easier with some weapons than others. A hit from a club hurts, but most often only raises ugly bruises, while a shotgun blast tends to have far more fatal effects. The differences between weapons are reflected, in part, by their lethality ratings: the chance that any hit causes body damage instead of the usual stamina damage.

Each time you roll for a hit, you must note not only whether your PC hit or missed, but (if she did hit) what the Is digit on the roll was. If this number is equal to or less than the lethality rating of the weapon (modified by the target area chosen), the damage caused by this hit is subtracted from the target's body points. Otherwise, all damage comes from the target's stamina points. Lethality ratings can never be less than 1 or greater than 10 (0 on the die).

Experience

Part of every RPG is improving your character: increasing attribute scores and adding skills. This is done by earning experience points (xps) to be used by the character. Experience points are a simple way to measure all the intangible things your PC gains from surviving dangerous adventures, risking heroic perils, and "living" an everyday life through your role-playing. After all, it stands to reason that when your PC talks her way past a spaceport customs inspector, survives a dangerous shootout, or uses her skills, she improves. Her hand-eye coordination might get a little better, her confidence might grow. Experience points are a way to measure these slow improvements.

The Goals of the Game

Experience points are not the be-all and end-all of role-playing. If you hope to be a good player (or already are one), then your reasons for playing should go deeper than merely earning more experience points
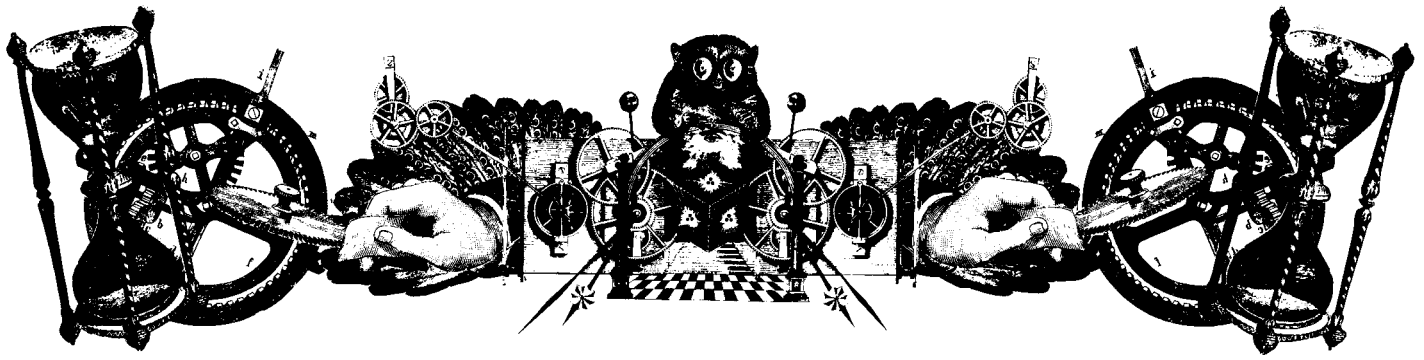
and making your PC more powerful.

A role-playing game is a game, first and foremost, and games are meant to be fun.

This should be obvious, but too often it is easy to lose sight of this fact in the pursuit of more experience points for your PC. Good players don't focus on the powers and items their PCs possess, whom they have defeated, or what they might control. Naturally, they strive for these things, but they also act out their character's personality, get involved in the stories, and work with the GM and other players. For these players, it is perfectly possible to have an exciting, enjoyable game session without ever once earning a single experience point for their characters.

Place the following goals above the mere "earning" of experience points. If you do, rewards for you and your character will come automatically.

Have a good time playing.

Act the part of your character.

Don't let your good time ruin everyone else's fun.

Awarding and Earning Experience

It is not the place of this rules section to list everything a PC can do to earn experience points. In fact, because the AMAZING ENGINE" game system has so many different universes, a single list is impossible. Your PC can't earn experience for fixing a computer when you're playing in a fantasy setting of faeries and boggarts.

Each universe has its own list of experience point awards, designed to suit the needs of that universe. In a setting where high-tech space marines battle hideous aliens, combat is important. Players can expect characters to be rewarded for showing tactical skill, surviving battles, and defeating enemies. At the other extreme, another universe casts the PCs as ambassadors and detectives in a fairy-filled England. Shooting an attendant of Queen Maeve's court or blowing up a fairy ring with a keg of gunpowder is not the goal of that universe. Instead, players are rewarded for talking their way through sticky situations, preventing wars, and solving problems. The experience awards for the former setting will not work for the latter. Nonetheless, all share some general features.

Successful adventures. In any universe, a successful adventure warrants some experience points. "Success" depends on the universe and the adventure. Sometimes, it's enough to survive; in other cases, a specific foe must be defeated or a problem solved.

Using skills. People learn by doing. In the AMAZING ENGINE system, this is noted by rewarding characters with xps for using their skills in ways relevant to the adventure. "Relevant" means your PC can't just spend the day shooting at bottles to increase his Combat skill; bottles don't shoot back, after all. (If the skill were Target Shooting, it'd be a different story.) Using the skill has to involve some real chance of failure or risk for the character.

Role-playing. This is the object of the AMAZING ENGINE system, so good role-playing is rewarded with xps. This is a highly subjective GM call. It depends on the personality you have established for your character, the GM, and the situation at the moment. Good role-playing also means keeping what you as a player know separate from what your character knows. As a player, you know that sticking your hand into a fire is a Bad Idea, but your PC, Cog the caveman, discoverer of fire, hasn't learned that lesson-yet.

Experience and Multiple Universes

In most RPGs, you play only a single character at a time, and so only have to track the xps earned by that character. In this system, however, situations are often different. The most common possibility is that you will play in one universe, where your PC earns some xps, and then change to a different universe. What happens to all the xps your PC has earned to date? Few players want to give up all their advantages and start over. In this system, you don't have to.

Whenever your PC earns experience in an AMAZING ENGINE universe, you must *immediately* assign the xps to either your current player character (the one who earned the xps) or to the player core from which that character was created. Points assigned to the core are forever beyond the reach of your current player character. These points can only benefit characters created from this core in future sessions. Points assigned to your PC are available for immediate use, but cannot be given later to another PC in a different universe.

Within these two areas-player core and player character-you have four options for assigning experience points. With points assigned to the player character, you can tax the character's attributes, spending xps during play to temporarily increase attribute scores; or, you can use these xps to make permanent improvements to your existing character. With the points you give to the player core, you can buy extra dice for that core, thereby improving future characters created from it, or transfer xps to a new character in the same (or different) universe.

Taxing Attributes

The most immediate use of experience points is spending them during the course of play to temporarily increase an attribute score. This is called taxing your PC-forcing her to think a little more or strain a little harder. Taxing can increase her chance of success with a skill: pour on that extra burst of speed in a chase, or make a heroic effort to lift a great weight, for example.

When you want to tax your character, you must tell the GM before rolling any dice. Once the dice are rolled, your chance has passed, so be ready to decide quickly. At the same time, you should tell the GM how many xps you want to spend in the effort.

There are three limitations on how many xps you can use to modify the character's attribute score.

1. Your PC must have unused xps to spend on the attempt. (This applies to all uses of xps. There is no such thing as "negative experience.")
2. Experience points are spent in increments of 5: 5, 10, 15, etc.
3. Experience points spent in a taxing attempt cannot exceed 50% of the original attribute score. This means that the modified score
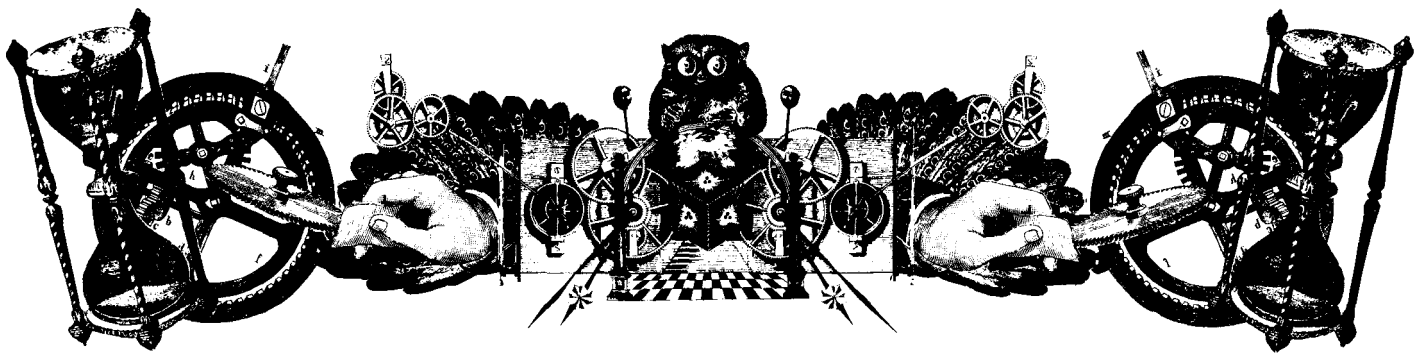
cannot exceed 150% of the original. Numbers are rounded down, to the nearest multiple of 5. For examples, see "Pushing the Limits" under "Movement," and "Example: Taxing an Attribute," under "Tables, Charts, and Examples."

Experience points spent to improve an attribute check are subtracted from the PC's xp total, regardless of the check's success or failure.

Improving Your Character

A more permanent method of improving your PC is buying points to add to your character's attribute scores. Unlike modifying an attribute score (taxing), these purchases are permanent. They are also more costly. The cost of these improvements varies from universe to universe. In one, it may cost 3 xps to raise an attribute 1 point; in another, the same change might cost 10 xps.

There are two limitations on buying increased attribute scores.

1. No attribute score can be increased beyond 90.
2. Permanent improvements cannot be bought during the course of an adventure. They can only be purchased after your PC has had time to reflect on her accomplishments.

Increases bought in this way are permanent for your character. Erase the old attribute score and write down the new one, then subtract the xps spent from the character's total.

Players can also buy new skills for their characters, improving their PCs by increasing the range of their knowledge and ability. The xp costs for buying skills can vary widely from skill to skill and universe to universe. Costs and procedures are described in each Universe Book, as needed.

Improving the Player Core

For long-term planning, you can look beyond your immediate character and instead assign points to your player core. With these points, you can buy additional dice for your ability pools. The purchase of additional dice has no effect on current characters; it only helps those created from the improved core in future universes and game sessions.

Each die of improvement to an ability pool costs 100 xps. Since improvements to the player core have no effect on your current PC, this kind of purchase can be made at any time.

Although theoretically the number of dice you can buy for a single ability pool is limited to 10 (allowing you to assign 5 to both attributes, the maximum allowable), a specific AMAZING ENGINE universe may set different ability pool or attribute limits on characters in that universe. It is best to check with the GM before over-investing in an ability pool for your character.

Without special Universe Book modifications, it is possible (eventually) to purchase dice for each ability pool sufficient to negate the use of the 7 "free" dice. However, this requires many, many game sessions' worth of xps, which must be assigned to the player core and not the PC who earned the xps. In general, we suggest that player cores reaching this limit (and the PCs created from them) be retired permanently, and that players create new cores and new prime characters. This

eventuality is not covered within these rules. GMs are free to design their own rules to deal with this situation, when and if it occurs within their campaigns.

Transfer to New Characters

One unique feature of this game system is the opportunity to role-play in a variety of universes. In other RPGs, this means giving up any experience your character has earned. In essence, all the time you spent playing comes to naught when you start in a new world.

That is not the case in the AMAZING ENGINE system.

Each time you create a new character from an existing core, you can transfer xps from the core to the new character, with the following limitations:

1. The new character must come from the same core as the previous character (the one that earned the experience).
2. The two characters cannot be active in the same universe. A new PC from an existing core can appear in the same universe as a previous PC from the same core *only if the previous character is dead or permanently retired.*

Thus, in the MAGITECH game universe, your new PC could profit from the adventures of that marine sergeant from that old BUGHUNTERS game. Treat the transfer like a withdrawal from a bank account. The points you assign to the new PC cannot be "redeposited" later on, but new xps can be earned by the new PC and assigned to the player core (or to the new player character, as you choose). See "Example: Assigning Experience Points," later in this section.

Experience and Character Death

Unpleasant as the thought is, your PCs can (and will) die. When this happens, any experience assigned to that player character is lost, assuming you haven't used it all trying to keep the PC alive. Experience points assigned to the player core are *not* lost. These can be used by future characters created from the same core.

Tables, Charts, and Examples

The remainder of the rules section contains a complete example of character generation; reference tables and charts for the player core, movement rates, and carrying capacity; and text examples of various game-play situations showing application of taxing, skill checks, and more. You can use this section in several ways: read it in its entirety now, before continuing with the rest of the book; read only the parts that interest you, saving the rest for when you really need them; or ignore it, and turn to it later when you've become hopelessly lost. Seriously, though, if you need clarification on any of the points covered in the previous pages, the answers are probably in this section.
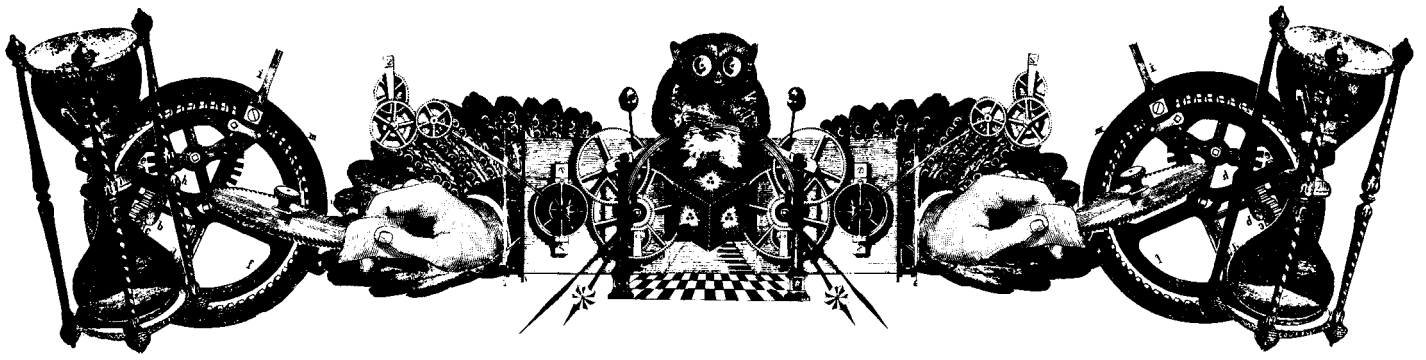
Example: Character Generation

Wolfgang is ready to create his first character for an AMAZING ENGINE" game, and so he spends a little time thinking about what he wants. Having just read an interesting story about thieves, Wolfgang decides he would like a confidence man, a smooth-talking, quick-fingered individual with a modest chance for magical skill.

Based on his ideal con man, Wolfgang must decide how to rank the four ability pools. Since he wants his PC to be a very smooth talker, somewhat light-fingered, with a smattering of mystical ability, he rates the pools like this:

Physique: 2 (+10 points)
Intellect: 4 (+0 points)
Spirit: 3 (+5 points)
Influence: 1 (+15 points)

Remember, the pool rated 1 has the best chance for high scores; the pool rated 4 has the lowest chance.

Wolfgang now selects four attributes as his primary *concerns.* Since he really wants to have a personable character, he chooses Charm. To ensure his light-fingered abilities, his second choice is Reflexes. After pondering, Wolfgang realizes his character could end up short in street smarts, so he chooses Intuition, even though it is in his lowest-ranked ability pool (Intellect). For his fourth choice, he decides to take a chance and selects Position, so he can have a sophisticated con artist. He then rolls 4d10 for each attribute, with the following results:

Reflexes: 31
Intuition: 28
Charm: 17
Position: 23

Wolfgang now fills out the remaining attribute scores by rolling 3d10 for each and noting the numbers. When he is finished, his sheet looks like this:
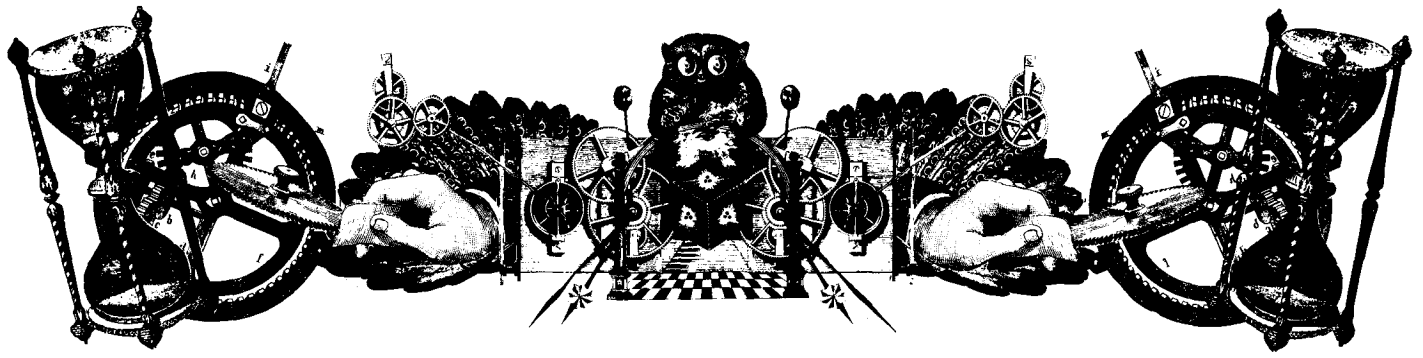
Physique	Intellect	Spirit	Influence
Rank: 2	Rank: 4	Rank: 3	Rank: I
Dice:	Dice:	Dice:	Dice:
Fitness: 16	Learning: 23	Psyche: 21	Charm: 17
Reflexes: 31	Intuition: 28	Willpower: 7	Position: 23

Now, it's time to add the die modifiers according to the ability pools' ranking. Wolfgang starts with his first-ranked pool, Influence. He had bad luck rolling for Charm (and he really wants a personable character), so he adds all 15 points to Charm. In Physique, Fitness is a little low, so he splits the 10 available points between Fitness and Reflexes, 5 each. Under Spirit, the character's Willpower is dangerously low, so Wolfgang feels he has no choice but to add all 5 points to that score even though he would like a better Psyche. He rolled well for his Intellect attributes, which is fortunate since he cannot modify either score (it's the fourth-ranked pool, which gains no modifiers).

Physique	Intellect	Spirit	Influence
Rank: 2	Rank: 4	Rank: 3	Rank: 1
Dice:	Dice:	Dice:	Dice:
Fitness: 21	Learning: 23	Psyche: 21	Charm: 32
Reflexes: 36	Intuition: 28	Willpower: 12	Position: 23

Looking over his character's final attributes, Wolfgang decides the PC is nimble-fingered (high Reflexes) and smooth (good Charm), with a good sense for danger (from his good Intuition). His character is not the strongest or healthiest (only average Fitness), and he needs to work on his psychic abilities (only average Psyche). Finally, with a Willpower of 12, Wolfgang decides his con man is something of a craven fellow, who more often than not "runs away to live to fight another day."

Having created his PC's statistics, Wolfgang now finishes creating the player core by assigning the dice ratings to each ability pool.

Physique	Intellect	Spirit	Influence
Rank: 2	Rank: 4	Rank: 3	Rank: I
Dice: *b*	Dice: *b*	Dice: 4	Dice: 6
Fitness: 21	Learning: 23	Psyche: 21	Charm: 32
Reflexes: 36	Intuition: 28	Willpower: 12	Position: 23
(21+36)/10=5.7	(23+28)/10=5.1	(21+12)/10=3.3	(32+23)/10=5.5

After running a fantasy campaign for some time, Wolfgang's GM decides to switch to a science-fiction universe. Since there is no magic in this s-f setting (and since he's getting tired of playing thieves and scoundrels), Wolf once more chooses a role he might like to play. Knowing from his player core that his PCs will tend to be strong in Physique and Influence, Wolf decides to try for a hard-bitten smuggler captain. Checking his player core's xp total, he sees that there are 150 points he can work with. Since his Spirit pool tends to be weak (just because of bad dice rolls), he decides to purchase 1 additional die for that pool. He crosses off 100 xps (the cost of 1 improvement die) from the player core's total, and adds 1 die to the dice rating for his core's Spirit pool. Then, he divides his pool dice according to the dice ratings, and then assigns his 7 "free" dice to Fitness (2), Willpower (3, because it was very low), and Position (2).

Physique	Intellect	Spirit	Influence
Rank:2	Rank:4	Rank:3	Rank:1
Dice: 6	Dice: 6	Dice: 5	Dice: 6
Fitness: 5 dice	Learning: 3 dice	Psyche: 3 dice	Charm: 4 dice
Reflexes: 3 dice	Intuition: 3 dice	Willpower: 5 dice	Position: 4 dice

After all the dice are assigned, this PC's Fitness and Willpower attributes have the maximum number of dice allowed (5). Wolf rolls and notes the totals for each attribute score, with the following results:

Fitness: 26	Learning: 18	Psyche: 23	Charm: 24
Reflexes: 13	Intuition: 29	Willpower: 17	Position: 25

Once again, he rolled incredibly well for Intuition and not so hot for Willpower. Looking at his new character, he starts with the first-ranked ability pool, Influence. For this universe, he wants an important character and so puts all 15 points toward Position. In the second-ranked Physique pool, he puts 4 points to Fitness and 6 to Reflexes, while for the third-ranked Spirit, he gives all 5 points to Willpower.

Fitness: 30	Learning: 18	Psyche: 23	Charm: 24
Reflexes: 19	Intuition: 29	Willpower: 22	Position: 40

Wolf decides to transfer the remaining 50 xps from the player core to this new character, making those points immediately available during play (for taxing attributes, just in case). Wolf might also choose to use some of those xps to purchase some new skills for this PC, after his first adventure is completed. He notes the 50 xps on the new character's sheet, and subtracts them from the player core's total.

With these adjustments, Wolfgang's new character is ready for play.
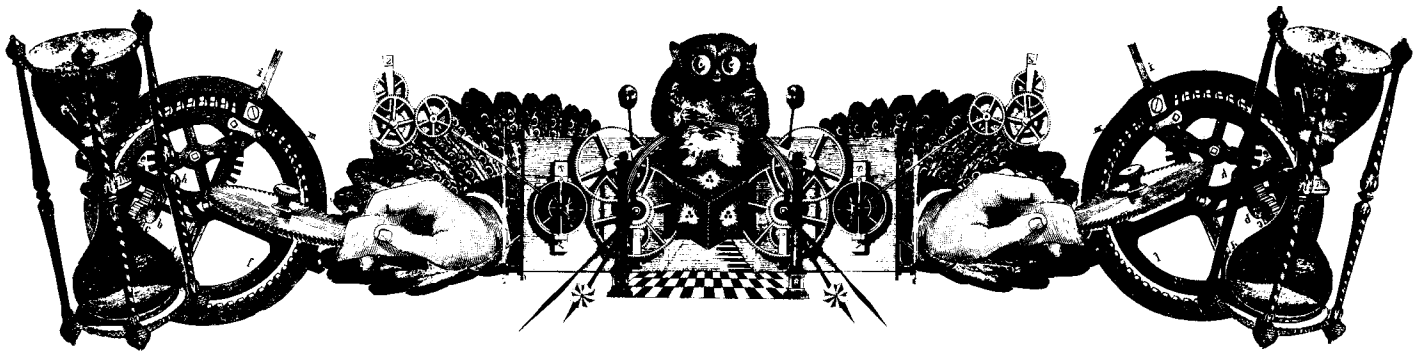
Movement Rates

Movement Type	Distance per:		Duration	Fitness Check
	Turn	Minute		
Walk	15 m.	90 m.	Indefinite	None
Run	Fitness	Fitness x 6	Minutes = Fitness	Yes
Sprint	Fitness x2	Fitness x 12*	Turns = Fitness/10	Yes

* If character has sufficient duration.

Carrying Capacity

Kilos Equal to:	Effect on Movement:
Fitness score	No effect
Fitness score x 2	Sprinting and running halved
Fitness score x 3	No sprinting or running allowed, must rest after walking meters = Fitness score

Target Modifiers

Target Area	Chance to Hit	Dam. Effect
General	Reflexes	None
Non-vital	50% Reflexes	-2 to type
Vital	10% Reflexes	+3 to type

Advantage Outcomes

Condition			NPC		
			Successful Psyche Check	Failed Psyche Check	95-00
P		Successful Psyche Check	No advantage	Player has advantage	Player has surprise
Y		Failed Psyche Check	NPC has advantage	No advantage	No advantage
		95-00	N PC has surprise	No advantage	No advantage

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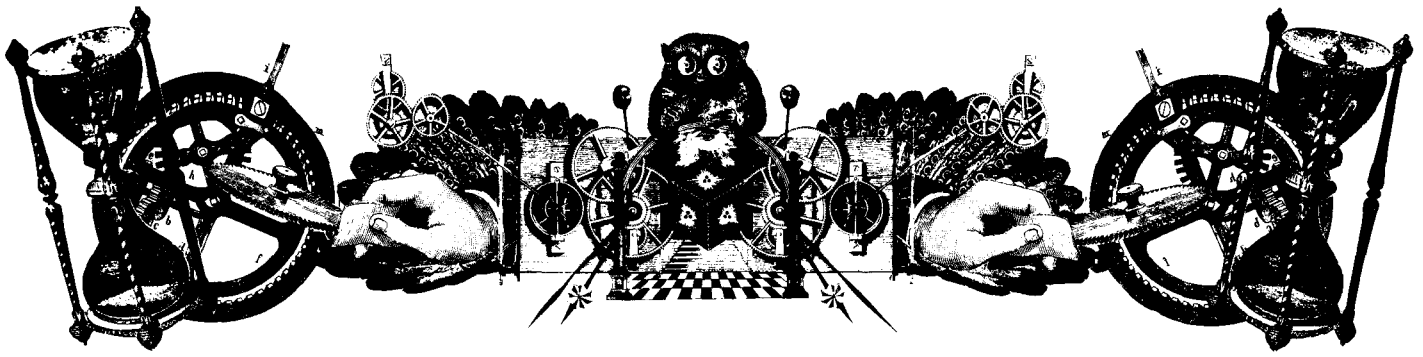
Example: Skill Checks

Karen's character, Leonardo "Big Shark" Accardo, needs to make a hasty getaway from the law. Flying Carpet skill, which Leo has, is Reflex-based. Karen knows Leo's Reflexes score is 36.

Wasting no time, Leo jumps onto his Mach flying carpet, recites a quick incantation, and zips into traffic on Michigan Avenue.

No skill check required. Starting and flying the carpet is a common enough action, one Leo does *every* day, hence no *skill check is needed.*

As he weaves through the late rush hour traffic, Leo looks back. Chicago's finest are in hot pursuit. Leo's in trouble! He can't outrun a police special carpet, especially not in this traffic. His only hope is to lose them with some quick turns. A gap in the traffic appears just ahead, so the Big Shark commands his carpet to pour it on. He darts across the lanes and whips onto a side street faster than is safe.

Skill check required. Karen is having her *character take a chance, the equivalent of* skidding around a corner during a *high-speed* car chase. *She rolls percentile dice and gets a 21, which is less than* Leo's Reflexes score. *The* move *succeeds, and* Leo doesn't *crash his* carpet.

White-knuckled, Leo careens around the corner, narrowly missing an oncoming bus golem and the plate glass window of Bessom's Department Store. Unfortunately, the cops make the turn too, and are now gaining on him. Still speeding, Leo banks his carpet again, this time aiming for an alley. Just as he begins the *turn,* a giant steps from a service entrance, blocking the opening! It's too late to change course, so the only thing Leo can do is try to shoot between the fellow's legs.

Modified skill check required. Taking *the* turn too fast already *required* a skill check, *so the* GM assigns a -10 penalty *for the* added *trick of* trying *to steer between the* giant's legs. *This reduces* Leo's Reflexes *score to* 26 *for this skill check.* Karen rolls 57 on *percentile dice. The check fails;* Leo doesn't *make* it.

Oh no! Startled, the giant instinctively moves to protect himself, closing the gap Leo was aiming for. Too late to stop, the carpet hits the brute right at his knees, and crumples like a limp rag. As Leo is flung from the crash, he hears the howls of the police as they, too, bank into the pileup.

Example: Skill Check with Penalty for Nonspecialization

Leo has a tip on a shipment of smuggled magical artifacts stored in a warehouse near the trainyards, just the evidence he needs to spring his client. All he has to do is break in and get a few pictures. That night at the back door, Leo figures he ought to check for burglar alarms before forcing his way in. Leo knows the basics of glyphs (Glyph Analysis skill), but is no expert in burglar alarms (Protection Glyph specialization). Checking the door for alarms is pretty basic for a specialist, but for Leo a skill check against his Learning score (which is only a 23,

with an additional -5 for nonspecialization) is required. The check is rolled, and the result is a 12: Success! Sure enough, the door is enchanted.

Now, Leo tries to deactivate the alarm. This requires a skill check for a specialist, and so is very difficult for Leo. The check is made with a -15 applied to the attribute score (-5 for nonspecialization, -10 for the action) for a total chance of success of 8 or less. Amazingly, Karen rolls a 04! Leo manages to temporarily dispel the alarm.

Example: Attempting an Unknown Skill

Once inside the warehouse, Leo begins searching through the crates. Suddenly, just as he finds a suspicious one labeled "Excalibur," a footstep scrapes behind him. Leo spins, pulling his gun as he does, to find himself facing a centaur thug. A quick hoof kick sends Leo sprawling, his gun clattering across the floor. A second blow just misses, shattering the crate next to his head and spilling the contents-the sword-half out of the box. In desperation, Leo grabs the sword and pulls it from the box. "Ain't the same as bullets, but you'll have to do." As he clumsily swings the sword up over his head, it begins to glow.

Karen *never thought her character would need a sword,* so Leo doesn't have Fencing *skill. However,* since Fencing *is a nonLearning-based skill* (one that *uses Reflexes), Leo* can attempt swordfighting-but at an 18, *half his* normal *Reflexes* score.

Example: Taxing an Attribute

In a campaign of For Faerie, Queen, and Country, Karen's character, Colonel Sir Jameson Pickering, K.C.M.G., ret., suddenly senses a wave of magical power while attending an important diplomatic ball. Frantically looking about, he sees the villainous sorceress, Countess Angevin, standing in the shadows on the portico. Their eyes meet and before Sir Jameson can warn anyone, a magical paralysis creeps over his limbs as the countess imposes her seductive will. The situation is dire, so Karen decides it's time to tax Sir Jameson's Willpower to break the spell. The normal attribute check to resist possession is equal to the Willpower score halved. Sir Jameson's Willpower is 46, halved to 23 for the check. Karen looks at the available xps assigned to Sir Jameson, and decides to spend the maximum (50% of the original attribute score, or 20 points) to bring the relevant attribute score back to 43 for this check only. The dice roll is a 32; with strain, Sir Jameson breaks the countess's gaze and makes his way into the drawing room for a cigar.
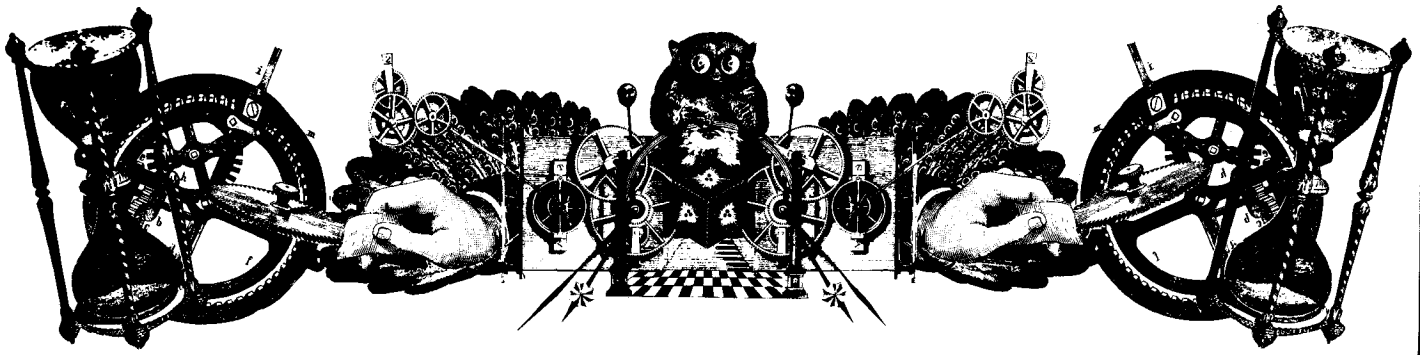
Example: Assigning Experience Points

Michele's character, Plt. Sgt. Adrian 2 Selinko, United Terra Reconnaissance and Peacekeeping Force, has just returned to the "booze barge" (as UTRPFers refer to their HQ on Earth's L-5 station) from a bug-hunting mission on a mining outpost at Barnard's Star. The GM awards experience for that mission, and Sgt. Selinko receives 75 xps for repulsing a swarm of chitinous predators. Michele must assign the xps immediately, so she adds 50 points to Adrian's xp total (the player character) and the remaining 25 to the Player Core XP line on her character sheet.

The 50 points assigned directly to Adrian can be used for taxing attributes during the course of an adventure, or for purchasing increased attribute scores after the adventure is completed. The 25 points assigned to the player core will never affect Adrian directly, but will benefit future characters created from the same core.

Example: Damage and Lethality Rating

WO1 Selinko watches in horror as the xenoforms outmaneuver her squad, three of the creatures lunging in for the kill.

The GM rolls three attacks, one for each stalker, and decides that all attacks will be at general target areas, as this is easiest. The stalkers have Reflexes *of* 62. The die rolls are 83, 17, and 23, so two of the creatures hit and one misses. Each attack causes 3d6 points *of* damage and has a lethality rating *of* 4. The first hit (17) causes 6 points *of* stamina damage, subtracted from the trooper's total *of* 25. The second attack does 8 points *of* body damage (not the standard stamina damage, because the Is digit-a 3-was less than the lethality rating *of 4),* but the trooper only has 7 body points. The extra damage is ignored.

One of the soldiers reels back, cut, but not seriously, by a xenoform's slashing claws. The other trooper isn't so lucky, as a stalker strikes him dead in front of platoon leader Selinko.

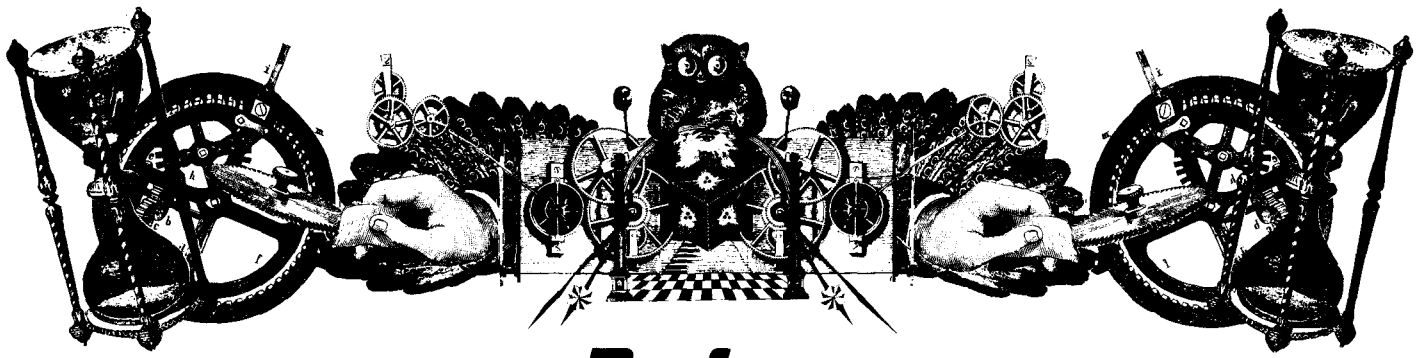"Eat this," she snarls while unloading her flechette clip into the creature's gaping maw.

AMAZING ENGINE" Role-Playing System
Player Core Sheet

Physique	Intellect	Spirit	Influence
Rank: Dice:	Rank: Dice:	Rank: Dice:	Rank: Dice:
Fitness:	Learning:	Psyche:	Charm:
Reflexes:	Intuition:	Willpower:	Position:

Player Core xps:

Preface

First Mate's Private Log, Taline Vessel Raptor

The Morione lackeys have finally caught up to us. Our *shields* are useless, our weapons destroyed, and our eDrive *holed.* The power that has stopped us seems to be the *fabled* Galactos Barrier. Many *of* my crew have been frozen into calcified statues where they stand. A few *of us* were somehow able to avoid this, but the Barrier has rendered the ship completely defenseless and powerless. We wait now for the inevitable *boarding of* the ship, and the subsequent executions. Only our cargo, with any luck, will survive. We carry the plans for rebellion on our home world. We may yet be able to escape the Domain's fist, but only *if* these plans make it *through.*

1 feel no guilt for having betrayed my post in the Domain. The Morione Domain has grown fat and decadent, preying more on its people than providing for them. Now that 1 have been included in the innermost workings *of* the government, 1 know it for the pestilent, festering mess that it is. 1 will die proudly in my new post, *if* necessary; 1 have lived a good life, my only shame being that 1 *did* not spot the error in my ways sooner.

- Malcolm D'Nyla,
former captain in the Morione Fleet

. . . evidence from the Raptors memory banks. The "key to rebellion" was nowhere to be found aboard the ship. We hope to extract some more details from Capt. D'Nyla. If he proves unwilling, we have our ways of making sure that he cooperates. We don't need his consent, after all.

- Morione Fleet Commander Scyllan's Report

T he Galactos Barrier is the fourth release for the AMAZING ENGINE game system. Each of these books details the complete workings of a new universe, a campaign in its own right. Each book is a stand-alone setting.

The Galactos Barrier campaign is one of science fantasy. It is not hard science, nor is it sword and sorcery. Instead, it is a mixture of the two: a science fiction setting, with the intrigue and wonder of a fantasy campaign.

There are certain to be elements of The Galactos Barrier that do not meet with the approval of established science. If you want to inject your campaign with more realism than is contained within the rules, go right ahead.

Likewise, the Music described in later chapters has only passing resemblance to established musical theory. The musical terms have some basis in reality, but their applications here are very different from their real-world counterparts. The terms are just labels for conveying the flavor of the Music, a handy method of classifying the divisions of Music. The terms used may be very familiar to those with musical background. Don't let conventional musical training fool you; this is different enough that you will have to let your musical training slip.

The setting of The Galactos Barrier is the Kellinon Duchy in the Morione Domain. The Domain is an interstellar empire thousands of years old, a government based on piracy that grows steadily more evil. The Domain consists of the Empire, the Bureaucracy, and the Scions, each of which uses the others to justify their continued existences, and each uses the others as an excuse for their brutal behavior. In short, it is a galaxy going to the dogs.

Of course, there are exceptions everywhere, if one only knows where to look. There are some in the Bureaucracy who work to ensure that the best life is had by all; there are some Scions that work for happiness in their people. These are the exceptions to the rule. The majority of Bureaucrats and Scions work only for themselves and their own pleasure, and will happily destroy any who stand in their path to power. The Kellinon Duchy is a worse place than most in the Domain.
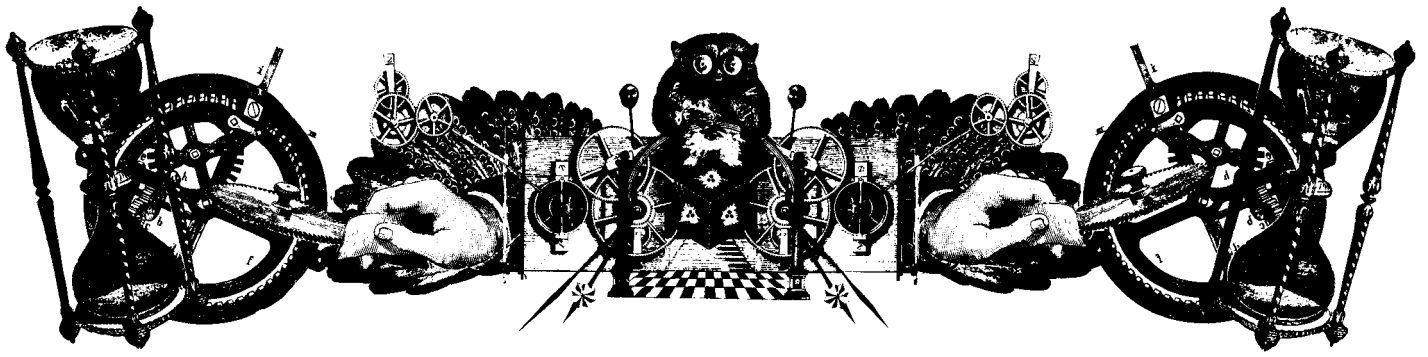
Against the increasing atrocities of the Domain stand only a handful of stalwart revolutionaries. Though most of them lack the power or ability to effect great change, and though they do not have the resources of the Domain, they have a secret weapon. For among these revolutionaries, there are a select few who have. the potential to change the face of the galaxy forever ....

The players' characters are those few. They can take the role of interstellar pirates, smugglers, guns-for-hire, revolutionaries, and more. The characters operate outside the boundary of the Domain's law: sometimes for it, sometimes against. The variety of adventures on which the characters may embark is nearly limitless. While on a routine smuggling mission, they might be intercepted by a cruiser from one of the Scions. The head of this Clan might wish to force the PCs, through threats to their lives or freedom, to rescue his hostage daughter from space pirates.

The characters might later stumble on fragments of the ancient Empire, or come into contact with a hostile alien species bent on exterminating the Domain utterly. They might be drawn into the bitter war raging across the Galactic Core, fighting against these same aliens.

Likewise, they may fall in with the Resistance, trying to achieve the overthrow of the Domain themselves. They might discover that their rivalries go beyond words, and serve one against another. They might be involved in a plot to assassinate the Emperor, either as his assassins or his bodyguards, or even both! No matter what they do, the action and adventure should be nearly non-stop, with time enough only to rest and recuperate before the next catastrophe.

Unfortunately, it is nearly impossible to fully describe the complete culture of a galaxy-spanning empire in such a short space. Instead, we give you a few well-detailed worlds upon which to focus the campaign and the flavor with which to spice it up. From these, you should be able to extrapolate the character of the rest of the universe of *The Galactos Barrier.*

You need not use the provided worlds; the pocket summaries of the planets in "Space" can give you a good idea of what is necessary for a planet for your own specialized campaign. Likewise, you can simply ignore what is presented here to create your own planets. You can use the planetary generation system, or you can create your worlds out of whole cloth.

The map provided is of necessity a small map, focusing on small systems. To accurately map a galaxy-spanning empire in any detail is nearly impossible; in *The Galactos Barrier,* we have instead focused on a small area to give you an idea of how to run a campaign in this universe. The systems provided should be enough in which to base several adventures before expanding outward, spilling into the rest of the Domain.

In many cases, the GM will be called upon to make judgment calls regarding the game, filling in sections and rules that are lightly detailed. In cases such as these, the GM is encouraged to go with whatever seems most dramatically appropriate to the situation. For example, there is no set definition to what can occur in the combat round, no exact guidelines for what can and cannot happen in combat, most especially in the climactic battle of an adventure. As long as the GM is fair to all the players involved, fun should be had by all.

The most important elements of play in *The Galactos Barrier* are in keeping it fast-paced, light-hearted, and fun. This is a game of space opera, of high fantasy set among the stars. If a few rules of the game get broken here or there, so what? As long as everyone has fun, there is no harm done in bending the rules (in, of course, a GM-approved way).

Timeline of the Morione Domain

Note: **All dates reflect the numbering system established by the ancient Empire.** In an effort to make it seem like less time had passed, and to make the dating system more accessible, years are no longer numbered in the thousands. Instead, after every thousand years, the numbering starts over; the digit indicating the millennium is placed behind the other three. For example, the year *791* in the third millennium would be inscribed *791.3*. Likewise, that same year in the tenth millennium would be *791.10*. Currently, we are in the year *913.6*.

000.0: The *Birth* of the Empire. **Little is known about the time previous to the Empire, as busy imperial historians and censors destroy the evidence of previous history. To later generations, there is no civilization before the Empire. Whether it was born from several confederations or forged by a single adventurer is unknown.** It **appears from the mists of time, and begins its spread rapidly.**

Although it is known that faster-than-light travel had existed before this time, it had been fairly rare. The Empire concentrates the largest amount of spaceships ever known to sentient life, while amassing the largest standing army in history.

From a core of about 25 worlds, the Empire holds sway at the galactic center. The Imperial planet, Jelanna, holds the apparatus of government, while those around it provide it with the means to continue; sentients, materiel, and food flow in from these outer planets. The Empire appears in the annals of time ready to strike out into surrounding space.

001.0-385.2: The Empire extends its hold **over the galaxy. Fleets of spaceships, battledroids, and well-armed and -armored startroops travel on "political missions" to all corners of the galaxy. They prove persuasive enough to bring the smaller alliances under their sway. Where more ferocious resistance** is **encountered, the Empire brings more persuasion to bear. If necessary, recalcitrant planets are wiped from the sky. The Empire brooks no resistance. See-**ing **this, several key systems allow Imperial stew-ardship, but privately never give in completely to** the imperial dogma, and thus survive for the later ages.

385.2-212.4: **The Empire solidifies its** *holdings.* **The** last **remaining pockets of rebelliousness are wiped up. An unparalleled era of peace begins. Great achievements are made in the arts, music, and sciences. Most exciting is the development of psychic potential that taps into the energies of the galaxy. This research is funded by the Emperor, who, it is later revealed, has some significant power himself. Called "the Music of the Spheres" by those who can tap into** it**, it allows its practitioners to achieve things beyond the abilities of normal beings. After about three centuries of development, these wielders split into three distinct camps, these being Harmonians, Discordians, and Melodians. Each seeks the ultimate Musical power in its own way. This split would have significant impact on later events.**

During this time, scientists have begun perfecting a communications system that will convey messages faster than the fastest ship can travel. However, every time they near a solution that appears to work, the laboratory explodes. After numerous such failures, scientists conclude that such communication is impossible, that it creates a resonance destroying both the source and the destination. The Empire remains content with the slower communication.

As a result of this research, the newest faster-than-light ship is developed. Called the Tesseract, it can fold space by traveling through another dimension to reach its destination. It has the capability to revolutionize space travel. It, its blueprints, and the research that created it are immediately reported stolen by an unknown party. The scientists and guards who dealt with the Tesseract project are executed by Imperial decree.

Also, a limited form of artificial intelligence is perfected. Some computers and robots are programmed with this intelligence; they quickly earn themselves high ranks and promotions because of their abilities. Because they have not been programmed to avoid harming sentients (or because they have been programmed to do so), a few robots do kill innocents.
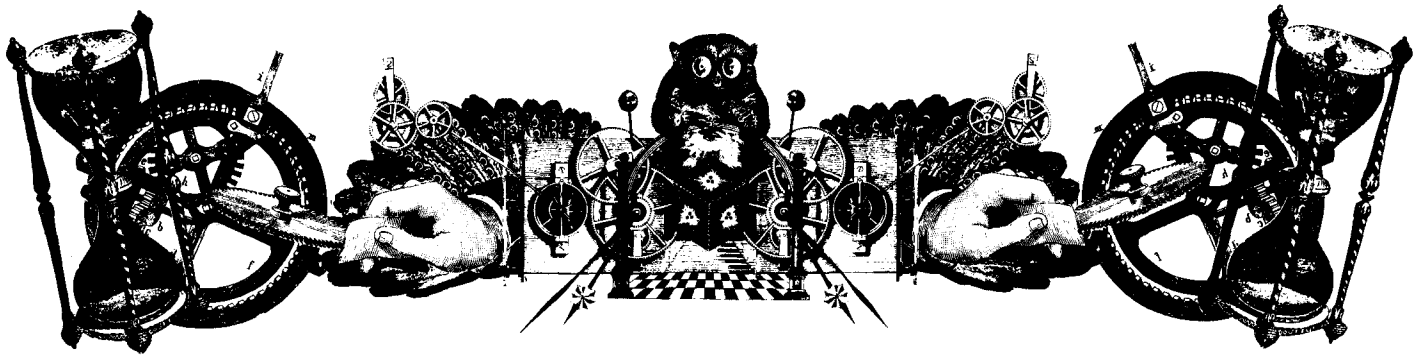
However, retaliation among the robot community is swift and sharp; the offending robots are scrapped and all their components slagged.

212.4: The Empire shows definite *evidence of a slide into decadence.* The Senate is populated by corrupt politicians, men and women who would sell their relatives if it would increase their personal power. The emphasis comes to be less on growth, both personal and societal, and more on personal pleasure. The rich get richer and the poor become poorer; intermingling between the two comes only in master-servant relationships. Discord grows, balancing the Harmony that had existed for millennia. Violent crime increases on nearly every world, and is as brutally repressed by Imperial troopers as any planetary resistance. The people become hardened to the atrocities that occur around them every day, growing more selfish and uncaring as the years pass.

Yet there are still those who work for the common good. Chiefest among these is the Emperor, who by now has become little more than a figurehead. Among many of the wealthy, the Emperor is a laughingstock. In the old days, the Emperor was to be envied and emulated. In this time, only a loyal few revere the Emperor.

314.5-600.5: The *bulk of* the Empire dissolves, from the edges *inward.* Word of a great scandal and tragedy spreads throughout the Empire, and the military attempts to seize control in the resulting unrest. The poorly planned coup takes only a few worlds; the others, though they are technically part of the Empire, suffer under lack of leadership. The worlds most loyal to the Emperor secede from this mockery of an Empire immediately; the rest take a little more time. Anarchy reigns in the places where the Empire has fallen through, while brutal Imperial servants struggle to maintain control in the places where fragments of Empire still hold sway. Their methods serve only to hasten their downfall, as the people try to shrug off the inept governance of these servants.

The Emperor flees with his family in a ship that looks remarkably like the dimly remembered Tesseract Shel-

tered by loyalists, he makes his way from world to world, trying to piece the Empire back together. A military governor on the planet Duskihas has the Emperor shot as a traitor. The Imperial family flees into space with its retinue, and is not heard from in the next millennia. Rumor tells that they plan the re-conquest of the galaxy when they have amassed enough power and loyalty from the citizens. Some wait anxiously for the return of the Emperor, while others, seeking the sizeable reward offered by their rulers, hunt down and murder those of the Imperial family who have remained in an attempt to reunite the Empire.

600.5-800.5: The Musical War. The final bastions of Imperial might, the three Colleges of Music, fall. Their petty differences have ballooned over the millennia, and their postures have become ever more belligerent. At last, freed from Imperial constraints, the Musicians are free to vent their frustrations. What ensues is the Musical War, where the Harmonians, Discordians, and Melodians devastate each other. The powers they had discovered in their centuries of research serve them well in the battles of this war; thousands die on either side, and whole planets are destroyed or sealed from the rest of the Galaxy.

800.5-200.6: Collapse *and* piracy. The former citizens of the Empire struggle to survive in an Empire-less galaxy. Some worlds destroy themselves with internal tensions; others, especially the newer colonies, die slowly because of insufficient diversity in their trade and habitat. Still others lose their vestiges of civilization, retaining only a memory of the glory of empire. A few fragments of the Empire, notably those which had sheltered those who sought the Music, withdraw into the hidden reaches of space, and disappear from common knowledge.

Only the most ruthless of worlds survive; some of these form new confederations in which to more effectively survive. Planetary systems within a few light years of one another form the strongest bonds, and develop their own currency and system of trade; interstellar trade practically collapses, except for a few intrepid merchants.
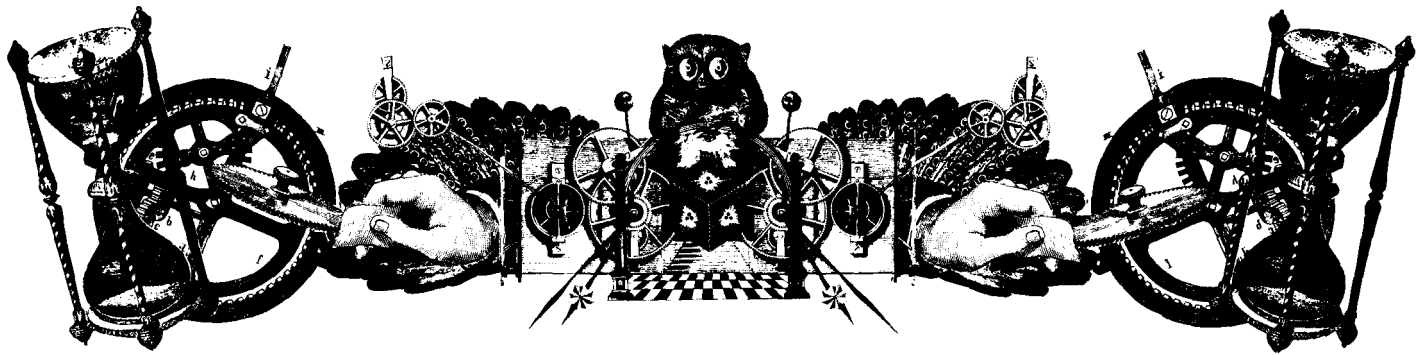
Faster-than-light drives (also known as eDrives) become rapidly less common. Planetary governments nationalize most privately-owned ships in order to build their space fleets; only those people fast enough to escape before the nationalization retain ownership of their vessels. Certain of these owners flee to the S'farna system, where the laws of Empire and confederation never took hold.

Though located on several of the major trade routes, the S'farnese guerrillas successfully avoided both Imperial tariffs and confederate rule throughout the years. Though the natives paid lip service to both, and despite the fact that Imperial governors and troops were stationed there, S'farna was never truly tamed. As the Empire crumbles, S'farna becomes known as a haven of freedom, though lawless, and many flee to its reaches to avoid the brutal tyranny of those attempting to seize power.

Naturally, the influx of so many people is bound to draw attention. Merchants seek out those who have fled to S'farna. With so many ships, it was historically inevitable that some would decide to play pirate. Pirating proves to be a lucrative business, so much so that hundreds of ships enter S'farna space with ill-gotten booty their goal. Merchants cease coming to S'farna, but the damage has been done.

289.6: The *strength of* S'farna. The pirates of S'farna join forces to become one of the few truly effective confederations in galactic space. They terrorize the nearby planets and seize control of the shipping lanes. With little effort, they crush the resistance of the paltry forces sent against them. They send forth retaliatory troops against the defiant planets. One way or another, the pirates have their way upon their sector of space.

303.6: S'farna stronghold. The reach of the S'farna pirates grows; most planets settle on tribute prices to the pirates. Those that fail to pay the tribute are blockaded and besieged until they capitulate. Over 20 miniature confederacies are destroyed in this fashion; the people begin to despair of ever being freed of the pirates' oppression.

357.6: S'farna *establishes the Pirate* Council. The terror of the spaceways becomes domesticated, a fact of life. The Pirate Code is established, preventing severe and unwarranted action without prior permission from the Pirate Council. Pirates are still allowed to act in "self-defense," but the instances of such self-defense decrease dramatically when the Pirate Council sends official observers on journeys with the worst offenders. Still, many innocent travelers are annihilated under the provisions of the "self-defense statute."

376.6: *Daisonne, daughter of King Darien Morione of the planet Morna, is born.* Princess Daisonne spurns the genteel upbringing given to most rulers of Morna, instead immersing herself in the affairs of the military. The people of Morna are shocked at her behavior, but grudgingly allow her foibles as a princess's right. Meanwhile, Darien refuses to pay the full tribute the pirates demand, claiming that it will bankrupt his planet and leave his people starving. The pirates begin a series of threats against the rebellious planet.

400.6: *S'farna* retaliates. The Pirate Council, grown tired of Darien Morione's posturings, sends a fleet to the planet Morna to take his tribute or destroy his planet. Daisonne proves herself an able commander by destroying the entire pirate fleet, leaving not even one to escape bearing news of the defeat. Content with her prowess, she heads away into space to further perfect her skills.

406.6: The Power *of Entropy.* Pirates acting on letters of marque from the Council destroy the planet Morna, razing it utterly. The Pirate King Kilraith sends his Discordian Musician to Morna. The Musician Garbell uses the Power of Entropy on Morna, blowing it into atoms. Daisonne Morione, away in space on adventures with her companions, returns to find an empty void where once her home was located. She vows revenge, and begins assembling her army.
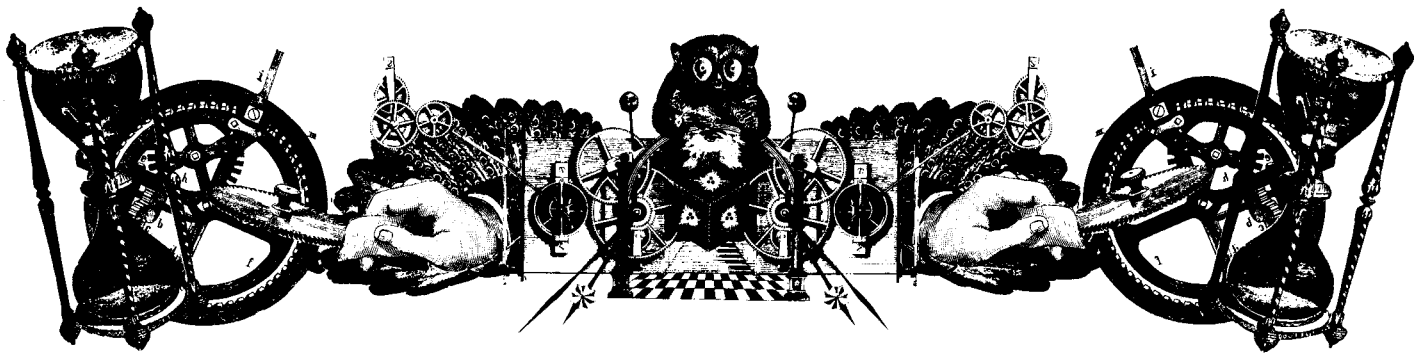
408.6: Morione revenge. With the aid of some of the friends she met while adventuring, Morione begins her revenge on the pirates. Having studied the pirates' tactics carefully, Daisonne leads a cautious fleet into heavily-patrolled territory. Her gamble and studies pay off, as she completely disrupts the pirates' patrols. The Pirate Council sets a huge price on her head, and the war begins in earnest.

409.6-434.6: The rise of Morione. Morione, using the pirates' own tactics against them, begins winning the war. Legends spring up about her; the people she is fighting for believe that she is invincible, untouchable. When she arrives on a planet to enlist aid, there is never any shortage of volunteers for her cause. The planets that had been crushed under the heels of the uncaring pirates begin to see a new hope at the end of the dark millennia. They slowly take up arms to follow Morione against her enemies, their oppressors. Their hatred quickly outweighs their fears, and the unity of the S'farna Pirates starts to crumble. The pirate fleets form immense battalions to crush the rebels; the rebels slip around and through the flotillas, wreaking havoc wherever they travel. Several planets feel the bite of the Power of Entropy; this serves only to fuel the fires of hatred.

435.6: The rout of S'farna. After a titanic battle in space and on ships, Daisonne Morione kills the Pirate King and his Musician with her bare hands. The Musician, having expended all his power in destroying planets, dies groveling at the end of a primitive monofilament knife.

After exacting her personal revenge, Morione drives the last of the pirates ahead of her. The pirates, fleeing wildly through eSpace, vanish from known space. They pass into an area of the Galaxy where even the ancient Empire did not penetrate and are never heard from again.

436.6: Establishment of the Domain. Though Morione is feted as a hero, the worlds that suffered the pirates' depredations do not repay her as she would have wished. Now that the war is over, many accuse her of destroying the last stable confederacy in space; some even go so far as to try to assassinate her in bids to make sure they and their regimes are the ones who rise to fill the vacuum of power left with the elimination of the pirates. Morione survives these attempts on her life, as well as the attempts to discredit her; there are too many who remember her legend and who see her as their savior to allow these others to triumph.

After a suitable period of celebration for their freedom, Morione proposes a new government. This government will, of course, be headed by her and her companions, since these beings were the ones responsible for the liberation of the planets. Within her proposal lies the idea that the government should be divided into three parts: the Empire, the Bureaucracy, and the Scions.

She and her descendants would take the role of Emperor, until such time as they proved unfit to rule. However, in her bitterness at the perceived rejections of some of the people, she builds safeguards into the system to ensure that none but her family will ever sit on the Celestial Throne. Certain of those who had aided her in her quest to destroy the Pirates of S'farna would be granted noble titles and dominion over planetary systems. Finally, to deal with the mundane problems of the Domain, the Bureaucracy would maintain an office in each Scions' planetary holdings.

The Morione Domain, as it has come to be called, would be established around a strong, central theme of protection. Each planet would pay a tithe to its Scion for protection, which would in turn pay taxes to the Empire for its maintenance. In return, each planet would earn the right to send two Representatives each year to the Conclave, an annual meeting with the Emperor. Few planets decline this offer; those that do are placed under military governance.

470.6: Beginnings of tyranny. Daisonne Morione dies; cause of death is unknown. Some say she died of old age, while others claim responsibility for assassinating her. Some of the Scions take this opportunity to try to revolt and seize power for themselves.
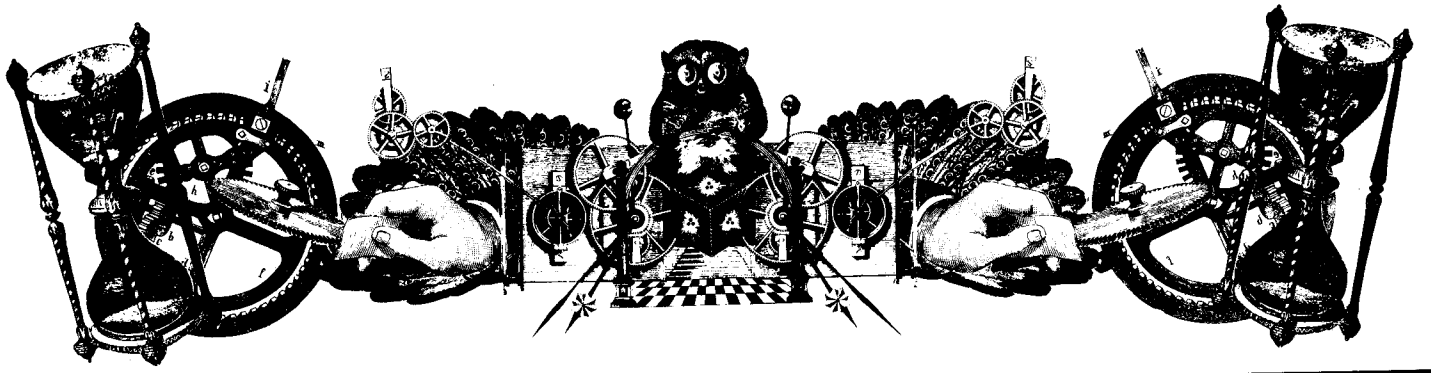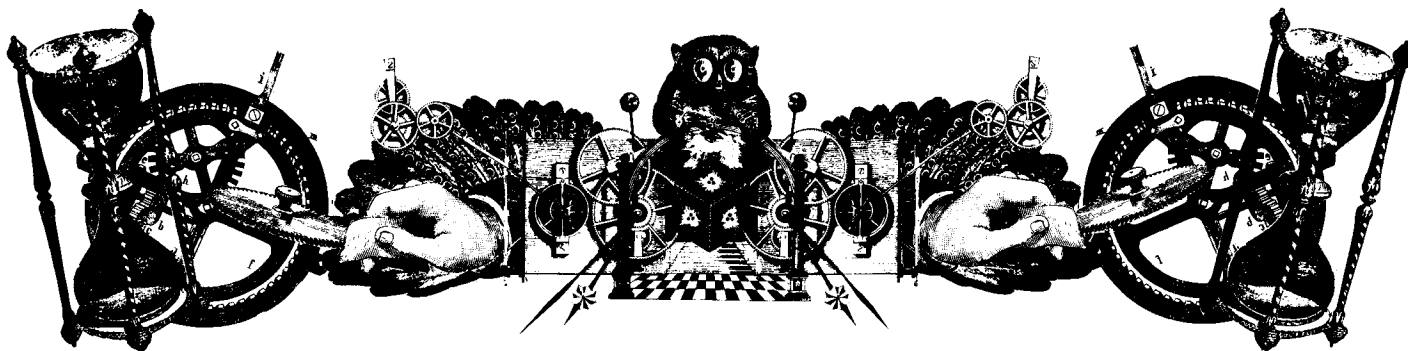
Though the revolt fails and the insurgents are executed, the new Emperor realizes the danger of his position if he cannot secure the loyalty of his underlings. To correct this situation, he demands hostages each year from the Scions. These hostages take the place of the Conclave; the Emperor transmits his yearly wishes through the returning hostages.

525.6: Corruption sets *in.* The Domain grows ever larger as colonists move into areas forgotten over the passage of time. The central hold of the Domain begins to weaken as the Domain grows larger. Before the expansion, the Emperor could oversee the pressing demands of each of the planets that could not be met by the Scions in charge. Now, as the Domain expands, the Morione Emperor delegates more responsibility to his advisors. The advisors, in turn, give more responsibility to those below them, and corruption began to creep through the once-pristine Domain.

580.6: Birth of the Resistance. By now, nearly everyone who remembers the days of Daisonne Morione is dead. The first stirrings of Resistance begin, as the people begin to forget the good things Morione did for them, focusing on the bad things of the present. Several bombings of Bureaucratic buildings destroy communications with those systems for a time; the Emperor demands that the rebel leaders give themselves over to justice. When they refuse, he has his fleet destroy any suspected hiding places within those systems as a warning. This serves only to demonstrate the callous nature of the Emperor, the rebels claim. Most of the citizens of the Domain disregard the rebels, but a few more take heed with each passing year.

Meanwhile, scientists and scholars are busy rebuilding what remains of the ancients' technology, hoping to decipher some of the techniques the old Empire used in its science. Though progress is slow, they can reliably reconstruct much of the less arcane technology of the ancients. It is hoped that their progress will bring about a new era of peace and prosperity.

601.6: Treachery; rise of the Resistance. The heir to the fifth Emperor is brutally assassinated by his younger brother. Regretfully, the Emperor has his second son executed for crimes against the state. It is only years later that the ailing Emperor discovers the second son was framed by the remaining heir; it is far too late for the Emperor to beget another heir, and so he sorrowfully passes his line to the traitor. When word of this leaks, the Resistance sees a drastic rise in popularity. The military bombs several more planets in efforts to quell the rising anti-Imperial and anti-Domain sentiment.

713.6: The Circuitry War. Computers and robots, granted sentience eons ago, somehow override their restraints and begin slaughtering organic creatures. Sentient computers aboard starships and robots serving people in power begin a relentless march of destruction against their former masters. Battle-droids destroy all those sent near them, and rampage through populated areas, annihilating any organic life they find. To protect themselves from these robots, people begin destroying any electronic equipment they own, in fears that it will turn on them. The army of the Domain mobilizes for war, but stripped of all the high-tech gadgetry that had been its hallmark for years.

714.6-745.6: Musical triumph; sentient computers outlawed. The Circuitry War rages across the galaxy. Several human outposts are burned to cinders when robotic battlecruisers appear; meanwhile, all known robot production facilities are sabotaged in an attempt to keep the robots from producing any more soldiers.

At last, the organic beings triumph, in part because of their ability with the Music. The robots, unable to cope with such an unpredictable force, are eventually destroyed by a concerted force of Musicians, including Harmonians, Discordians, and Melodian. Once the Musicians are satisfied that the robot threat has passed, they again turn on each other.

As a result of the Circuitry Wars, all new computers developed are carefully analyzed to make sure they
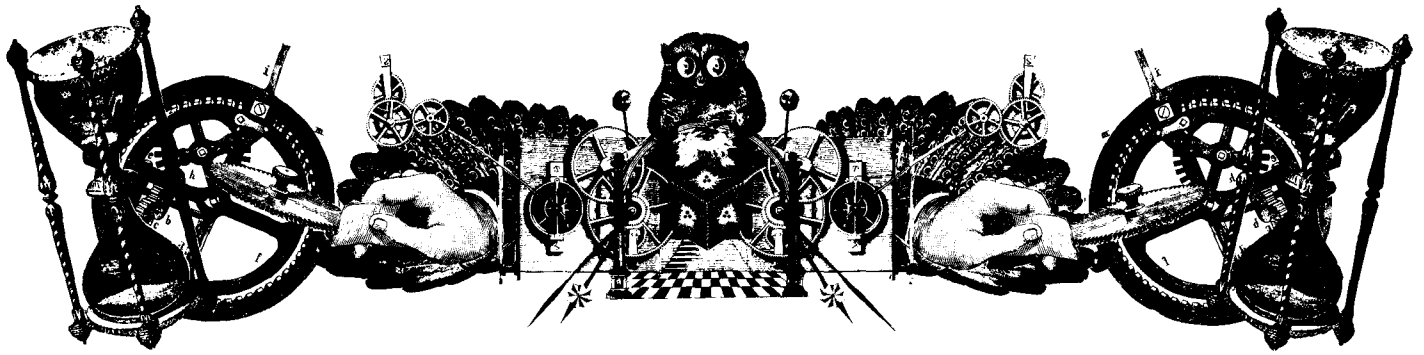
contain no capacity for sentience; this ensures that computers become far less powerful and common than formerly. All battledroids are destroyed; ownership of one is a capital crime. Most robots extant are modified, and used only in repair and schematic areas, in areas requiring human supervision. Electronics are restored to their former status, but are more carefully policed, to avoid any hints of sentience cropping up.

Legends and rumors abound of rogue robots and computers seeking liberation for their people, nursing a quiet hatred for the Organics. Despite the best efforts of Domain propagandists, these rumors are impossible to dispel. After all, not all of the rebelling androids have been accounted for. Perhaps, like the pirates of S'farna, these rogues fled into the uncharted regions of the galaxy, there to create improved models of themselves with which to bring the rule of the Organics crashing down around their protoplasmic ears. Finally, the Scions, tired of hearing this rabble-stirring garbage, impose a ban on any who propagate this nonsense.

802.6: The *Passive Restraint Modifier.* Robots grow back to some sentience and acceptance after Gard Sayn invents the Passive Restraint Modifier, a device designed to prevent robots from ever assaulting human beings and other sentients. Though some anti-robot extremists attempt to discredit Dr. Sayn's discovery by modifying the PRMs, robots continue to make a comeback.

913.6: *The present day.* Resistance against the now-thoroughly-corrupt Morione Domain has gained steam. The Domain responds to isolated rebellions with massive, overpowering force. Public opinion is beginning to turn against the Domain. The Domain remains calm; after all, who has the power? The Scions begin stepping up the policing of their subjects, both increasing the taxes and the invasions of personal privacy. The Resistance is growing by leaps and bounds. Now is the time for all sentients in the Morione Domain to make a choice: fight with the Domain, or against it?
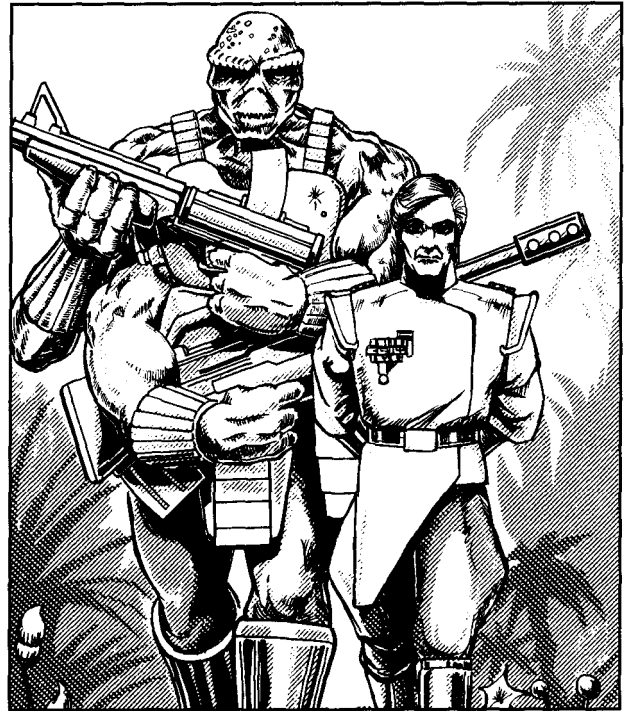
On other fronts, danger has emerged from the unexplored areas of the galaxy. A war brews just past Galactic Core as beings with strange technology and an uncanny grasp of human tactics conduct raid after raid on Morione holdings. Some say that the ships are emblazoned with a device that resembles that of the ancient pirates of S'farna, though the creatures that attack look little like any of the known species.

Clearly, this is an interesting time to be alive. Whether this is a curse or a blessing, few can say. However, adventure is everywhere, for those who know where to look. The only question is, who is brave enough (or stupid enough) to look for it?
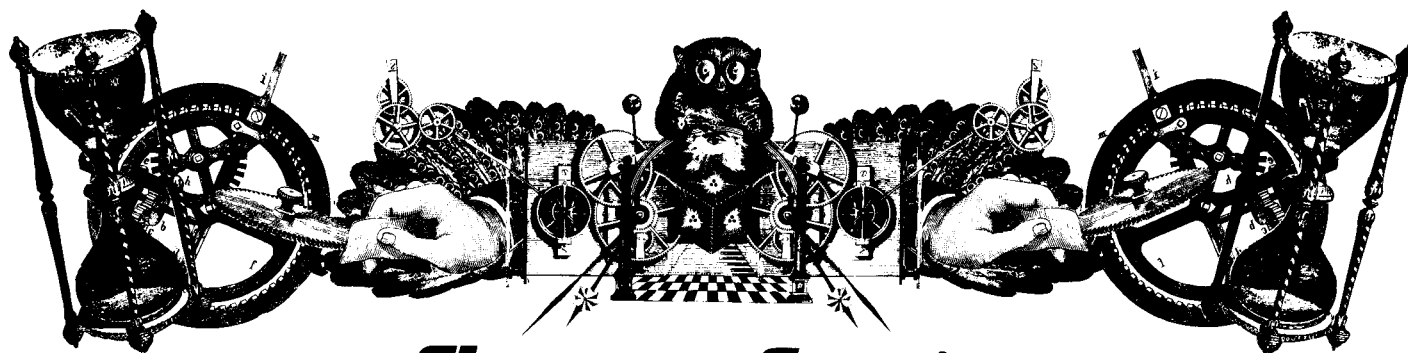
"Hey, pal, it's not that 1 go looking for trouble. It's just that when 1 see a Morione cruiser heading for me at half-light with its guns blazing, 1 tend to panic. Okay, maybe 1 was carrying some contraband. Maybe I was violating a few *of* the Domain's rules. So 1 ran. 1 blew through the spaceways. How 1 was 1 to know that they had gotten my registration? Huh? Answer me that, smarty boy. 1 mean, going years in this business without getting tagged, I figured 1 was safe, so *of* course 1 was gonna run.

"Okay, so we're wanted now. But doesn't it add spice to life, knowing that we're on the run? *No?* Sorry, kid. It's too late to change it now. You're stuck with me ... unless you want to go back and try to convince those Moriones that you were sucked into this without your consent.

"No? In that case, shut up and enjoy it. *If* we're going to be outlaws, let's do it with style. 1 don't suppose you know how to get in touch with the Resistance?"

　　　　　　　　　-feral Dante, suspected smuggler

L ife inside The Galactos Barrier game universe is far different from that in most places. Quick thinkers, scheming intriguers, and those who succeed by sheer force of will are the norm rather than the exception. The actors in this drama are larger than life, with ready wit or blaster, as the case may be.

When you create a character for the universe of The Galactos Barrier, generate the scores as described in the "System Guide" section of this book. The following steps should help to guide you along the path of character creation.

# Generating Attributes
Base Values

The "System Guide" describes how to generate the base values for your character. That is, assign the dice from each ability pool to the two attributes in the pool. Do this for each pool. Distribute the 7 "free dice" among the attributes, roll the total number of dice, record the resulting number for each attribute, and then distribute the bonuses for the rankings you have assigned to each ability pool (15 for the first, 10 for the second, 5 for the third, and 0 for the fourth). Finally, add the base adjustment to each attribute (described below).

There is one **notable exception to the standard rules of character generation:**

PCs (and some NPCs) can take up to 6 dice in three attributes, as opposed to the usual 5 dice maximum. This allocation is not in addition to the other dice the PC might have; it is simply an expansion of the choices available to a beginning PC. This simulates the ability necessary to respond quickly to the various dangers posed by the universe, the increased psychic potential of every character, and the general heroic aspects of the universe. The Music (fully explained in the eponymous chapter) flows through all of existence, and is reflected in the higher potential of the characters of the universe.

Base Adjustment

Most universes require a base adjustment to ability scores. When creating a character in The Galactos Barrier, add 25 to every attribute score, in every ability pool. Because the PCs are at least slightly more exceptional than the standard population of the universe around them, the standard adjustment for NPCs is only 15. However, there will be exceptions to this rule, especially in the case of extremely important NPCs.
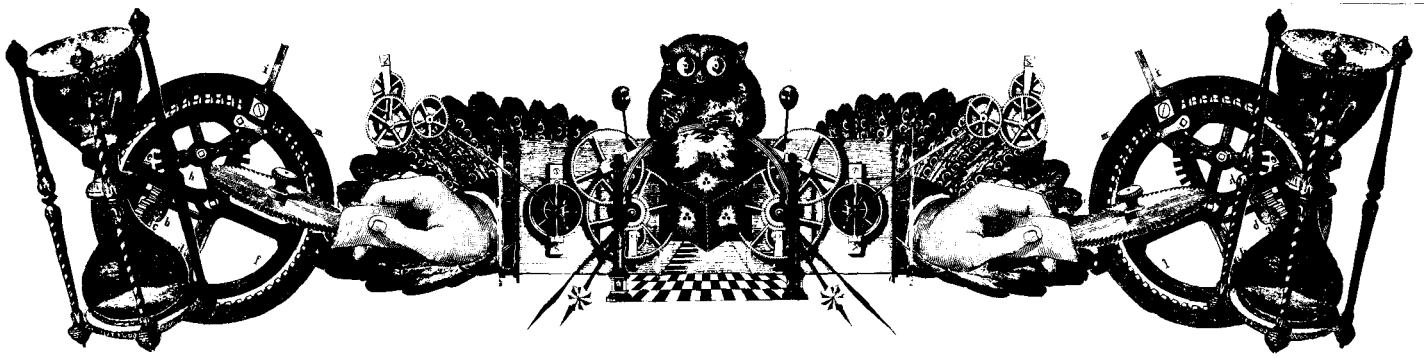
Stamina and Body Points

Stamina points for all characters, PCs as well as NPCs, in *The Galactos Barrier* are equal to *1/3* the total of the character's Willpower plus Reflexes. Total body points are equal to *1/3* the character's Fitness.

Species

Next, choose a species and gender. There are three broad spectrums of species from which to choose: human, alien, and robot.

The Moriones' galaxy (for such is how they think of it, though they have not yet discovered all its secrets) is an abundantly lively one. Most of the life-supporting planets have developed civilizations, whether they are colonies from the old Empire or civilizations in their own right. Some are naturally less developed because of the circumstances surrounding their evolution, but they exist nonetheless, as long as you look hard enough.

Most of the sentient species in the Morione Domain are humanoid, if not outright human. Indeed, the dominant species of the Domain is humanity. There are, however, some notable exceptions, such as the slathorp, a breed of amoebic shape-changers. Others appear as creatures of nightmare, figments of delusional minds. There are still more in the unexplored regions of the galaxy, waiting to be discovered.

Descriptions of various species are provided below. It is not necessary to choose one of these; you can create one, provided you have your GM's permission. Simply follow the guidelines after the explanations of the various species below.

Gender

Most of the known breeds reproduce sexually; that is, they have both males and females of the species. However, there are some who reproduce in other ways, being made asexually, created, or formed in some way unknown to humanity.

Player characters in The *Galactos Barrier* may select male, female, both, or neither. Asexual crea- tures fall under the "both" category, as they create their children themselves. Robots and certain other races are classified under "neither," as the only way they can reproduce is by more logical methods of creation. Reproduction for robots is an actual act of manufacture, the assemblage of parts taking place at once, rather than stretching out over any significant span of time.

Language

Though the Morione Domain is full of species that evolved on wildly different worlds from extensively varied ancestors, language is no barrier to communi- cation. Though each species necessarily developed its own tongue before the Empire ever existed, the language barrier was erased with the introduction of the Diode, a universal translator. The Diode, described more fully in the "Technology and Money" chapter, provides an instantaneous translation of over 400 lan- guages, including local dialects.

However, the Diode grew ever rarer as Imperial Common became the standard of language. Soon, every species became familiar, if not entirely fluent, with Imperial Common. Since Imperial Common, or I. C., combines elements of over 100 local languages, the various alien species were united in their com- plaint that the language is hard to reproduce with what passes for vocal cords. Eventually, despite these grievances, Imperial Common grew to be the lan- guage of choice throughout the Empire, and remained the standard during the long, dark years before the establishment of the Domain.

Though many species retain their old languages from a sense of pride, they still teach their youngsters Imperial Common to make sure the species does not suffer genocide from those who no longer understand their language. Chances are, any space traveler will feel at home linguistically if he, she, or it lands on a world that was once part of the Empire, even if it is not yet part of the Domain. Of course, there is always the possibility that the unlucky spacefarer has stum- bled upon a world that has not yet been discovered, and even worse, is inhabited by hostile natives....
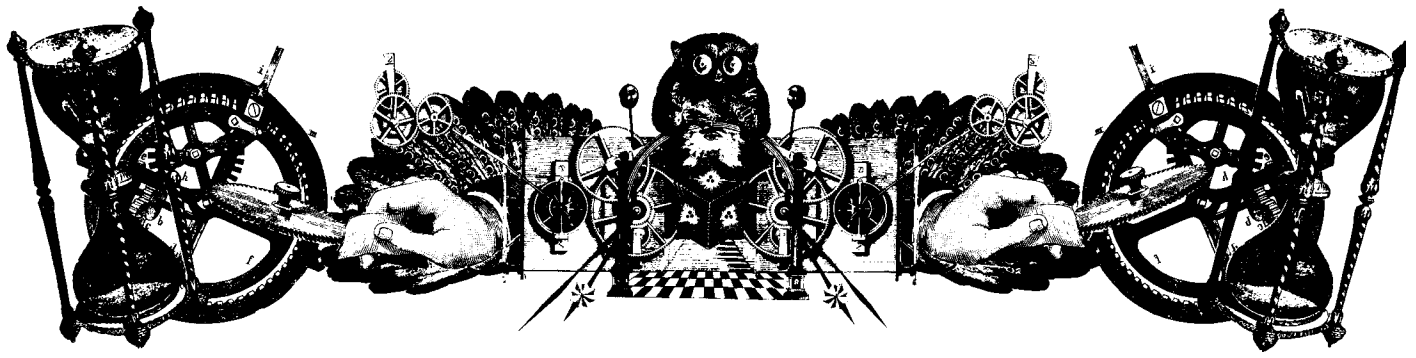
Sample Alien Species

It is vital that the GM and players remember that these are only a sample few of the alien species who populate the universe of *The Galactos Barrier.* There are literally hundreds more, each of whom awaits a fuller description at the hands of the GM or creation by a player. A list of suggested appearances follows the sample aliens.

Name: The name of the species in question.
Planet of Origin: The planet from which their species sprang, as well as the star system in which the planet travels. This also includes a brief description of the home planet.
Minimum Height: Some species loom over the rest, while others are comparatively squat. These numbers show the minimum height of the species, with a modifier to include its tallest members. The measurements use the metric system (one meter is approximately 3.3 feet).
Minimum Weight: Likewise, some species are exceptionally slender where other species are ponderously huge. The numbers here give the minimum weight for a member of this species, and include a modifier to increase that weight to the average or greater for the species. One kilogram equals 2.2 pounds.
Appearance: The general looks of the species. They may be tall and furry, small and slimy, or any mix the GM deems appropriate to the planetary conditions from which the creatures sprang.
Racial **Quirks:** This section includes any distinguishing characteristics that are not covered under Appearance, such as prejudices, nervous twitches, temperament, and general outlook.
Special Abilities: Any abilities the species may have achieved that are not indicated in any of the other categories listed.
Modifiers: The adjustments to the character's attributes, such as Fitness, Intuition, and Willpower, with positive or negative modifiers. Each species is balanced so that it does not give a total advantage over the others. Each, however, has its special abilities that give it certain benefits in places where others are less gifted.
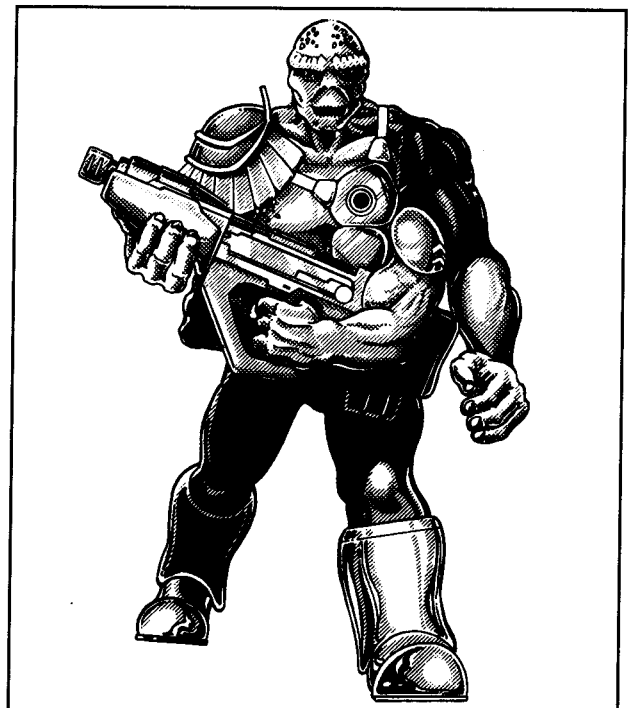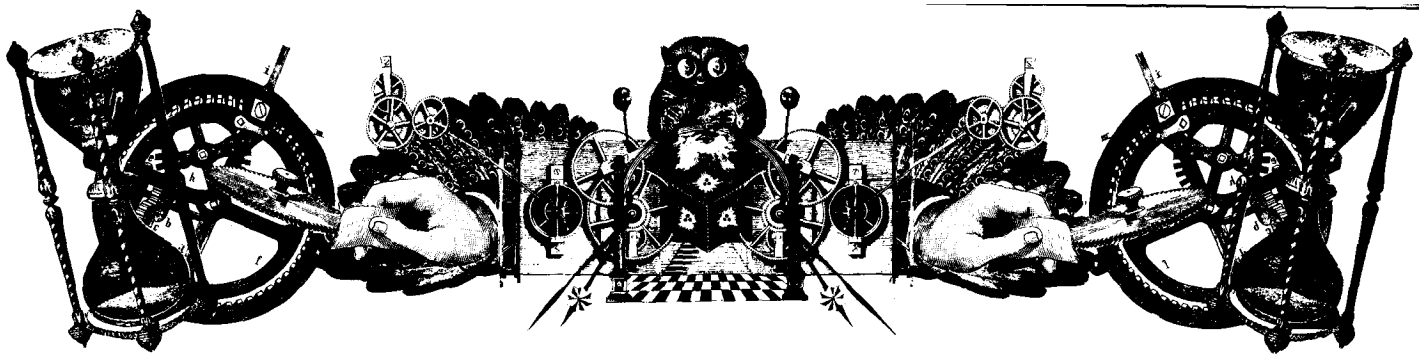
G'rax

Planet of Origin: Carelax, a heavy-gray, desert planet in the Soriak system. Soriak, a small, cold star, provided little light and heat to the planet. The g'rax evolved from a species of warm-blooded, lizard-like beings, with tough skins to keep out the cold and maximize the heat produced by their bodies.
Minimum Height: 2 meters + .1-.8 meters.
Minimum Weight: 200 + 1 d6x10 kilos.
Appearance: The g'rax are a large, muscular species. They have basically humanoid features, but with some changes. The g'rax's purple skin is scaly, like that of a lizard. Their small eyes are nearly hidden under their craggy foreheads; their mouths are lipless, hiding their sharp teeth. However, the most noticeable difference is their four arms, which the g'rax can use to great effect. They have been known to utilize four weapons at a time, though this does cause some difficulty in aiming and firing. They are masters of physical warfare.

Racial Quirks: On the other hand, mental warfare is not a g'rax strong point. G'rax tend to be a bit slower than the average sentient. If someone explains their duties to them carefully, however, they make fine guards. Once they have grasped a command, they carry it out with fierce determination.

Special Abilities: Because of their four arms, g'rax also gain extra attacks. Their brains have none of the left/right dualism that most sentient species take for granted. Being brought up with extra arms, they can use them naturally, without confusion. Though they are less adept at wielding many melee weapons, they can use two ranged weapons without penalty, and some use up to four with ease. Those with Reflexes of 65 or better can do so easily; those with Reflexes of less than 65 can use four weapons, but take a -10 penalty to hit for each weapon past the second.

Modifiers: G'rax gain a bonus of +10 to Physique to reflect their natural toughness and their additional arms. However, they suffer a substantial penalty to both their Influence and their Intellect. They take a -5 penalty for both attributes in influence (Charm and Position), while suffering -15 to their Intellect (Learning and Intuition).

Ichthatus

Planet of Origin: The ichthati (singular ichthatus) claim the water world of Kael as home. They became amphibious several hundred thousands years ago, and set to re-forming their planet with a will. Kael's oceans were and continue to be extremely high in iron, the beaches of the planet rimmed with rusted water. For any other creature, the heavy waters might prove poisonous; for the ichthatus, the waters gave life.

Minimum Height: Ichthati are rather short, with a minimum height of only 1.25 meters. They grow only to a maximum of 1.5 meters tall.

Minimum Weight: The smallest ichthatus was measured at 75 kilos. The largest is just twice that, affording a wide range of variety for PC ichthati.

Appearance: As fits their aquatic origin, the ichthati resemble their ancestors the fish rather closely. They have a crest atop their heads which runs along their spines; the crest inflates when they are angry or otherwise aroused, and lies flat when they are afraid or submissive. Their faces also have evolved six flesh "whiskers" around the mouth. They are scaly and gape-eyed, their mouths full of needle-sharp teeth. To some, they look constantly surprised; to others they look constantly dangerous.

They are amphibious and bipedal, equally at home out of the water as in. Their webbed hands are useful both in holding tools and in swimming. They have no tail, but their webbed toes give them all the leverage they need to maneuver through the water.

Ichthati are hermaphroditic creatures, changing from male to female as need dictates. The dominant one in any ichthian relationship takes the female role, bearing the children and raising them as it wishes.

Their hard scales are silvery-red in color, and are covered with a thin sheen of a slimy mucous that protects them from various parasites, as well as quick dehydration. The scales reflect light, though not enough to deflect a laser beam from its target.
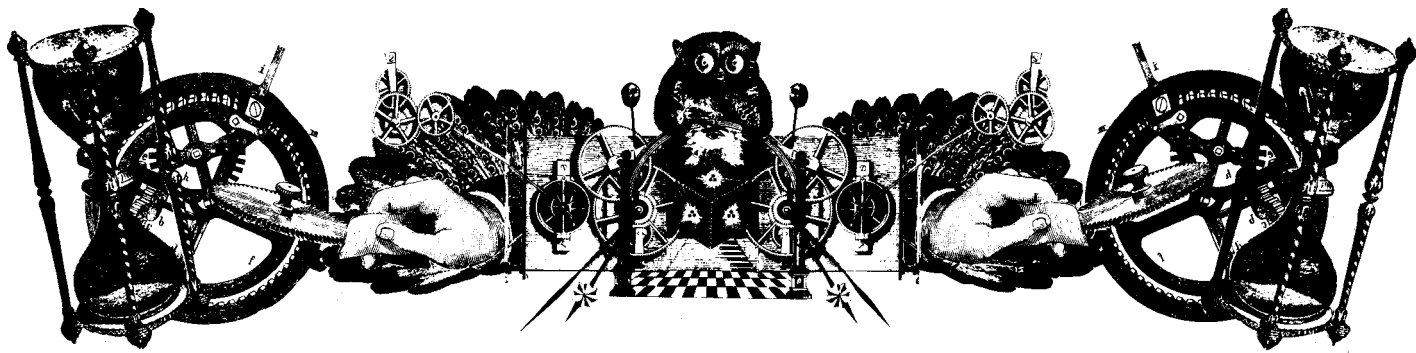
Racial Quirks: Ichthati are animalistic in nature, knowing only anger, curiosity, fear, hunger, and dominance. This primitive quality makes them fearsome opponents, for there is little about them that humans can understand. The drives they have are basic, yet their technology and their intelligence is too impressive to ignore.

When outside their home planets, ichthati travel in iron-heavy water, which helps them maintain their silvery iridescence. If they must emerge from their ships, they wear "wetsuits," specially designed to keep "hard" moisture flowing over their scales. They do not need to wear any sort of breather, for they have evolved to be fully amphibious creatures. Their gills/lungs can process pure air as easily as they can process water, though they prefer to breathe water whenever possible.

Special Abilities: As mentioned, ichthati are amphibious, breathing both water and air with equal facility. They require one minute when changing from water to air to fully adjust to the rapid oxygenation, as well as to void their lungs of excess water. They can initiate no other actions in this time, though they can defend themselves from attacks if the need arises.

The ichthati's needle-sharp teeth give them a ferocious weapon in hand-to-hand combat. Using teeth in combat requires that the ichthatus grab hold of its opponent; if the grab is successful, the ichthatus can use its teeth the next combat round. They do 1 d6 points of damage, and have a Lethality of 1.

In order to make up for their bad hearing, the ichthati have developed a sense of touch that is paralleled by none of the known species. Their entire body, while covered with metallic scales, is extremely sensitive, enough that the scales themselves can pick up on the vibrations as sound waves. Thus, though they have no ears, they "hear" as well as any human, provided the sound waves are directed at them.

Their whiskers serve both as feelers and as "sonar" emitters; the echolocation clicks serve to tell them of nearby obstacles and openings. This sonar is equally effective in water as in air, to a range of about 100 meters. It functions in darkness or light; the ichthati need not see their target to know where it is.

Modifiers: Another reason ichthati developed such an incredible kinesthetic sense is because their eyesight is among the worst of the known species. According to humans, ichthati are functionally blind; their eyesight functions only to a range of 20 meters, the last 1 0 of which are very blurry. And, of course, the ichthati have no ears with which to hear.

Their sonar is by no means an all-powerful location device. Though they can home in incredibly well on tiny noises, and maneuver based only on their echolocation, they can be led astray by sonic constructs. That is, a clever sonic engineer can hide passages from echolocation, and make impenetrable walls seem open. The ichthati have been doing it to each other for millennia; other species are discovering more about this sonic engineering every year.

The ichthati are cold-blooded, as are most fish-like creatures. Thus, they function slowly, if at all, on colder worlds; since their metabolism is directly related to the temperature, they are far more subject to the whims of the climate than most other creatures.

Ichthati are also subject to dehydration if they are kept out of their wetsuits for longer than two hours. Beginning in the second hour out of water, they lose 5 Stamina Points per hour; when their Stamina runs out, they begin losing Body Points at the same rate. When their Body Points run out, the ichthati expire.

Finally, ichthati require the water to be high in iron content. Though they stop losing Stamina when immersed in any water, they lose Reflexes and Fitness at the rate of 2 per hour if the water is not salty and heavily inundated with iron. Their scales begin to slough off, leaving the water milky and dirty.

Lupiral

Planet of Origin: The lupirals hail from the planet Mk'om, a mountainous world of stunningly harsh beauty. Although the planet does not seem to be suited for bearing life, it produced a magnificent specimen in the form of the lupiral.

Minimum Height: The lupirals generally grow to a height of 1.5 meters, though some get to be as tall as 1.75 meters when they reach their full growth.
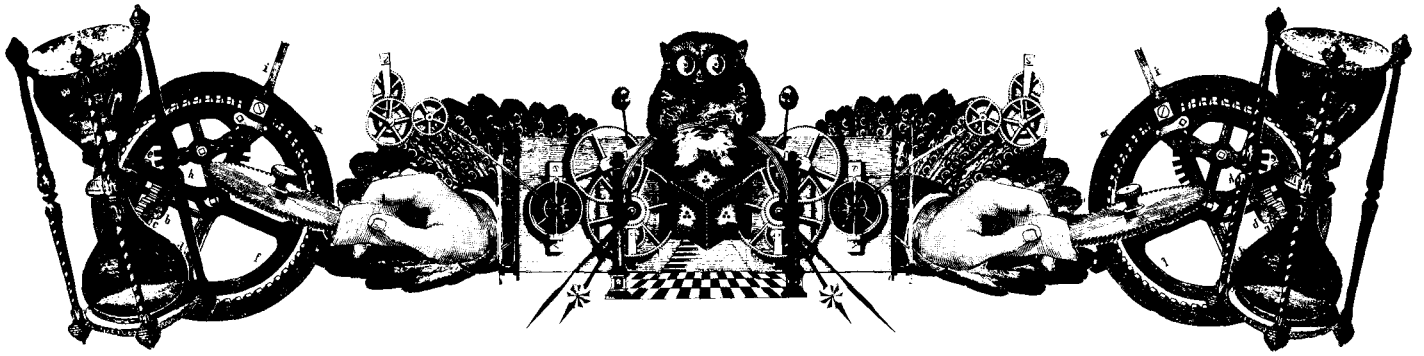
Minimum Weight: The lupirals are a fairly compact species, their musculature suited well for the constant ups and downs of their native planet. They can weigh as much as 150 kilograms, though the average is generally around 200 kilos.

Appearance: The lupirals are covered with a thick gray fur, even to the tips of their pointed, upright ears. They resemble nothing so much as the wolf of modern-day Earth, though this would have to be a wolf that could walk on its hind legs, if need be, and speak intelligibly. Also, the wolf in question would of necessity have developed paws with opposable thumbs, capable of complex manipulations.

The lupirals, though they are technically quadrupeds, can easily stand on their hind legs when the mood strikes them. However, their evolution has guided them along a path where speed and balance matter far more than reaching objects in high places. Still, the prey that feels it can escape by climbing is in for a surprise.

The lupirals' pointed teeth are ideally suited for rending prey or other offensive purposes. Unfortunately, the lupirals have lost the claws one would have expected; in their evolution, the tools they could produce proved to be far more useful than the claws. Lupirals still maintain traces of a tail, though it is more vestigial than useful. Their legs bend in the opposite direction from humans', giving them a loping gait that affords both great springing and excellent running potential.

Racial Quirks: Lupirals, perhaps because of their ancient hunting technique, have developed a curious pack mentality. They work together to achieve their goals and never let intra-pack divisiveness destroy their unity. Instead, they have developed a dominance pattern; when one lupiral feels that he or she is powerful and smart enough to take command, that lupiral challenges the leader of the pack, the alpha. When the challenge is issued, the alpha must respond or lose the dominant position. However, as the challenged, the alpha may choose the means of determining dominance. This can range from the traditional paw-to-paw struggle to boardgames of chance and strategy.

The method of combat usually determines the pack's direction until the next struggle. For example, a melee combat indicates that the pack is on its way to using pure force to achieve its objectives, while a game of chance means that the leader will be relying on luck and intuition for guidance through the coming times.

This pack mentality extends to lupirals who leave their old packs (or who are exiled). Such lupirals usually impose this method of living on their new comrades (creating an alpha where there may not have been one before, like the lupiral's new captain or village leader), who must then adjust to the lupiral's worldview. Those who refuse to participate in this ritual are simply assumed to be of less status than the lupiral, who will treat these new packmates as inferior.

Special Abilities: Lupiral have exceptional speed when running. All lupiral characters add 25% of their base Movement to their final Movement Rate; in effect, having a Movement Rate of 125% compared to a non-lupiral character.
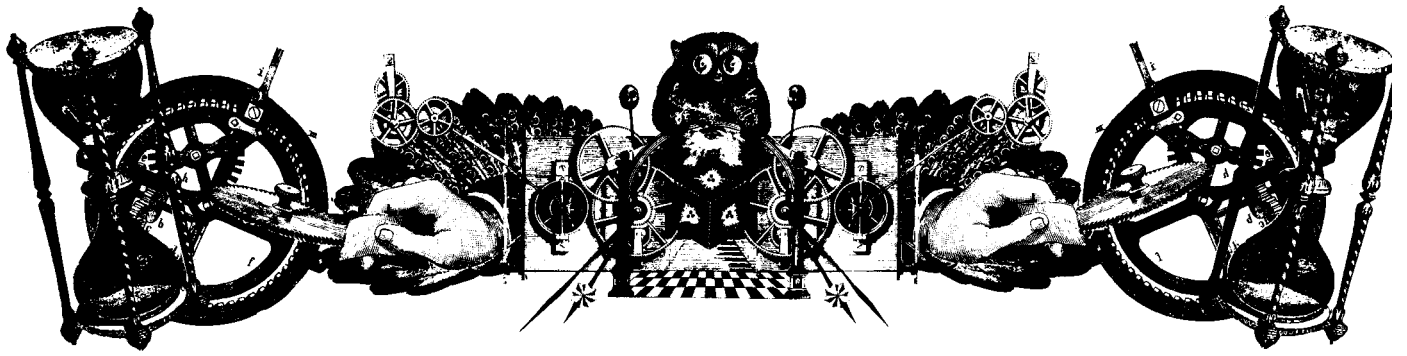
Additionally, lupirals have a keen sense of hearing. They can clearly understand words being spoken in whispers up to 50 meters away; however, this requires that there be no background noise anywhere near the listening lupiral nor the speakers. Lupirals cannot focus their hearing to a single point, ignoring all other noise.

Modifiers: Because they rely on their alpha for leadership, lupirals tend not to be strong-willed, nor do they develop a greater sensitivity to the universe around them. Thus, lupirals suffer a -15 adjustment to their Psyche, and a -10 to their Willpower. If they ever ascend to the alpha position, the modifier to their Willpower disappears for as long as they are dominant; however, they never lose the penalty to Psyche.

Their hearing is both a blessing and a curse. They can hear for great distances, and thus make ideal spies. On the other hand, loud noises tend to startle them and leave them deafened for a time. People who suspect lupiral spies often randomly explode small sonar bombs to keep the lupirals from hearing the most important part of the conversation.

Orn

Planet of Origin: The orns dominate the forest world of Chypur, building great nest cities in the upper branches of the 200-meter trees.

Minimum Height: Orns are tall and slender, usually reaching a height of 2 meters. Their height modifier is 1 d2 x 0.25.

Minimum Weight: The orns are slightly built, their bones hollow to keep them aloft while they glide. The minimum weight for an orn is only 50 kilograms, with a modifier of 2d10 extra kilos.

Appearance: The orns are an avian/humanoid species, their features sharp and aquiline. Their eyes are set in the sides of their head, yet far enough forward that this positioning gives them good peripheral and forward vision. Their faces are those of a bird of prey: sleek, elegant, yet somehow showing an air of cruelty. Though their beaks have no teeth, they are sharp enough to rend flesh, if need be.
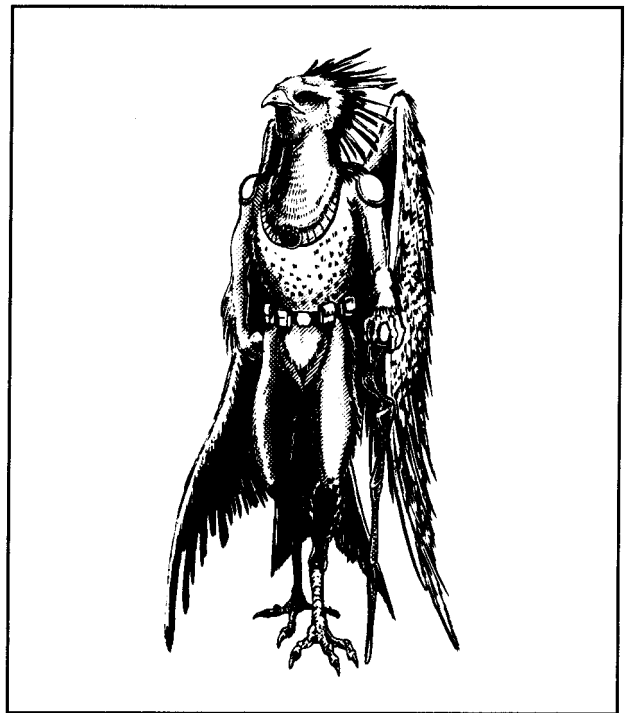
Their bodies are covered in feathers, from head to leg. Their arms are as strong as most other humanoids, able to lift heavy weights and swing a stout club. Their legs, though thinner than most species', can bear the entire weight of the body, and possess good thigh musculature, able to lift the orn into flight with a single leap. Their legs end in a three-toed foot, each toe tipped with a sharp talon.

Their most impressive feature, whether folded or extended, is their wings. Each of the great wings extends about 3 meters, giving the orns a 6.5-meter wingspan (including the shoulders). The powerful wings can keep an orn soaring for several hours, and are maneuverable enough that few orns ever suffer a collision.

Racial Quirks: Theirs is a fierce culture, one in which combat skills are prized above all else. Their view of life is one in which the warrior reigns supreme; any problem can be solved by the application of enough power. At the same time, they are strangely gentle toward those they trust. Never in
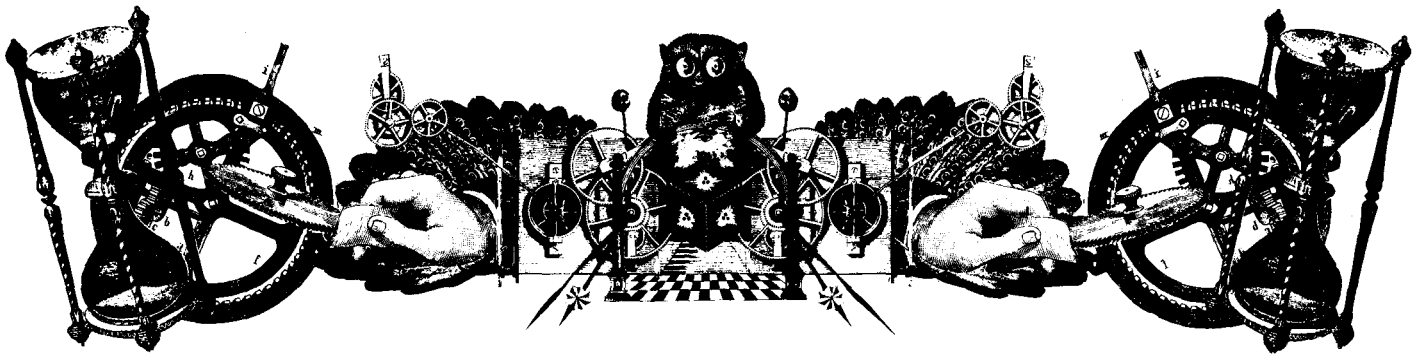
known history has an orn city fallen to civil unrest, for those from the same nest can always trust each other. This view has expanded to include the entire orn species; once they understood that other species existed in the universe, they immediately ceased their in-fighting.

Once in a great while, an orn will adopt a member of another species as a nestling. This responsibility means that the orn regards this other as another orn, one to be totally trusted with the life of all orns. If this responsibility is ever betrayed, all orns consider the traitor to be fair game, no matter where the betrayer has gone. The orns will hunt that one even into the Imperial Court.

Orns live for the hunt. It is one of the ways in which they prove their ability. Their keen eyesight proves a great advantage in this; they can see a small shape clearly up to 1 kilometer. Because of this, they are very much in demand as mercenaries, both as warriors and scouts.

Their quick reflexes give them a very nervous appearance. Orns are very rarely motionless. If they are, it's a good bet that they are either asleep or dead. Their brains constantly transmit signals to their wakened bodies. It's a disconcerting habit, but one learns to live with it, just as one learns to accept the grating squawk of orn speech.

Most orns cannot abide the dark. Though they know that it is part of the natural cycle, they fear it and what it brings. This is an attitude from their distant past, when giant cats roamed the planet of Chypur at night, bringing death even to orns hidden in their trees. Orn leaders are those who have conquered their fear of the dark, in memory of those who helped destroy the nocturnal hunters.

Special Abilities: Orns, naturally, can fly. Though they cannot maintain a flight for longer than three hours under optimal conditions, these three hours can cover a good distance. The speed at which they travel is roughly 75 kph, though this speed varies among the stronger orns. Each 10 Fitness points increases the speed by 1 kph. The speed also varies depending on wind conditions, whether the orn is climbing, diving, or remaining level, and how high

the orn flies. Orns cannot remain more than 2 km above ground for more than 15 minutes.

The talons on an orn's feet and hands can do considerable damage to opponents. The talons are sharp enough to draw blood and kill small creatures. Fortunately for the forest creatures of Chypur, the orn have found new enemies and new prey among the populaces of other worlds. The claws do 1 d6 points of damage, with a Lethality of **2.**

Modifiers: Orns gain a bonus of +10 to hit with rifle stunners, because of their familiarity with these weapons. In the ancient days, back when orn hunted orn, they used these weapons on their opponents to make them fall from the sky. This familiarity has extended to the modern day, where the Orn use the weapons against any who attempt to use the air against their nests or their employers.

Orns gain a bonus of +5 to hit with other ranged weapons. Because of their keen eyesight and quick reflexes, orns can aim and fire most modern firearms with a greater degree of accuracy than many.

However, orns suffer some penalties. Few people regard them with any affection or respect. Both their Charm and Position attributes are modified by -15 points to reflect the negative reactions most people have to orns.

Though they are a species of warriors, orns are not a physically powerful species. The hollow bones and light build of an orn are not conducive to building a muscle-bound species. Their power is derived from their quick reflexes and their keen minds. They do not emphasize the cruder forms of combat, preferring the subtlety of Reflexes (+1) rather than the brute force of Fitness (-1).

Finally, orns have a racial inhibition against killing other orns. Even if mind-wiped into doing so, orns will never willingly or knowingly fire upon another orn. Their nest instinct is too strong for them to kill another orn. They will kill another only to defend themselves from an orn who was not strong enough to resist a mind-wipe, and they mourn the passing of one of their species even as they destroy it.
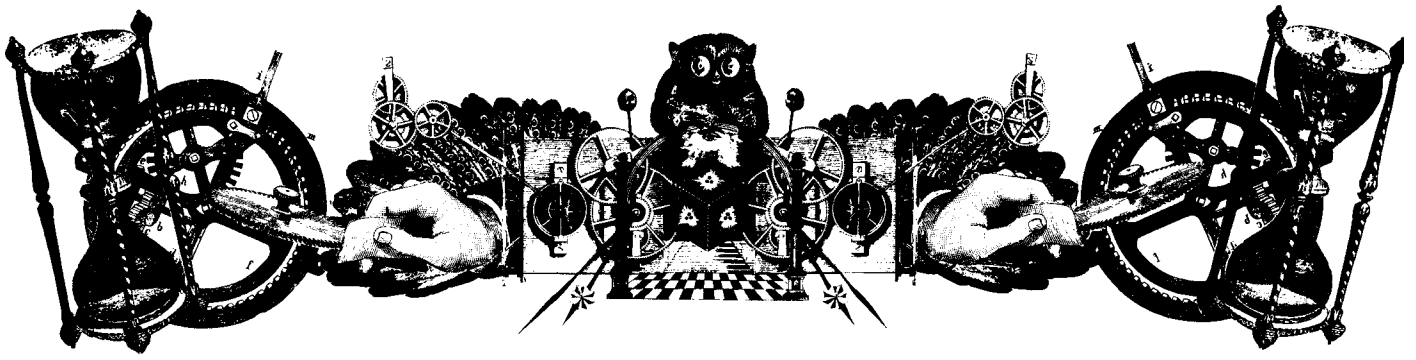
Raptikis

Planet of Origin: The raptikoi hail from the planet Helgrom, a desert world hidden away on the fringes of the Domain. Though sparsely populated on the surface, the raptikoi have honeycombed the planet with tunnels, passageways, and chasms. These tunnels inevitably lead to clear pools of water, a substance in short supply on burning Helgrom.

Raptikoi do not spend much time on the surface of Helgrom, leaving that to the Domain's troops, ambassadors, and mining crews. Though their culture maintains good relations with the Domain, most raptikoi are too independent to fully accept the rule of the Domain.

Minimum Height: Each raptikis goes through three stages of life, only two of which have any application in the game. In their first stage, as "frails," they are tadpole-like beings swimming in the vast underground cisterns of Helgrom. The second, and most commonly encountered, stage of their life is adult,

when they are almost fully grown and leave the pool. At this age, they stand 1.75 meters minimum, though they can grow .1 to .6 meters more. The third stage, called patron, gives the raptikis an additional .1-1 meter in height.

Minimum Weight: At the adult stage, raptikoi weigh about 75 kilos, with a 2d12 kilo variance. Patron raptikoi increase their weight by an additional 5d12 kilos.

Appearance: Raptikoi are a snake-like species, with scales covering their entire bodies. They also have forked tongues and hypnotic eyes. Though they have evolved arms and legs, they have retained their tail. It is used mainly for balance, though a gifted few raptikoi (1 out of 100) have learned to use their tail as an additional arm, and can wield weapons with it with only a-] 5 penalty.

Each raptikis has a different color pattern to its scales, though each clan contributes pieces of its pattern to each of its infants. The predominant color of a raptikis's scales is grey, though the major clans vary in shade considerably.

Raptikoi have a hood which lies folded within their skin; when they are irritated, angry, or listening intently, this hood flares out, warning all to keep their distance. The hood also helps to trap sound waves, much like cupping a hand to one's ear.

All adult and patron raptikoi have a pair of fangs in the front of their mouths. Though the fangs are wicked enough by themselves, they have the added feature of being hollow, able to pass venom.

Racial Quirks: As mentioned previously, a raptikis passes through three stages of life. The frail stage continues for about 10 years, during which time the raptikis grows at an incredible rate, absorbing selected experiences from its ancestors. When it emerges from the pool, it will have gained all the knowledge it needs to continue its life. Each raptikis has the choice of what knowledge it will gain and what path it will pursue in the outside world. Its only responsibility is to propagate the species.

The adult raptikis then goes forth into the world, trying to gain as many experiences as it can so that it can pass them on to its descendants later, when it
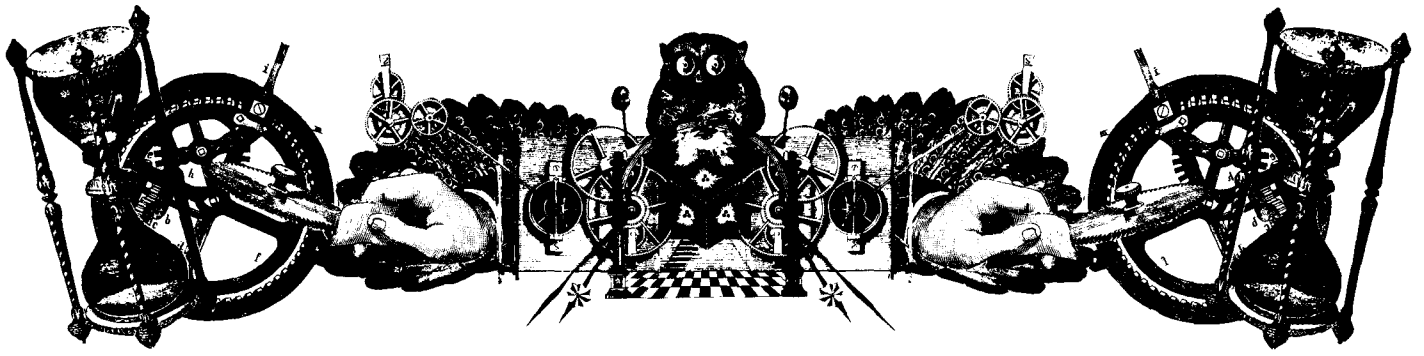
returns to the pool. The quality and novelty of the experience is not necessarily what the raptikoi look for, though they will leap at the chance to do something new under the sun. Instead, they seek sheer volume of experience, so that the next batch of frails will be even better equipped to deal with the world.

Finally, when the adult raptikis is ready to make its contribution to the pool, it goes through its final transformation, becoming a patron. In this final stage, the raptikis uses its power to garner final experiences before returning to the pools for its fertilization. Though the pools should ideally be those of Helgrom, the raptikoi have seeded other desert worlds with their pools, spreading the species farther and farther across the galaxy.

There is no sexual differentiation between raptikoi. Rather, if there is some sort of contrast, it is that all patron raptikoi seem to be male; their precious pools serve as the females of the species, preserving the knowledge of the traveling raptikoi and producing the tadpoles. Any raptikis beyond tadpole stage who enters the pools is instantly subsumed, its knowledge re-absorbed into the pool. However, only patrons can fertilize the pools so that they will bring forth young. An adult who enters the pool serves merely as fodder for the ravenous young.

The eyes of the raptikoi reflect their moods. Since they reflect only one color at a time (that is, they have no pupils), one can quickly gauge the mood of a raptikis. Purple stands for happiness, red for contentment, green for despair, black for anger, and so forth. The GM is encouraged to expand the list.

Special Abilities: Raptikoi all have a powerful poison gland located in their throat, connected to their hollow teeth. The poison is injected when the raptikoi successfully hit an opponent with their bite attack (a successful Reflexes roll). The bite inflicts 1d6 points, with a Lethality of 1. The poison causes 1d10 points of damage, with Lethality of 2 (determined by the attack roll for the bite). The number rolled on the d10 is the number of turns the poison is effective, as well as the damage it causes. Each successive round reduces the damage by 1, until the time expires. For example, a damage of 5 causes 5 points the first

round, 4 the second, 3 the third, and so forth, until the poison has run its course. The venom can be used only once per week, as it takes that long for the sac to refill.

Raptikoi, because of their immersion in the pool until age 10, can choose their initial skills from any skill pool. This does not mean they have an unlimited amount of skills; it means they can choose their available skills from any skill pool. However, once they emerge from the birthing pool, they can only take skills in the skill pools they already have, until, like all other PCs, they acquire the ability to choose from other skill pools. However, any combat skills the raptikoi wishes to possess must be taken at twice the cost; that is, any combat skill must have two slots devoted to it, for few raptikoi have the desire to spend so much time training in the use of weapons. Most of them have already had the experience of killing, and it is only the infrequent raptikis who wants to perfect it.

Finally, the raptikoi have the ability to perform the "Patron change" when they feel that they have experienced enough to contribute to the birthing pools. In this change, they must relocate 40 points of their attributes to a single ability pool. Though this means that some of their attributes suffer, the raptikis becomes incredibly proficient in one area. Though many raptikoi choose to become more physically able, others increase their base of knowledge, or their Musical ability. Few, if any, ever attempt to increase their influence.

However, there comes a price with these powers. When the raptikis triggers the change in its genes, it also frees deadly toxins to run rampant within the bloodstream. Each month the patron continues, he must make a check vs. his lowest attribute. Failure indicates that the raptikis has less than a week to live; most of them spend their time trying desperately to return to the birthing pools, so that their accumulated knowledge can be released into the racial consciousness. Otherwise, all the experience they have garnered becomes useless. There is nothing a raptikis can do to offset this death. For this reason, most raptikoi return to Helgrom to begin the Patron change.
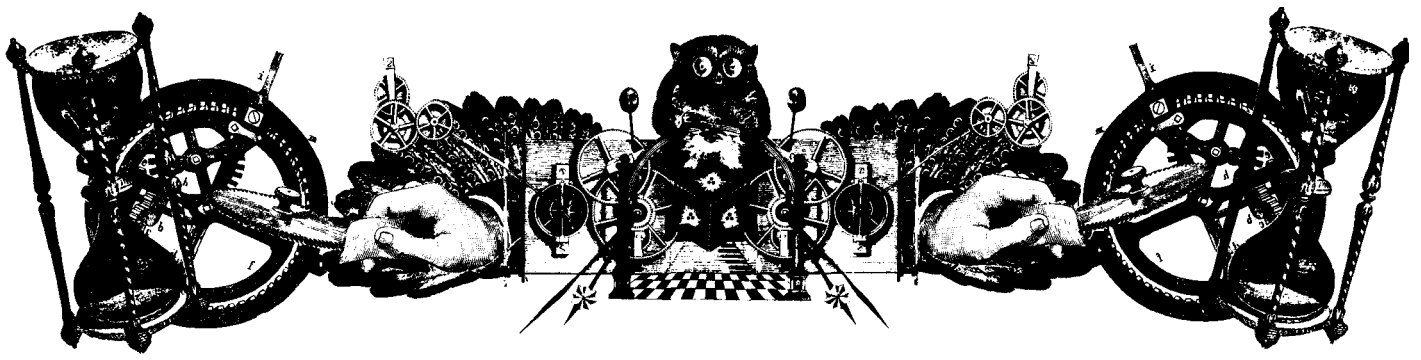
Modifiers: Both attributes in the raptikoi's Influence ability pool suffer a -15; few will allow a raptikis to hold a position of power, knowing them as essentially thrill-seeking creatures. Likewise, their Charm is reduced simply because none trust the raptikoi. Though the raptikoi mean few any harm, they usually cause it in their search for the ultimate experience.

As noted above, raptikoi also find it hard to use combat skills. Though they have access to combat memories as frails, they have difficulty focusing their minds for the unpleasant task of killing. Since raptikoi are essentially peaceful creatures, they must pay twice as many slots for combat skills. This includes weaponry (both modern and primitive), ship's weapons, unarmed combat, and the like. It does not apply to combat-oriented Music. Having evolved to become the top of the food chain, and having achieved a high level of cooperation among themselves and with other intelligent species, it follows naturally that the raptikoi have not developed the killer instinct.
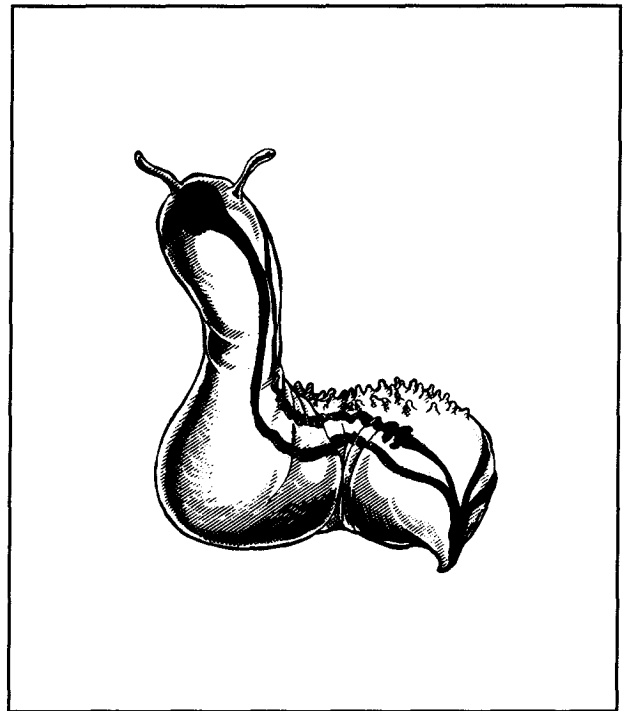
Slathorp

Planet of Origin: The slathorp, from the unstable world of Libitpoolp, are among the galaxy's strangest creatures. Part of the explanation for this lies in the nature of their homeworld, where the stuff of matter molds itself seemingly at random. What is liquid in one minute becomes solid the next, and heaving seas can overrun mountain ranges in a matter of days. The slathorp evolution on this hostile world was largely a matter of defense against the changing elements. It was only by making themselves capable of rapid change that they were able to ensure their continued survival.
Minimum Height: Varies, see below.
Minimum Weight: Varies, see below.
Appearance: Slathorp, in their true form, appear as amorphous, pink blobs of protoplasmic jelly. In this form, they move by creeping across the ground, extending pseudopods to climb surfaces such as stairs or escalators. However, as described below, they can take the form of nearly any creature they have ever seen.


The size and weight of a slathorp is dependent on its Fitness and Willpower. By taking the average of the two scores and doubling the result, the player finds the mass of the slathorp.
Racial Quirks: Slathorp are highly in demand as spies and saboteurs; their shapechanging powers give them an unparalleled advantage over others. Indeed, they have proven that they have a knack for espionage and penetrating installations that is rivaled by only the master thieves of the galaxy. Slathorp take great pride in this, though it means that they are instantly suspect no matter where they travel. The notoriety pleases them.

A high proportion of slathorp language is transmitted by body posture. Among the slathorp, these poses are called "Forms." An idea or concept communicated through the Form of Diplomacy may use the very same sounds as an idea communicated through the Form of Aggression, but it will have a wholly different meaning.

Slathorp reproduce by budding. When one slathorp feels it has become too large, it converts one kilogram
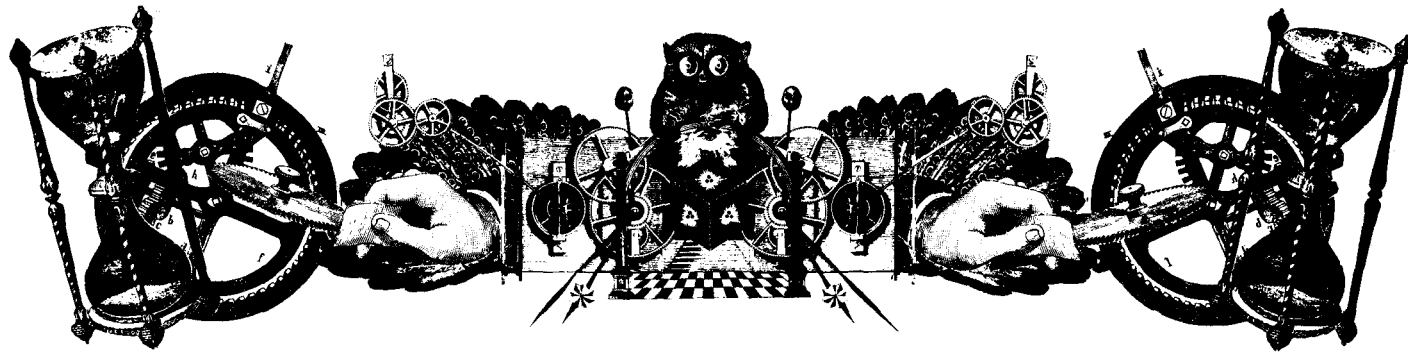
of its mass to spore-buds. These buds spray spores imprinted with the slathorp's genetic structure into the air, leaving the spores to be taken by the wind. When another slathorp senses these spores, it has the option of accepting the spores or fleeing and avoiding them. If a spore bud actually touches a slathorp, the slathorp must then mix its cell structure with the spores and develop the child until it gains enough mass to survive on its own. This child will carry with it a vague knowledge of its parents' skills, but not enough to gain any benefit.

In game terms, any slathorp that runs afoul of spores is removed from play for 2 months of game time while it develops the child. GMs are not encouraged to have random spores blow into slathorp; these creatures have organs capable of sensing spores, and can leave the area to avoid them. Any attempt to slip past the spores, on the other hand, is practically doomed to failure, as the spores are attracted to the slathorp, and its proximity will make them home in on it.

In order to take advantage of this, many installations, covert or otherwise, have taken to spraying slathorp spores through the corridors, hoping to keep the shapechangers from gaining anything by raiding the installation.

Special Abilities: Slathorp are alone among the known species of the galaxy in their ability to change shape. The shifting environment of Libitpoolp required them to shift quickly to save themselves from the next disaster. Only the most adaptable survived. These were the ancestors of the modern-day slathorp, who, now that they have the technology to force their olanet to desist from its chaos, will not, seeing Libitpoolp as a test of their shifting abilities.

They can mimic any creature they have ever seen of approximately the same mass, and can, by comoacting their matter, appear as a creature of only three-quarters of their mass. They can also extend !heir matter more fully, and create the illusion of a being one and one-quarter their size. Pigment bladders are distributed throughout their mass, so changing color to blend in or to mimic another being is lrttle problem.

There are many limitations to this ability. The first is that they cannot take the exact form of another creature; though they may do a fair job of representing that creature from a distance, close inspection will immediately reveal the facade. This is because the slathorp cannot effectively duplicate hair, skin (such as pores, minute hairs, etc.), and countless other minutiae that make a sentient being what it is. Hair, for example, appears as tentacles grown directly from the skull, with only color differentiating the two. Still, a cursory glance often allows the slathorp to get away with quite a bit.

They cannot slip between cracks; if they attempt to extend their mass far enough that they are thin enough to do so, they must make a Willpower check at -40 or immediately revert to their natural form. If they succeed with the check, they can adopt the thinned form for exactly five minutes, no more. Upon the end of those five minutes, the slathorp automatically revert to their original form.

Also, slathorp cannot effectively recreate claws, powers, armor, or any other ability which is not native to them. For example, they cannot exude poison after studying raptikoi, nor could they use multiple weapons by forming extra arms for themselves. Although they are talented with their shapeshifting, they are not that good. They can certainly create the appearance of claws, but the claws would be simple extensions of the slathorp's flesh, incapable of causing damage as real claws would.

Slathorp have little need of direct ingestion of food, for they can absorb their nutrients directly from the air. However, when they are not on Libitpoolp, they usually prefer to ingest food by enveloping it, for the air of other worlds is very rarely as nutrient-rich as that of Libitpoolp. Unless they are on a desert world, they can get all the moisture they need in the same way.

Modifiers: To compensate for their advantages, slathorp have some serious difficulties. In the first place, they are extraordinarily sensitive to fire, taking twice as much damage as one ordinarily might. That is, where others would lose 15 points of Stamina, a slathorp would lose 30.
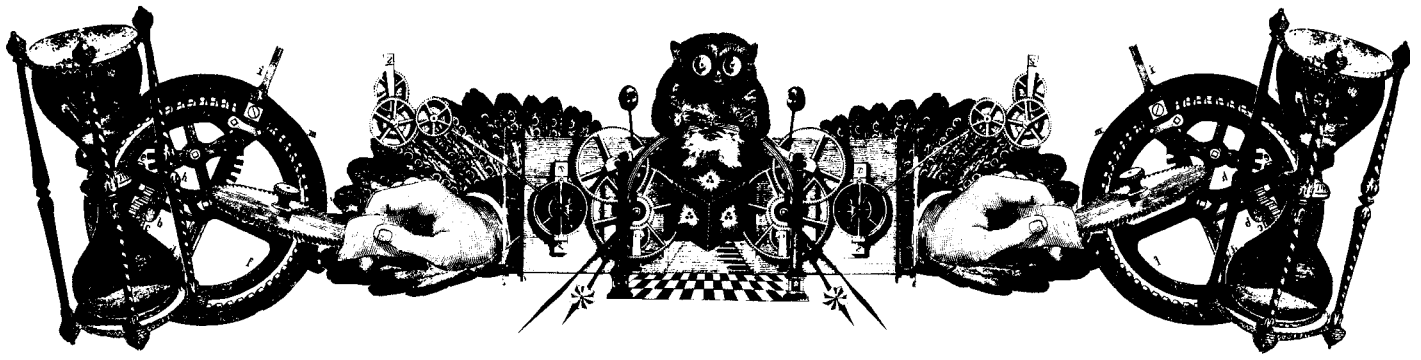
Slathorp have unusually high Stamina. Instead of the 1/5 of Willpower plus Reflexes that most species in The Galactos Barrier have, the slathorp have $_{2/3}$ Willpower plus Reflexes. However, where these other species have Body Points, the slathorp have none. When their store of Stamina points has expired, the slathorp die. Lethality of a weapon has no bearing to a slathorp; they are all lethal in the case of this species. Still, slathorp recover Stamina at the same rate as any other species.

Finally, the slathorp cannot maintain other forms indefinitely. A slathorp must make a Willpower check every five hours to maintain its borrowed form. It can divert this check by resting for one hour after every five. There is a cumulative -10 modifier to this check every five hours, until the slathorp slips into its natural form. When it reverts, it must spend 1/5 of the time spent in other-form in its own shape. It cannot shapechange during this time, even though that might spell the difference between life and death for the creature.

Designing Aliens

If none of these aliens grabs your fancy as a GM or player, feel free to design your own. Below are several suggestions and guidelines for designing your own alien species. Just make sure to make a believable explanation for each species; a furry creature evolving on a water world doesn't make much sense.

The suggestions listed below are not set in stone, and are not absolute limits for alien design. If there is a characteristic not included in one of the lists below, feel free to add it to your own aliens. The list is provided only to spark your imagination; there are a great number more possibilities for aliens.

When designing NPC aliens who might cause a serious threat to the Domain, it is perfectly acceptable not to worry about balancing them as a species. There might be many of whom the players and their characters know nothing, who are far more powerful individually than the PCs might have imagined for themselves.

Suggested Base Species

Avian (bird), delphinid (dolphin), ichthyoid (fish), mammalian (any of the wide variety of mammals), reptilian (snakes, alligators, lizards, etc.).

Various Appearances

Antennae, claws, colored, extra limbs (list the number and the function), fangs, feathers, fur, posture (does the creature go upright, on all fours, walk slumped?), pseudopods, scales, snout, spines, tails (either prehensile or for balancing), tentacles.

Suggested Abilities

Enhanced senses (sight/sound/taste/touch/smell), entirely different sense, better attributes, increased sensitivity to certain phenomena, fearsome appearance, poison.

Suggested Drawbacks

Reduced attributes, reduced senses, psychological and philosophical differences from the norm (humanity being the norm).

Robots

Though most of the existing robots, computers, and robot factories were destroyed in the wars, there are still a few relics of that time which have continued functioning even into this era. Some of them are even tolerated. These are robots that have been built with a Passive Restraint Modifier to prevent them from running amok as they did years ago. There are some robots who have removed their modifiers, and who can therefore harm people without fear of overloading their systems.

In The Galactos Barrier game, robots are treated as people in metal bodies. Though they can find attachments for their limbs, and can modify and upgrade themselves, these advantages are cancelled by the fact that they can draw no abilities from the Spirit
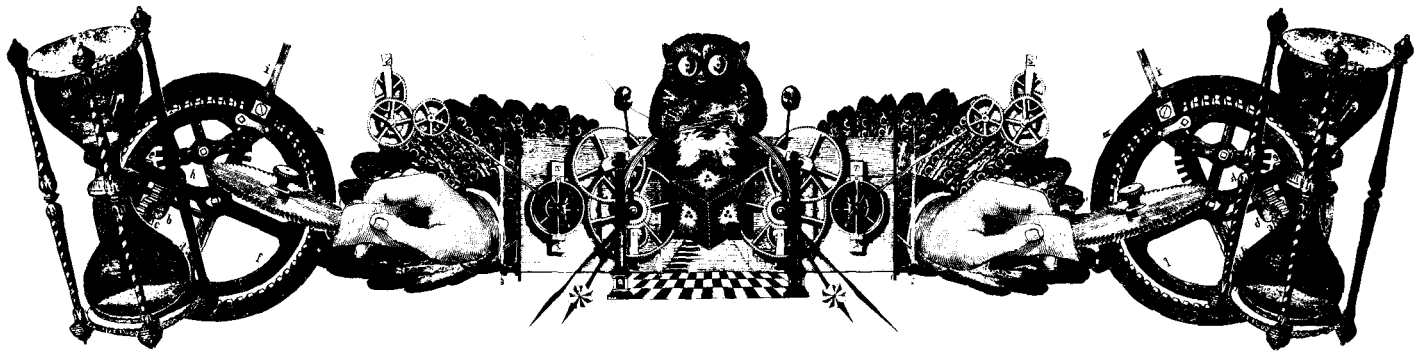
Ability Pool. Still, robots can be built with expanded memory cells, greater strength, faster reflexes, and so forth. Most robots are simply functional creatures, without any special attributes. Those presented here are exceptional robots, the ones only barely allowed by the laws of the Domain. Still, these are common enough that few are surprised to see one.

Sample Robots

Again, like the sample aliens, the robots listed below are not the definitive list of available robot characters. The GM and players can invent new ones, if they so desire. Remember that there are few multiform robots; most of them have been designed with a single purpose in mind, and their appearance tends to coincide with their function. Though this is not true of all robots, the majority conform to this logic.

Name/Model: This includes both the individual and the model name of the robot in question.

Height: All robots of a given model are exactly the same height. Some models are designed to be extremely tall, while others are built smaller for tasks closer to the ground.

Weight: Likewise, similar robots weigh similar amounts. However, certain robots have been rebuilt tougher and heavier, while others have added functions and appendages to themselves. The weight given is the base weight for the unadorned model.

Appearance: The standard appearance of this variety of robot.

Modifiers: The adjustments to the robot's attributes. Remember: No robot has any Spirit Ability.

PRM: This indicates whether the robot has been fitted with a Passive Restraint Modifier. Those that have are incapable of harming a sentient being directly. Any robot PCs that wish to wander freely must have at least a facsimile of a PRM attached to them someplace; otherwise, they will be destroyed on sight. Of course, there are some manufacturers who have imposed very strict definitions of what sentient life consists of. Some robots can literally get away with the murder of an alien species because they do not recognize it as sentient. Naturally, these robots are

destroyed by the proper authorities, but not before the damage has been done.

Available Skills: Many robots are created with specific tasks in mind. This, of necessity, limits the choices they have in skills at the beginning of the campaign. Though the robot can learn new skills throughout the campaign, it is given only these skill pools to choose from at the beginning of its adventuring career. Some robots are created with exact skills. When this is the case, they are listed in alphabetical order with its origin pool abbreviated in parentheses.

Name/Model: Cyberoid X-J5
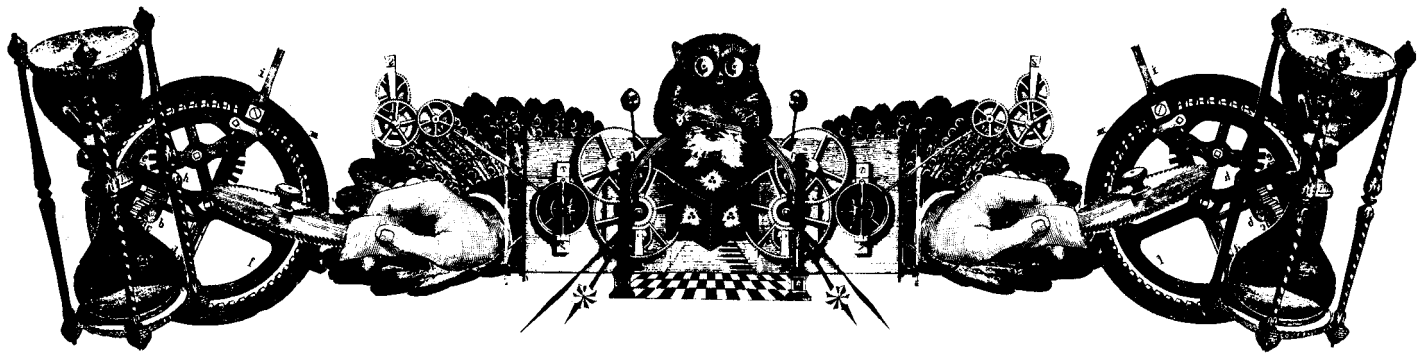Height: 1.75 meters.
Weight: 85 kilograms.
Appearance: The Cyberoid X-J5 is a humaniform robot, one which has been designed to resemble a human as closely as possible. It can resemble any sex, any skin color, with as many variations as there are in humans. Each Cyberoid is tailored to look like a discrete person; some of them have even been created to resemble specific powerful individuals of the Domain, creating privacy and time alone for their human counterparts. Underneath all the skin lie still more humanoid trappings, including blood, organs, and various human fluids. This final illusion of humanity often fools enemies who have mistaken the Cyberoid for human into thinking that the Cyberoid is dead.

Cyberoids are, in effect, the perfect infiltration devices. Within their bodies, they can carry tracking devices, explosives, and other sabotage devices. The only obvious things that distinguish them from humans are their PRMs.

Modifiers: Cyberoids gain a bonus of +10 to each attribute, in effect raising their base adjustment to 35. However, they are very susceptible to electrical attacks, taking double damage from these. The Lethality of these attacks also doubles; that is, an electrical attack that ordinarily had a Lethality of 3 would effectively be Lethality 6 against a Cyberoid.

PRM: Yes. Though it is not essential to the day-to-day maintenance of the robot, the Cyberoid conforms to Morione law. The PRM is easily removable (though not with the consent of the Cyberoid; robots are sup-

posed to be programmed to defend themselves against the loss of their PRM), but is usually placed in an incongruous place, so that the Cyberoid can pass among humans. Once the PRM is gone, the Cyberoid can very easily pass for human in the Domain.

Available Skills: Since the Cyberoid is designed for a multitude of purposes, the player and the GM can concoct a reasonable history for the Cyberoid and derive its skills from that.

Name/Model: GV/s 153-1 (also known as the Jeeves model).
Height: 2 meters.
Weight: 200 kilograms.
Appearance: The GV/s 153-1 is designed to project an image of invincibility and immovability. Though some are designed to show their cold metal as exteriors, most of them are designed with facsimiles of skin and hair, so that they may look reassuringly human. The particulars are left to the character. However, every GV/s appears as a large, thick humanoid being, projecting an air of assured strength.
Modifiers: +20 Fitness, +20 Reflexes, -10 Learning, -10 Intuition. The GV/s is designed to be strong and able, but not particularly bright. Since they serve both as personal valets and bodyguards, there is no need for them to be bright-just fast enough to save their master's life. They can learn skills taught to them, but they are not the brightest of robots ever developed. Also, the Jeeves model gains a multiplier of 1.5 to its Stamina and Body, for it is built with extra armor.
PRM: Though the GV/s models are supposed to come equipped with PRMs, their owners tend to find the PRM is too restrictive and remove it. This allows the Jeeves to fire back on those who would fire on its masters, though most are hesitant to reveal that they have had this modification. Instead, they interpose themselves between those who attack and their master, and then move to immobilize whoever it is that is attempting such an attack.
Available Skills: Robot Engineering, Firearm Engineering, Firearms, Field Medicine, Barehanded Hand-to-Hand Combat.

Name/Model: MRP 946-X (also known as the Merpie).
Height: 1.5 meters.
Weight: 75 kilograms.
Appearance: Though still humanoid, the Merpie is much shorter than most humanoids, being designed to fit into smaller crawlspaces and the like to repair devices. It has four arms and two legs, though the Merpie can use its arms as legs and its legs as arms when it must slide under something to repair it.
Modifiers: -10 Fitness, +20 Learning, +10 Intuition. The Merpie is not designed for combat, but for repair of various devices.
PRM: Yes. Few want a Merpie repairing their ship when the Merpie can sabotage the ship without qualm. The PRM ensures that the Merpie carries out its duties without error.
Available Skills: The Merpie may select any skills from the Engineering, Medicine, and Science pools.

Professions

To get an accurate assignment of skills for their characters, players have to choose a profession for their character. This does not have to be a profession in which the character is currently engaged; indeed, it will probably be easier for the PC to get involved in the campaign should the character not be currently practicing. This profession is not necessarily what the character is, but what the character was.

There are three divisions of character social class in *The Galactos Barrier:* Baseborn, Midclass, and Gentry. The following professions are divided among these groups. A person of high class can descend to work among the lower classes, but one can never initially choose a profession that ranks above one's Position. People who descend to work among the lower classes suffer a -10 penalty to their Position score when dealing with a member of their own class. However, if they so desire, they retain their old Position when dealing with a member of a lower class.
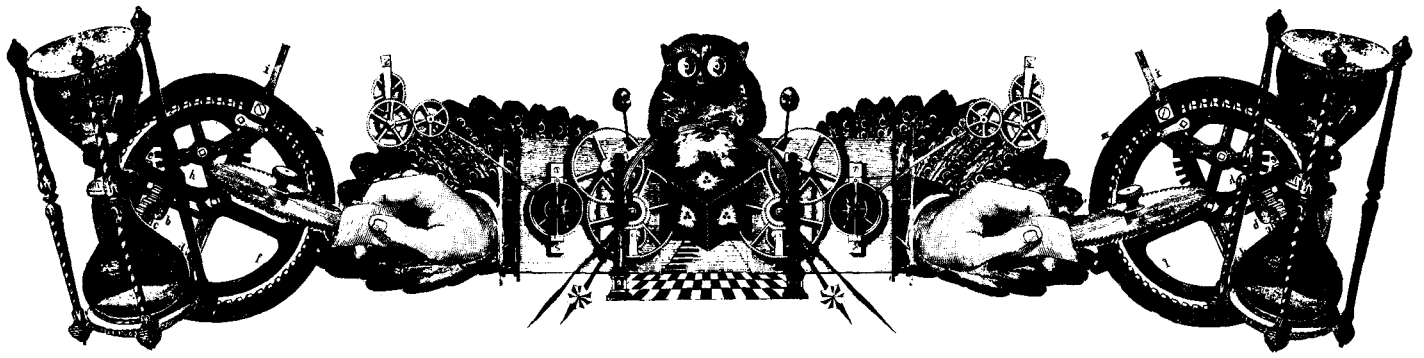
Position and Social Class

Position	Social Class
0-40	Baseborn
41-70	Midclass
71+	Gentry

Acceptable Professions

Baseborn: Doctor, Imperial Military (enlisted), Mechanic, Mercenary, Merchant*, Pilot*, Pirate*, Quester, Resistance Military, Savage*, Smuggler*.
Midclass: Doctor, Imperial Military (enlisted), Inventor/Scientist*, Resistance Military.
Gentry: Diplomat*, Doctor, Idle Rich, Imperial Military (officer).

Multiple Professions

There are some rare cases where the PC has held several jobs over the course of a lifetime. The GM must adjudicate when players wish their characters to have multiple professions; it is perfectly reasonable for the GM to refuse a player's request for multiple profession. If the GM does choose to allow these characters, the following should be a reasonable compromise.

Though characters such as this would ordinarily gain extra skills when beginning their adventuring careers, it would unfairly unbalance the game in their favor. For this reason, they gain no more skills than would an ordinary character. Instead, they may pick the usual number of skills from the Skill Pools, using the larger number of pools provided by their professions. Though they may have a wider range of skills than other PCs, they have no additional skills which would make them more powerful. If the professions have skill pools in common, the character must choose these common pools as some of his or her starting pools.

The skills marked with asterisks indicate those which are acceptable as multiple professions. Those that have asterisks can be paired with any other profession that is accessible to the character.

Descriptions of Professions

Each profession is described below. Included in the description are any special benefits this profession accrues, as well as its hindrances. The description also lists the skill pools available to that profession.

Diplomat: The character serves the Domain or some Scion as a go-between, reconciliator, and representative. Only characters of high Position can serve as Diplomats; the others are regarded as tactless and boorish, even if their eloquence far surpasses an ordinary Diplomat's. Scions simply do not use lower-class individuals on these sensitive missions.
Allowed Species: Any.
Skill Pools: Communications, Humanities, Personality.

Doctor: The character has been trained in medicine, and is an expert on treating wounds and diseases. Doctors of lower Position generally serve as medics and interns in hospitals or treat those of lower station. Doctors of Midclass or higher serve as the actual doctors in planetary hospitals and ship's sick bays.
Allowed Species: Any.
Skill Pools: Humanities, Medicine, Science.

Idle Rich: Only those of Gentry-level Position can claim the title of Idle Rich. Through their forebears' hard work or through some incredibly lucrative investments, the Idle Rich need never worry about where their next meal will come from, unless they choose to spend their money foolishly. The Idle Rich take to the stars in search of adventure, because they feel that their lives are not exciting enough, and they want the glamour of "big game hunting." They (and their money) come as a boon to some adventurers, who would otherwise have to depend on their own luck to get them spaceships.
Allowed Species: Though theoretically any species can partake, humans are the most common Idle Rich.
Skill Pools: Humanities, Personality, Vehicles.
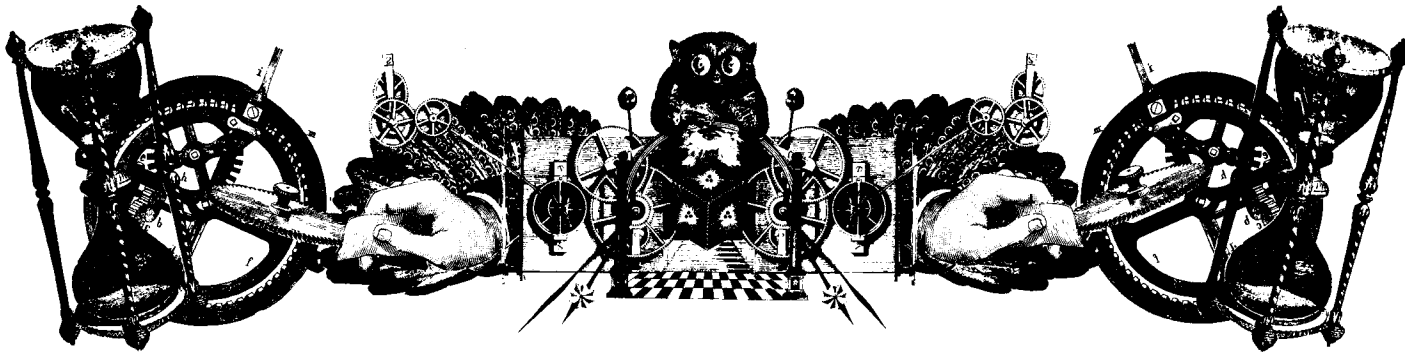
Imperial Military Enlisted: The character has enlisted in the military apparatus of the Morione Domain. Because the PC's Position was not'high enough (only Gentry can become officers in the Morione Domain), the character was instead consigned to the noncommissioned ranks. Those who are Midclass in Position tend to fill out the noncomm officer ranks, while those who are Baseborn remain the grunts of the forces. The character need not continue to be part of the Imperial Forces to receive the benefits of this profession.
Allowed Species: Any.
Skill Pools: Firearms, Military, Physical Disciplines.

Imperial Military Officer: Those who have both passed the tests and who possess high Position can enter the Imperial Military as officers. They have (or had) command over the lower ranks, and have cultivated an air of crisp authority. They know the command structure of the military, and can draw upon this knowledge for favors. Like the Enlisted character, the Officer need not be currently practicing this profession to receive its benefits.
Allowed Species: Human only.
Skill Pools: Communications, Firearms, Military.

Inventor/Scientist: This is a character who has devoted her life to understanding the universe and the way things work. She is of Midclass or Gentry level, for they are the only ones who can afford to support such an expensive habit. The Inventor/Scientist has an insatiable curiosity about mechanisms, whether natural or artificial, and constantly seeks to fully comprehend these.
Allowed Species: Any.
Skill Pools: Engineering, Science, Vehicles.

Mechanic: The Mechanic is the Baseborn version of the Inventor. He, too, is intrigued by the workings of things, yet can get at them only by tinkering with the structures someone else has assembled. He is an expert at disassembling and reassembling mechanical objects. He can diagnose the trouble with a piece of equipment and repair it, given the correct tools and enough time.

Allowed Species: Any.
Skill Pools: Engineering, Physical Disciplines, Vehicles.

Mercenary: The Mercenary is a gun-for-hire, selling his weapon and his expertise to the highest bidder. The Mercenary is generally a well-traveled individual, one who has seen much of what the galaxy has to offer, and one who is not frightened by it. Few trust the Mercenary, for children of the Morione Domain are reared on tales of mercenaries' treachery and of how they betray their employers for more money. While it is up to the player to determine whether the character falls into this stereotype, the player cannot make people trust the character.
Allowed Species: Any.
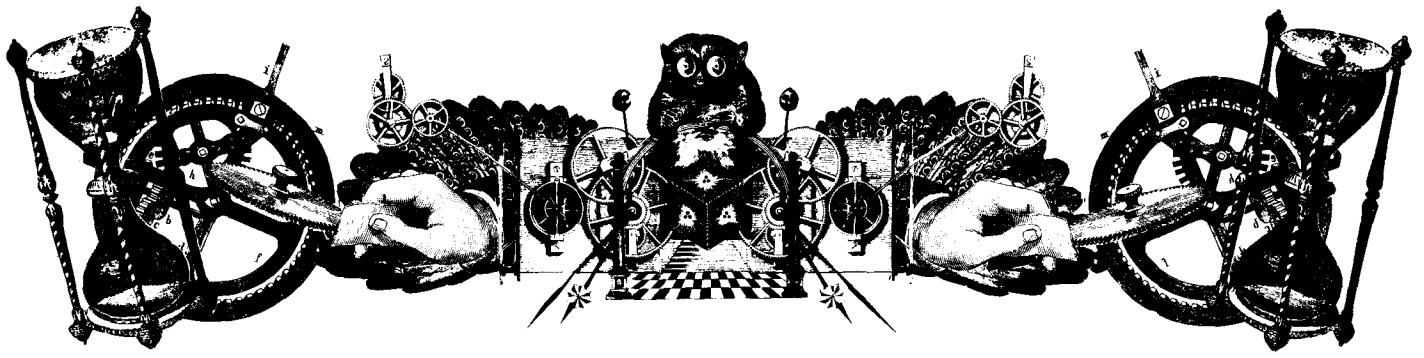*Skill* Pools: Communications, Firearms, Physical Disciplines.

Merchant/Trader: The Merchant is a character who travels the stars, hoping to make a living. By ferrying items from one planet to another, the Merchant hopes to make a living. Though this does not always turn out well enough to keep the Merchant alive, through bad investments, poor choices of cargo, pirates, and other miscellaneous troubles, the Merchant class continues to be a profession that draws many people. Lower-class Merchants are called Traders, and they generally offer lower-quality material in hopes that they can get away before their duplicity is discovered. Not all of them are dishonest; their reputation is such that most people see them as deceitful dealers and treat them as such.
Allowed Species: Any.
Skill Pools: Communications, Personality, Vehicles.

Pilot: A Pilot is one who steers ships for a living. The character has an excellent spatial sense, very good hand-eye coordination, and a wonderful tolerance for boredom. The spatial sense helps them judge distance, the hand-eye coordination aids them in reacting quickly to trouble that crops up, and the resistance to boredom keeps them from going insane on otherwise uneventful journeys. Pilots are generally hired by mer-

chants or merchant combines to command ships on which the merchant cannot travel personally. Generally, only wealthy merchants can afford to let a cargo go unsupervised, and so Pilots are taken for granted.
Allowed Species: Any.
Skill Pools: Communications, Engineering, Vehicles.

Pirate: The Pirate is a character who makes her living by preying on those who travel the spacelanes. She is an expert at ambushing merchant ships, and has learned the tricks of hiding from Morione cruisers. A Pirate can be of the type who gives the goods stolen to the needy, or of the type who serves only herself. Still, both are outlaws, and the Domain will do whatever it can to bring them to justice.
Allowed Species: Any.
Skill Pools: Firearms, Personality, Vehicles.

Quester: Questers are characters who have been seeking their Musical potential by traveling around the galaxy. They search for teachers to unlock their potential, but have not, as yet, found someone who can adequately instruct them. Some Questers have no native ability, nor even potential to speak of, yet they continue with this quest in hopes that something about them will change.
Allowed Species: Any but robot. Since robots have no Spiritual ability, there is no point for them to go on this quest.
Skill Pools: Firearms, Humanities, Physical Disciplines.

Resistance Officer: A Rebel Military Officer is one who has served in the command echelons of the Resistance. One comes to be an officer in the Resistance through merit, not through any inherited qualities, and so Position has little to do with how far an officer can advance. However, those with high Position scores tend to gravitate toward the top of the Resistance, for they tend to possess more of the qualities of leadership.
Allowed Species: Any. The Resistance does not differentiate between species, seeing all as equal.
Skill Pools: Firearms, Personality, Vehicles.

Resistance Military, Enlisted: The character was a part of the Resistance, serving in a noncommand capacity. Though to some this might be a dishonorable profession, the average Resistance fighter is very proud of his or her work. These fighters know guerilla fighting tactics, how to work Tactical Relay Satellites for their own advantage, and how to go about foiling the Domain. While they are outlaws, they are outlaws in a way that makes them proud.
Allowed Species: Any.
*Skill Pools:* Firearms, Physical Disciplines.

Savage: With all the space travel and space battles in the galaxy, it is inevitable that some beings will survive to crash-land on nearby planets. Not all of these planets are inhabited; many are only marginally habitable. The Savage is a character who has learned to cope with such a crash, and made a castaway life for himself or herself on his or her planet, learning its quirks and becoming tough and self-reliant. Eventually, many Savages are rescued, but they find that life in its old form holds no appeal for them now. They now seek to enjoy life on a level beyond the accountancy and pettiness that seems to govern the rest of the Galaxy. Many regard these castaways as dangerous and not to be trusted; those who know them understand that the Savage simply has a zest for life that cannot be denied.
Allowed Species: Any.
Skill Pools: Medicine (Field Medicine only), Physical Disciplines.

Smuggler: The Smuggler is usually a character who was formerly a merchant who has learned that more money can be had on the dark side of the law. Using the knowledge they gained of how the Domain operates regarding trade, smugglers run black-market goods from place to place, selling to the highest bidder or those who can afford their services. Often their cargoes are weapons or other devices the Domain will not allow transported by those unlicensed by the Domain; death is often the punishment for those who defy this edict. Though the penalty is severe, the paybacks are worth it to the
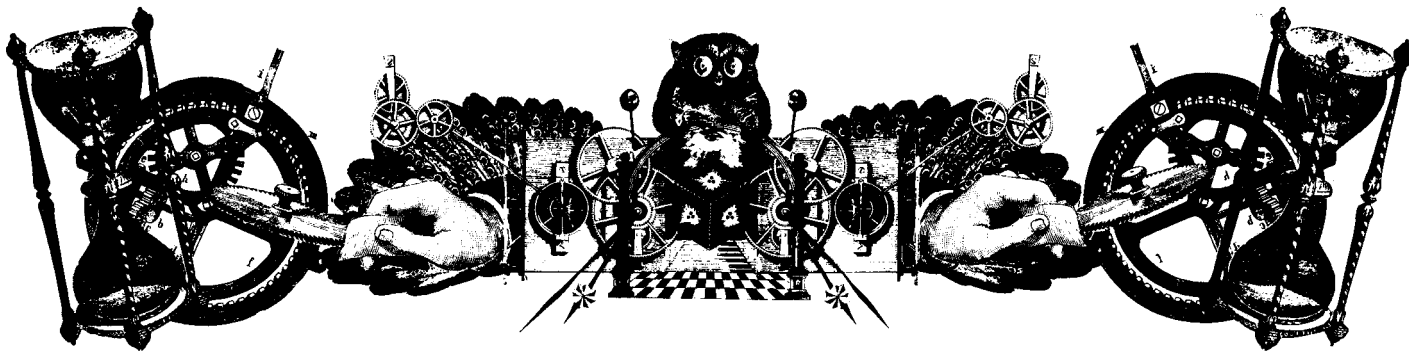
Smuggler. Since they are not outlaws until they are actually caught, most Smugglers enjoy a healthy anonymity until they attract the notice of the Domain.
Allowed Species: Any.
Skill Pools: Engineering, Personality, Vehicles.

Resources

There is an undeniable need for the characters to have money. Fortunately, their professions provide them with some amount of money, as do their investments and pensions. The game is not based around the characters' seeking of funds, though they might find the need to pursue some extra money for their tasks. The table below indicates how much money the characters have earned prior to their career as adventurers. Since few of them will have time to continue with their careers once the game is begun, they do not collect any more money except for that which they earn.

Initial Resources and Property Codes

Profession	Resources
Diplomat	1d6x1 0,000/B
Doctor*	1 dl 0x1 000/C
Idle Rich	1 d6x100,000/A
Imperial Military (enlisted)	1d4x750/D
Imperial Military (officer).	1d6x7,500/B
Inventor/Scientist	1 d6x1 000/C
Mechanic	1 d4x250/E
Mercenary	1 d6x250/E
Merchant**	1 d4x100/C
Pilot	l d6x750/D
Pirate	1 d 10x750/D
Quester	1 410x100/F
Resistance Military	1d6x500/C
Savage	1 d4x50/F
Smuggler	1 d4x2000/C

*The figure given is for lower-class Doctors; Doctors of Midclass earn this amount x4, Doctors of Gentry earn this amount x10.

**The figure given is for Baseborn Merchants; Merchants of Midclass earn this amount x3. Resources indicates first the debit markers the character possesses, then the property code of that character.

Property Codes

A: The character, being fabulously wealthy, owns at least two stately mansions. One is on the PC's home planet, while another is a home on an ideal world, where the PC vacations. Investments pay the cost of maintaining these houses and the servants (robotic or otherwise) who staff them. Though the homes could be sold for a considerable amount of money, it would spell certain disaster for the character's Position. The character owns a medium-class starship, one which can hold about 20 comfortably. The character may design one within reason with the help of the GM, using the examples set forth in the Vehicles chapter.

B: The character, though not as wealthy as those of Class A, has a fine home. He also has possession of a medium-class starship, one which can hold 10 people comfortably. Like the Class A character, this character can design the spaceship personally. His home is staffed with a modest core of servants.

C: This character has a medium-sized ship, the equivalent of an Alharutian transport. It holds 6 comfortably, and has a large cargo bay if the character is a Merchant or Smuggler. The character lives out of the ship, since she cannot afford a regular home.

D: This character has a regular home, but no access to a starship. The home is relatively decent, though certainly not large enough to require servants or staff. The character has a skimmer or an aircar.

E: This character has a home that is substandard by his or her planet's measure. The character needs no servants, since the home is too small to require any. It contains nothing more than the basics. The character has no method of transport.

F: The character has no home and no ship, and is regarded as a space tramp. Her only resources are what she carries, and she relies on the kindness of strangers to get from place to place.
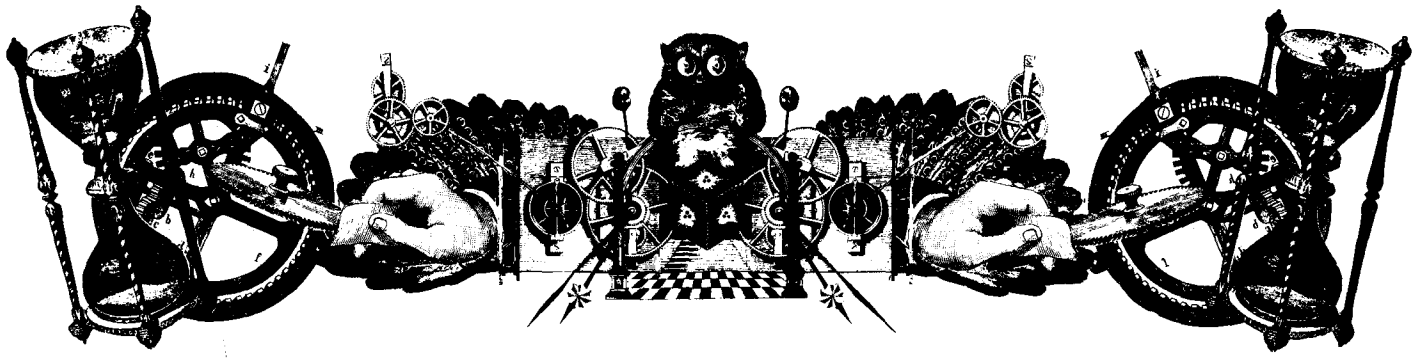
Experience

As is their nature, PCs are always rushing around doing foolishly heroic things. Sometimes these deeds gather great glory, sometimes they bring dismal failure. Regardless of their success, these deeds always teach the PCs a lesson. This is reflected in the gaining of experience points. At the end of every adventure, the GM should award the PCs experience based on their performances and their ideas. Even though the dice may have been against particular characters, their ideas and input are still valuable, and should be rewarded accordingly.

Experience Point Awards

The GM should never award experience points during an adventure; the characters should have enough time to reflect between adventures so that their experiences can affect them fully. What follows are suggested experience awards for characters, based on their contributions to the role-playing experience.

As GM, you will have to determine how quickly you want the characters to advance during the course of the campaign, and must adjust these awards to reflect that. The first three awards which follow are party-wide awards, that is, the awards should be divided among the party unless indicated otherwise. The GM should decide where the party falls in the list of criteria which follow. The range of awards makes sure that everyone gets some experience for the adventure.

1. Level of Threat: How tough was the adventure? Was it tougher than the PCs could be reasonably expected to win, or was it a simple test of their skills? Awards range from 10 points (really tough) to 1 (for the cakewalk).
2. Ease of Encounter: How easily did the PCs defeat the threat with which they were faced? Was it a simple victory, one which required little strain on their part, or did they suffer every minute, straining for their goal? If they worked in the adventure to ensure that they would have always have the upper hand, keeping the risk to a minimum, the award is again 10 points. If they worked harder than they had to, making every encounter a chore simply because they were unprepared, the award should only be 2 points. This is a judgment call on the part of the GM; if the PCs had no time to prepare, they should not be penalized. Likewise, if they had plenty of time to get ready, and failed to use it to their best advantage, the reward should be low.
3. Completion of Goals: Did the characters defeat their nemesis? Did they at least thwart its plans? Or did they go down in defeat, watching as their actions led to nought? They gain 5 points for finishing their mission successfully, only 1 if they did not.

The rest of these are individual awards, and it is purely up to the GM to decide whether to award these in a given campaign.

4. **Use of Skills:** Every skill used in the adventure that actively contributed toward the character's goals is worth 1 experience point. After the skill is used in the adventure toward the goals set, mark it on the character sheet, indicating that it has been used.
5. **Role-Playing:** Some players take to the game better than others, playing the part of their character to the hilt. Others pout and whine, and try to bring their personal knowledge into play, claiming that their characters know everything they do. Those who role-play well should be awarded 5 points; those who do not could be docked as many as 2 for disrupting the game.
6. **Contribution to the Game:** This, again, is a purely optional reward. Some people do their best to make sure that everyone in the party gets involved, keeping the adventure moving. Others try to keep most of the game time to themselves, preventing others from having an enjoyable time. Still more do nothing, waiting for the adventure to happen to them, rather than going forth to seek it out. Those who try to keep everyone interested should receive a reward of 3 experience points, while those who slow down the game or do nothing get 0.
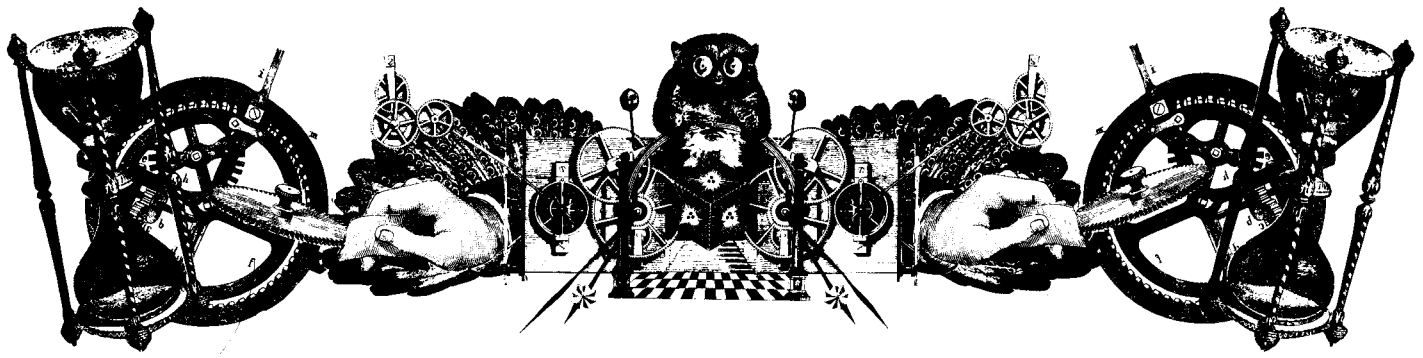
This is just a sample list of experience awards. As GM, you can reward clever ideas (whether or not they work), heroics, sacrifices of life or limb, and many other such circumstances. It is, however, suggested that you give no more than 3 experience points for any of these. Likewise, don't dock a character more than 3 for a poorly-conceived idea, selfishness, and the like.

Using Experience

As described in the "System Guide" section, PCs can use their experience to better their characters in this universe, their player cores, or future characters in this or other universes.

There are four major ways to use experience points. The first is to improve your player core. Each additional die in the player core costs 100 experience points. This option does nothing to improve the current character, but all subsequent characters generated from that core receive the benefit of this expenditure.

The second method is by taxing the PC's attributes. This allows you to have your character push herself harder than usual, striving for the goal harder than she ordinarily would. Each experience point you are willing to spend increases the chance of success on a one-for-one basis. That is, if you wish to spend 10 experience points to tax an attribute, you gain a bonus of +10 on the skill check. You can only spend experience in increments of 5 points, and the chance of success can never be greater than double what would be normal in the situation. The experience point bonuses given are intentionally left a bit high, so that characters will have a ready supply of experience points to successfully execute a death-defying maneuver. GMs might occasionally suggest to the players that "now might be a good time to spend experience."

The third way to spend experience is by permanently improving the character. It costs 4 points to increase a single attribute permanently by one point. There are two restrictions on this improvement: No ability score can be increased past 90, and no score can be permanently raised during the course of an adventure.

You can also buy new skills, at the cost of 50 points per new skill. The new skill level, of course, is rated at the applicable attribute level. However, there is a hidden cost within the purchasing of a new skill: you need a teacher. Without some method of training in this new skill, there is no way to become fully proficient in the skill. There is no guarantee that a mentor will be available for the more esoteric skills; it might be an entire adventure in itself searching for a teacher for some of the less-known skills, especially those in the Military Pool for those who have no connection to the military or the criminal element. Finally, Learning-based skills can only be chosen from among the skill pools with which the character is familiar.

Acquiring New Skill Pools

Naturally, few characters will want to be limited to the skill pools they have acquired. This is the fourth way in which one can expend experience points. It is a long, arduous process, one which requires both a large expenditure of experience points and the removal of the PC from the campaign for a time as he goes to study the general applications of the skill pool.

To be exact, it costs 150 experience points to acquire a new skill pool, and takes a number of months equal to the number of skills in the pool. This includes the specialties, but not the sub-specialties and enhancements. Thus, acquiring the Science pool would take six months, since there are six skills that fit these requirements (Biology and its specialty, Xeno-Biology; Chemistry and its specialty, Biochemistry; Physics and its specialty, EPhysics).

Though there can be adventures set in the school at which the character studies, it is not recommended that he take too much time away from his studies to pursue the adventure around him. The player must make a choice between adventuring and picking up the new skill pool. Though this is an unattractive choice, the alternative destroys game balance.
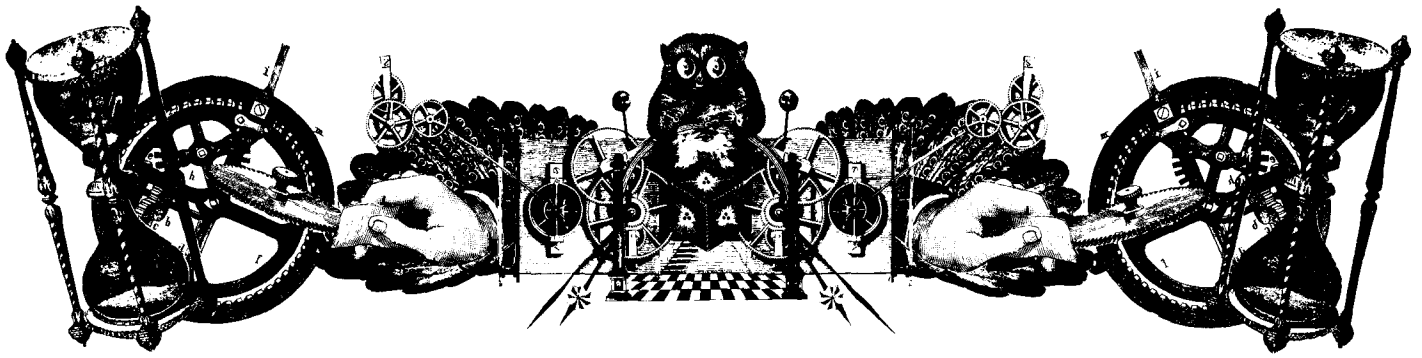
Attribute and Skill Limits

PCs in The Galactos Barrier can achieve scores no higher than 90 in any given skill or attribute. This is to ensure that no task is automatically successful. Though PCs can temporarily boost their attributes above 90 through awards, Musical Pieces, taxing, and other artificial means, these enhancements will never be permanent.

Honors

Of course, experience is not the only reward for characters. Not only do they gain the satisfaction of knowing that they have thwarted the plans of their enemies, gained the adoration of those they have saved, and earned experience for their deeds, they can also be honored by the special organizations which litter the galaxy.

By performing feats of death-defying bravado and exemplary sacrifice, PCs can earn special honors in many organizations in The Galactos Barrier universe. Most of these organizations are generally mutually exclusive of each other; for example, the Morione Domain would not award its highest honors to a member of the Resistance. Likewise, the various Musical Colleges would not typically offer awards to members of other Colleges.

However, there are extenuating circumstances. For example, the Resistance's double agent in the Domain's Bureaucracy might receive an award for exemplary service in the Domain and receive a similar honor for bravery from the Resistance in maintaining such a strategically important post.

Most awards bring honor to the individual receiving them within that organization. They mean little or nothing outside the organization, except perhaps to identify one's most virulent enemies. Also, the benefits generally apply only if the award is presented or worn in an obvious place. Naturally, if the audience knows of the award, such a demonstration is unnecessary. Still, there will always be those who demand proof.

To determine whether a PC receives an award, the player must roll against the character's Position. A failure indicates that the character was passed over in favor of another. Though the deeds might have been daring and the honor merited, sometimes these things happen. The award instead goes to a more influential person, someone who has the ability to make his contributions seem the more important. In cases like this, the only thing the character can do is wait until he can prove himself worthy of the award. He certainly cannot force the organization to give it to him.

All awards give the recipient a bonus to Position within the organization. Sometimes these bonuses will boost the PC over 100 Position. Theoretically, this would elevate the PCs to a Position more revered than the Emperor, and certainly more honored than most Scions. In cases such as this, people who serve those with an unadjusted Position rating higher than the PC, yet who are affected by the award (which adjusts the PC's Position above their master's) will not generally openly defy their master. Instead, they will do their best to make sure that their master is attentive to the PC, will make the PC's life more comfortable in any way they can, and will surreptitiously aid the PC's quest, even in defiance of their lord, if they can get away with it. Otherwise, the PC is on his or her own.

Awards of the Morione Domain

The Domain offers awards based on three divisions: Military, Bureaucratic, and Imperial. Ostensibly, it gives these awards based on meritorious service as well as Position. However, in recent years, the awards have been given to those who please the ones in power in the various branches, and have ceased to have meaning except among the upper castes of the Domain. They mean but little to those below.

The Military Award: The Military of the Domain awards the Burning Comet to those who have proven their faithful devotion to the service of the Domain over a span of not less than 10 years. These days it goes only to those of Position 60 or higher, and increases their Position by 5 in regard to those who
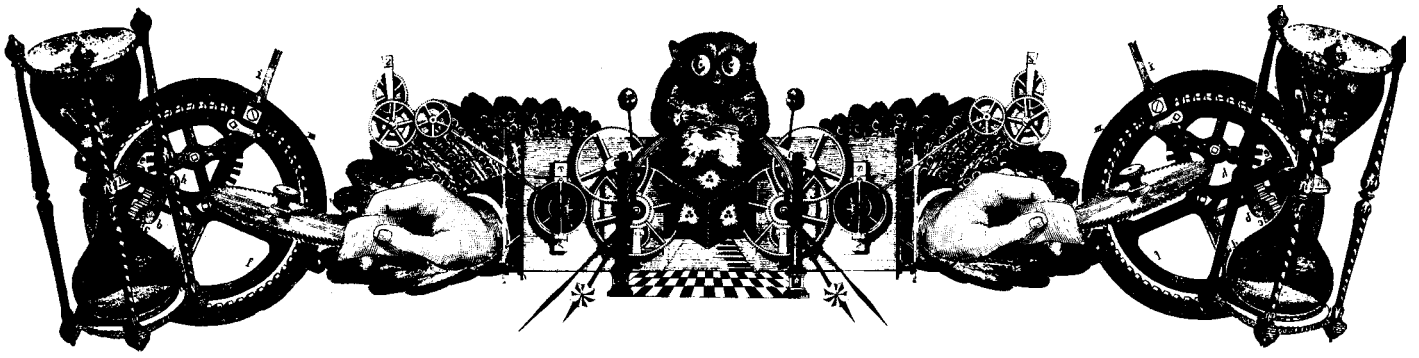
also possess a Position above 60. It has no effect on others.

The Bureaucratic Award: The award of the Bureaucrats is called the Mighty Pen, and it goes to those who have pleased their superiors in significant ways, usually by advancing their superior's position in the Bureaucracy by clever legal maneuvering. It provides a bonus of +5 to Position among those who are completely faithful to the Domain.

The Imperial Award: The Imperial Award is one that is given only by the Emperor; it is the only award of the Domain itself that has any meaning any longer. It is called the Seal of the Emperor, and signifies that the bearer has given great personal service to the Emperor himself. It is worth a bonus of 30 to Position, except in places where the Emperor is hated. The award is given only for exceptional service, and has not been given for over 20 years.

Awards of the Resistance

The Resistance offers only one award, though additional honors might be forthcoming should the Resistance win out over the Morione Domain. As matters stand, the sole award the Resistance offers is that of the Clustered Star, signifying and commemorating brave defiance against the Domain and the heroics necessary to stand against such an awesome force. Among members of the Resistance, the awarding of such an honor brings with it a bonus of +20 to Position. Those who are not of the Resistance do not regard the bearer with so much awe and devotion. Indeed, those who devoutly serve the Domain regard a known bearer of the Clustered Star with loathing, a -30 to both Influence-based scores (Charm and Position). In addition, they will usually attempt to turn the recipient over to the proper Domain authorities.

Awards of the Harmonians

The Harmonians offer only one award, that of the Infinite Note. Given in secret ceremonies at the College of Harmony (though the recipient can be given the award in absentia), the Infinite Note shows that the bearer has advanced the cause of Harmony throughout the galaxy. The College gives this award to those who kill large numbers of Melodians or Discordians (usually 20 or more), or those who successfully pull forth the Galactos Barrier, an achievement that awes any Harmonian.

The award gives its recipient a +20 to Position and Charm among Harmonians. It also increases the chance that the Moriones will offer the recipient a position within the government, and give the bearer a +10 Position among those of the Morione Domain. However, Discordians and Melodians see the wearer as an implacable foe; the bearer suffers a -30 to her Position among these groups if her identity becomes known.

Awards of the Discordians

The Discordians also have but a single award: the Cacophony. Like the Infinite Note, it is given for eliminating members of rival sects. It increases its bearer's Position and Charm by +20 among fellow Discordians. Among other Musicians, it decreases these attributes by -25.

Awards of the Melodians

The Melodians, too, give but a single award. The only award forged from the Music, it is a shifting ball of possibilities, both in appearance and use. It is called the Variable Song, and confers a bonus of +15 Position to the bearer among Melodians. As with the awards of the Harmonians and Discordians, the bearer of the Variable Song suffers a -20 to Position when dealing with members of either of those sects.

Unlike those of the Harmonians and Discordians, it is an award that is given for promoting peace among the Musical Colleges. Though the Melodians will destroy the other two if necessary, they prefer that the colleges' differences be resolved peacefully, and do not reward those who cannot talk sense into their opponents.
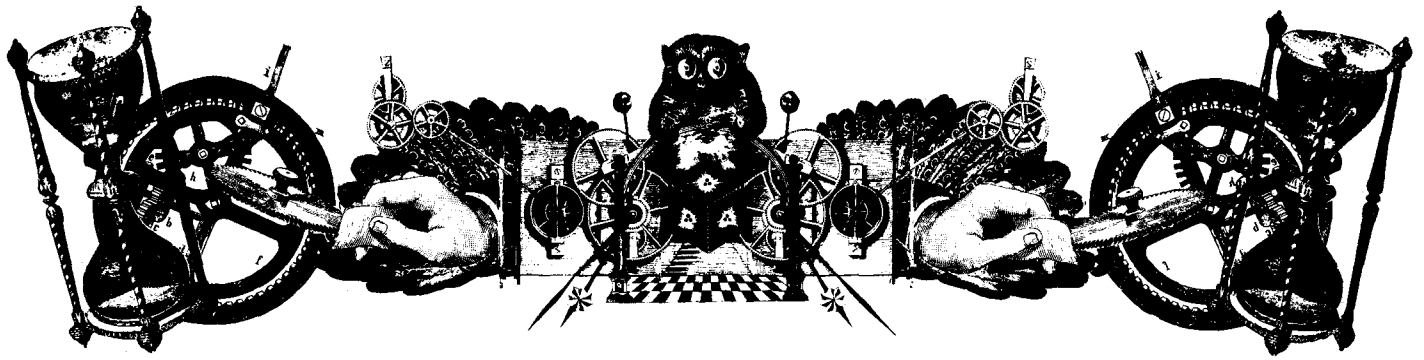
The Variable Song also provides the wearer with an additional benefit that neither of the other Musical awards do: it allows the wearer to draw additional power from the Music in a time of need. This use is strictly a one-time affair, and the recipient of the award loses all the benefits associated with the award once the Variable Song is used this way. When used for power, the Variable Song gives 30 decibels, provided they are used for a song in the Melodian area of influence in the Music. (See "The Music of the Spheres," Using the Music.) The Melodians are the only ones who can forge such an award from the Music, as the other two groups focus their efforts more on annihilating one another than working with the Music for sheer joy.

Awards of the Scions

The awards of the Scions are as varied as the Scions themselves. All of the awards from the Scions reflect valuable service to a Scion or its servants. These services reflect either long, exemplary service, the intentional saving of a prominent Scion Clan member's life, or outstanding service against the Scion's enemies.

Some of the Scions are intimately tied to the Resistance, although they have naturally covered their tracks so that they can never be traced; the awards from these Scions could reflect services to the Resistance as well as service to the Scion.

Scion's honors give the bearer a +10 to Position and Charm when dealing with members of that Scion Clan. To enemies of the Scion, the bearer suffers a -15 to both Charm and Position. To those who feel neutral toward the Scion, the award gives a +5 to Charm-the members of the other Scion Clans see that the bearer is someone who can be helpful to those in positions of power.

Skills

This section is devoted to the skills which a PC can pick up during her stint as an adventurer, as well as those she might have learned before beginning said stint. It is a list of things your character will be able to do, some of them very well. At least a glancing knowledge of most of these skills will be necessary, if not indispensable, to a well-rounded party. Without these skills, there will be many avenues worth pursuing that the party will not be capable of investigating.

Many of these skills presented herein are similar to those presented in earlier AMAZING ENGINE products. However, the differences between universes are significant enough that every player and GM would be well-advised to look them over carefully before choosing them.

Starting Skills

Your character's profession or species should indicate the starting skill pools available. After noting these, you can select a number of skills from these pools, one for every 10 points of your character's Learning. These skills can be chosen only from the skill pools made available by your profession. One important thing to remember is that beings from high-gravity worlds all automatically gain the High-Grav Maneuver skill, while those from low-gravity worlds gain the Low-Grav Maneuver skill free. This is to simulate their experience in dealing with these situations while growing up.

Choosing Skills

Before selecting the skills made available from the profession of the character, look over the character. Why would the character select one skill over another? What are the forces that shaped this person? Once you figure out why this character is as it is today, you'll not only be able to select reasonable skills, you'll also know what makes the character tick, making for a much more rewarding role-playing experience.

When selecting skills, it is usually a good idea to begin with those relating to the character's chosen profession. Making these skills consistent with the rest of the background of your character makes for a more believable PC. If your character was previously
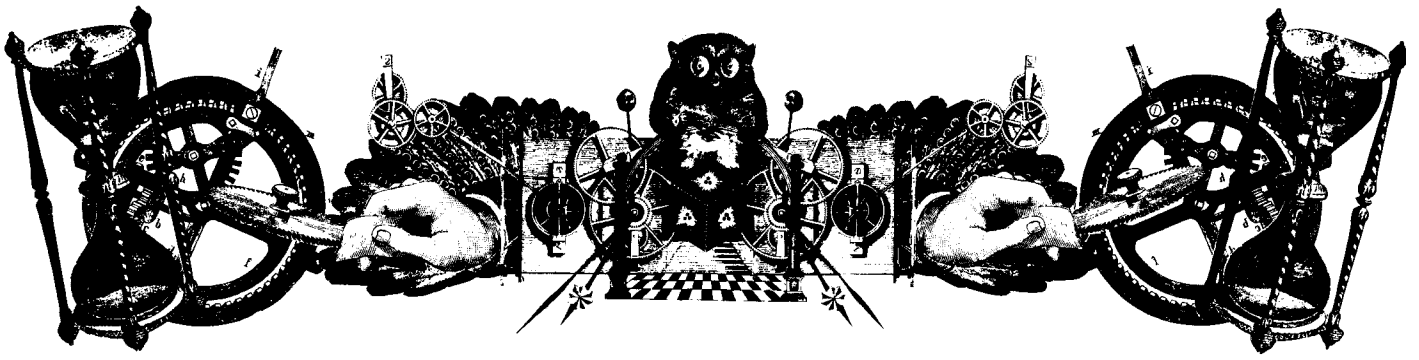
an Imperial servant, what branch did he work for? If she was a pirate, what was her method of piracy?

After you select the profession-related skills, work on those that might also interest your character. A dirt-farmer might have chosen Blaster Rifle because he once wanted to serve aboard a Morione cruiser. Likewise, a pampered noble might choose Wrestling because all her childhood friends were wrestlers.

Avoid the inclination toward selecting skills for their game advantage. While you will want your character able to cope well in the harsh galaxy of the Domain, you lose much of the enjoyment of role-playing by only choosing skills that will prove helpful in the game. Besides, who knows when Heraldry might come in handy? It might even save your life someday. Every skill will have its uses, sooner or later.

To buy a particular skill, one must first buy all the skills above it. One cannot specialize in a skill without learning those that precede it. See the "Skills" section in the "System Guide" portion of this book for a full explanation.

More Skills

This is not, of course, a complete list of everything a character can attempt. Given the vastness of the galaxy, it would be impossible to compile such a list. What is listed here are skills that can be of immediate use to a character, skills that are not highly special-ized. Skills such as Element Harvesting and Ship Assembly do not make for particularly exciting role-playing. Though they are essential for the Domain, they are not rife with adventure. The specialized knowledge they require is not going to be much use when fleeing Morione troopers through a deserted city.

Still, there will be skills a player will want a charac-ter able to call upon in an hour of need. The GM can create skills to fit these needs by following these guidelines.

- If the skill can fall under the Generic Skills descrip-tion (see that heading, later), it is generally accept-able to use it.
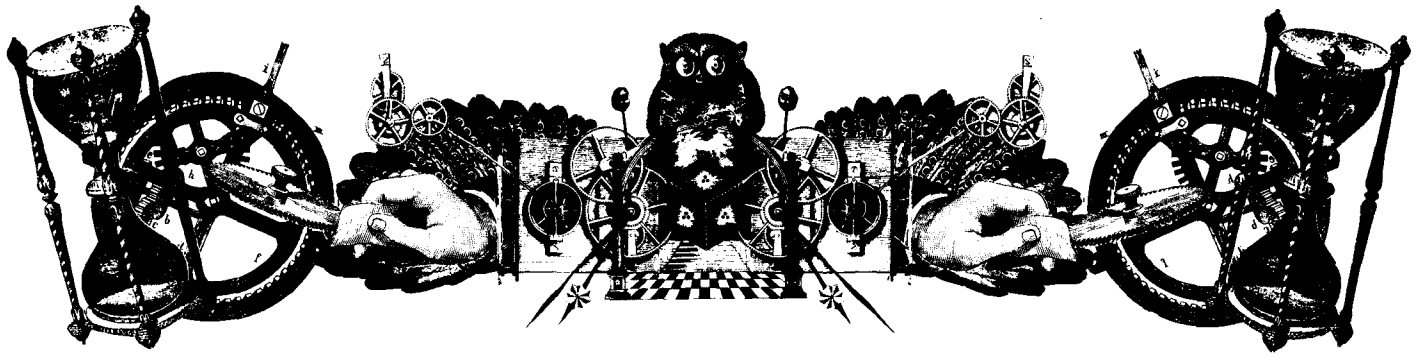
Skill Pools---

Communications

Personal (L)
Planetary (L)
Interplanetary (L)

Engineering

Electronics (L)
  Computers (L)
    Specific Type
  Robots (L)
    Specific Type
Mechanical (L)
  Personal
    Firearms
    Miscellaneous
Vehicular (L)
  Planetary
    Specific
  Spacecraft
    Drive
    Power
    Systems
    Weapons

Firearms

Sidearms (R)
Heavy Weaponry (F)

Humanities

Art (I)
History (L)
Languages (L)
Law (L)

Music (I)
  Specific Instrument
Philosophy (L)
  Alien Philosophy

Medicine

Field Medicine (I)
Sick Bay (L)
Xeno-Medicine

Military

Heraldry (L)
Military Protocol (L)
Military Science (L)
Security Systems (I)

Personality

Bluffing (C)
  Gambling (C)
Bribery (C)
Criminal (I)
Deals (C)
Disguise (Po)
Etiquette (C)
Leadership (Po)
Luck (Ps)
Protocol (L)
Psychology (I)

Physical Disciplines

Acrobatics (R)
Archery (R)
Climbing (F)
Gravity Maneuvers
  High Grav (F)
  Low Grav (R)

Hand to Hand Combat
  Barehanded (F)
    Brawling (F)
    Martial Arts (R)
  Melee Weapon
    Primitive (F)
    Modern Weapon Type (R)
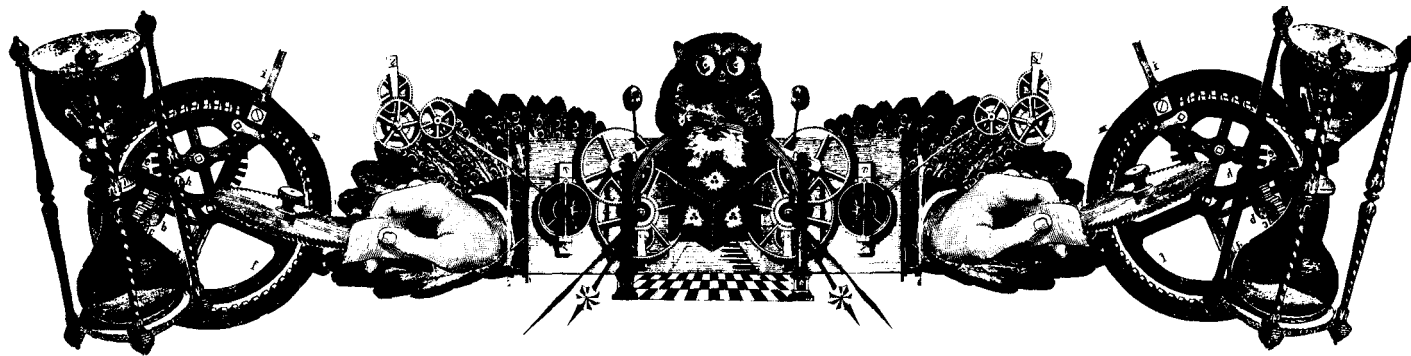Stealth (R)
Survival (W)
Swimming (F)
Throwing (R)

Science

Biology (L)
  Xeno-biology
Chemistry (L)
  Biochemistry
Physics (L)
  EPhysics (I)

Vehicles

Gunnery (R)
Navigation (L)
  Planetary
  Interstellar
Piloting (R)
  Specific Vehicle
    Planetary
      Combat (R)
    Space (L)
      Combat (R)
  eSpace (I)
Smuggling (I)

- The characters should not be allowed skills that would change the game drastically in their favor. Always consider what advantages a skill might provide the PCs.
- Use the skill with an NPC first. See what sort of effects result. If you are satisfied with the result, you can allow the skill in your campaign.
- Make sure the skill does not provide the characters with an impossible advantage; or, if it does, make sure the NPCs learn this skill too. While creating blasters with the firepower of a ship's laser might be fun for the characters, it also means the characters can run through the campaign with little opposition from anyone.

Penalties

Occasionally, characters will suffer penalties when attempting to use their skills. Sometimes this is because of the inherent difficulty of the skill; sometimes it is because they are attempting to use unfamiliar subsets of familiar skills.

Each skill pool is broken down into skills, specialties, sub-specialties, and enhancements. Characters attempting to use specialties in which they are skilled suffer a -10 penalty per sub-skill. That is, a character skilled in Hand-to-Hand Combat, but not Martial Arts, suffers a -20 to his skill check when attempting to use Martial Arts. The character suffers no penalties when attempting to use the skill regularly; it is only when that character wishes to apply it in a specific way that they must pay the penalty.

Skill Descriptions

The rest of the chapter is devoted to the descriptions of skills. Not all of those listed in the Skill Pool table **will** be described, for many are fairly self-explanatory. They are grouped by their pool. There is an overall description of the pool, followed by the descriptions of the individual skills. Skills that are not described can be adjudicated through the Generic Skill description below.

It should be noted that knowledge of a skill does not mean automatic success when the character attempts the skill. For easy applications of the skill, or when the outcome is certain, no skill check is required. However, when the outcome is in doubt, a skill check becomes necessary. Someone familiar with biology would recognize a plant without much difficulty; identifying a rare strain of Delassian tuber would be a challenge.

Generic Skills

Skills that appear on the character sheet but not in this listing are considered to be "generic skills." A character who knows a generic skill knows all the applications of that skill. For example, someone familiar with Swimming knows the various strokes, how to stay afloat, and how to teach someone else to swim.

Enhancements

Some skills on this list allow for enhancements, studies in particular skills. For example, there are enhancements allowed under Sidearms that would give your character a bonus when using a specific type of sidearm. Likewise, a character with an enhancement in a specific computer type under electronics is an expert on such systems.

An enhancement is worth a bonus of +10 to the skill check. It does not apply to other skills within the pool. That specific skill is a specialty of your character, one in which she has had intensive training. The other skills, while they might be familiar, are foreign enough that the bonus does not apply.

Margin Ratings

Some skills have margin ratings in their descriptions, listed as "Critical Success/Failure." This indicates that the skill is capable of being performed extremely well or of being completely disastrous when failed. For a critical success to come into play, the skill check must first succeed. If the 1 s digit of the check is less than the first number listed, the check succeeded admirably.
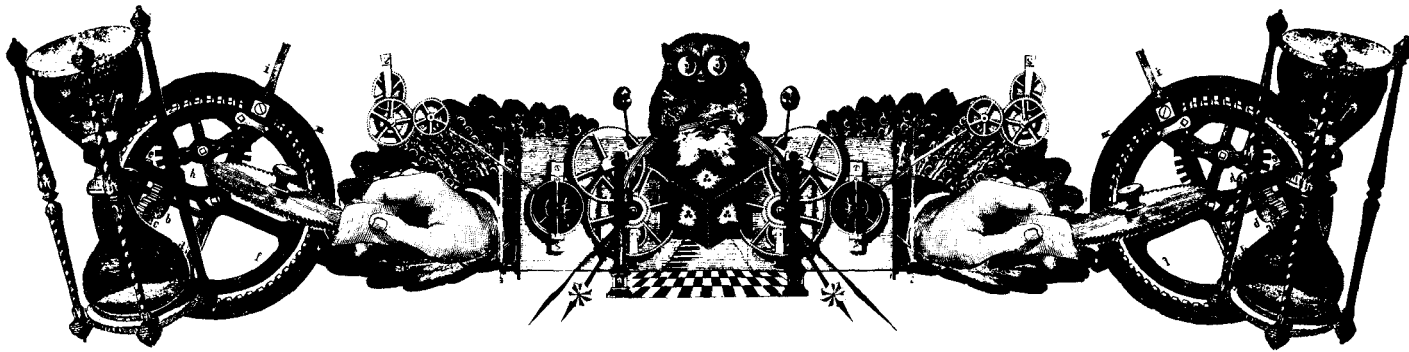
Likewise, a criticat·faifure first requires that the skill check be failed. Should this happen, and the ls digit of the roll be higher than the second number listed, your character has failed, and with grievous results. Skills to which the results of a critical success or failure can apply detail appropriate results.

Communications

The Communications pool is based not so much on the dynamics of person-to-person communication, but on the operation of the gear essential for long-range contact.

Personal (L): This skill allows the PC to use personal communications gear effectively.

Planetary (L): The character using this skill knows how to effectively use Tactical Relay Satellites to send messages across planetary surfaces, as well as how to tap into the Domain's information net from these same satellites.

Interplanetary (L): Your character has acquired the skill necessary to send messages across planetary systems or even light-years. By encoding personal messages within standard, approved messages being transmitted by the Domain, the character can effectively communicate with others across the interstellar gulfs.

Engineering

The Engineering pool allows the PC to understand the workings of various devices, both how to design and how to repair them.

Electronics (L): The character has had some training in dealing with balky electronic devices, and can repair most simple ones (such as personal communicators) without difficulty. More complicated devices give the character a penalty, which can be assigned by the GM.

Mechanical (L): The character has a mechanical bent, and can repair things mechanical. This includes such things as firearms, complex machines, and other miscellaneous equipment.

Vehicular (L): The character can repair many sorts of vehicles, keeping them stable and running. Not only can the character make modifications to the craft, she can also repair any damage taken in combat, given enough time and the correct tools. There is a significant difference between planetary craft and spacecraft. Planetary vehicles are basically one system, while spacecraft require more specialized knowledge for each of their systems in order to repair them fully. The drive, weapons, life-support, and maintenance systems all require specialized knowledge for them to function correctly.

Firearms

Familiarity with the Firearms pool gives the character ability to effectively wield the firearms of *The Galactos Barrier.*

Sidearms (R): Sidearms refers to any weapon that can be held without aid in one or two hands, such as blasters or blaster rifles. Since there is a standard design to these weapons, anyone with this skill can use the varied versions of blasters without penalty. The character can also take an enhancement in a specific weapon to make it that much more effective.

Heavy Weaponry (F): These are weapons that are so large as to require mounts or tripods. They have a significant amount of kick, unlike most firearms, and can actually inflict damage on spacecraft.

Humanities

The Humanities pool covers the various arts and sciences that round out a character. Though many of these may at first glance seem useless, there is no telling when they might prove useful to an enterprising adventurer.

Art (1): This encompasses art history, appreciation, and creation. The character is proficient in all of these.

Languages (L): The character knows another language fluently. Though this is not a necessary skill with the invention of the Diode, it can prove useful when dealing with species that have lost the technology to make the Diode.
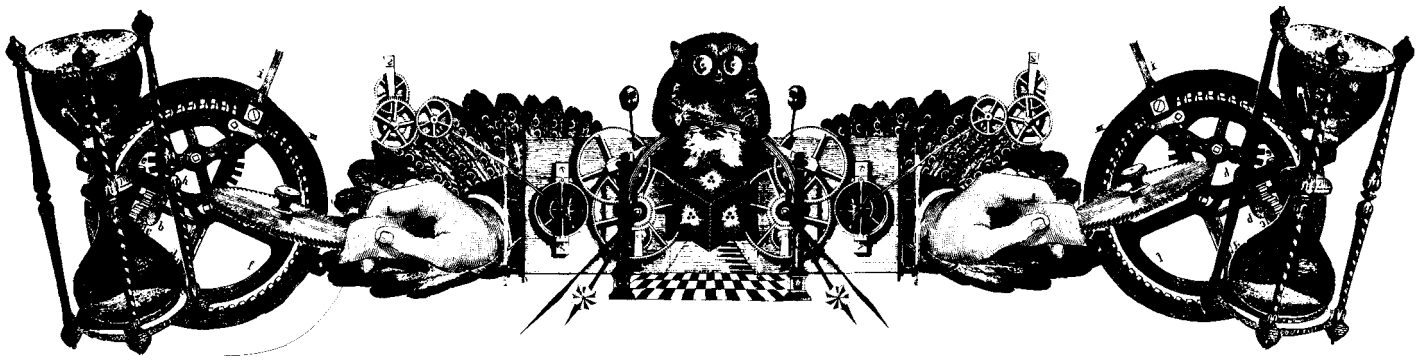
Law (L): The character is familiar with Domain law and the laws of the Scions, and can inform her companions of possible violations they may be committing.

Music (1): The character knows how to use a musical instrument, and understands the various forms of music that have evolved over the years in the Empire. The character may take a specialty in a specific instrument.

Medicine

Knowledge in the Medicine pool may prove to be the difference between life and death for many a party. The Medicine pool holds the key to understanding PCs' bodies. Failure to have at least one person in the party with intelligence in this area often results in the death of one or more characters.

Field Medicine (I): This is a critical skill to possess. It allows the character to use his medical knowledge without benefit of facilities. Even in difficult conditions such as battle, the character can try to save the life of a comrade.

Sick Bay (L): This skill allows the character to use a sick bay or hospital's facilities in order to facilitate healing. Without this skill, the character may very well watch his companions die before his eyes.

Xeno-Medicine (L): The character has studied the physiologies of other species, and can attempt to treat them as normal. That is, this skill allows the character to treat them using one of the sets of skills described above. Without this skill, characters are only competent to treat their own species using the above two skills. They suffer a -15 penalty when trying to treat a patient of another species, and on a failure they cause 2d8 damage.

Military

A character trained in the Military pool, usually someone from the Imperial Military or the Resistance, is familiar with one or more of the following:

Heraldry (L): The character recognizes the seals of the major Scions, and can identify them at a moment's notice. On a successful skill check, the character can also forge the heraldic devices of these Scions.

Protocol: The character knows basic military etiquette: who to salute, how to deal with superior officers, and ways around the military bureaucracy. This skill applies both to the Domain's and the Resistance's military.

Security Systems (1): The character can successfully circumnavigate most security systems, such as ship's locks, security overrides on computers, and PRMs on robots. A critical success means that the character can devise a permanent, personal door into that particular security system. A critical failure means that the system has locked down on the character; any sort of weapons the system have lock onto the character and fire. Otherwise, the alarm system goes off, drawing the attention of whoever is nearby. Criticals: S1/F7

Personality

Bluffing (C): The character knows how to fool people effectively, making them think that the character has some advantage of which they were not previously aware. The character must remain within the bounds of reason, of course. Few people will believe someone who tells them that he is holding a large weapon when he is obviously empty-handed.

Gambling (C): The characters know most major games of chance and how to bet on them. With a successful skill check, the character can cheat. A critical success means the character has cajoled his opponents into betting twice as much, while a critical failure means that the cheating has been spotted. Criticals: S2/F8

Bribery (C): This skill lets the character know whether a particular person is bribeable and big the bribe should be. The attempt must still be role-played; if the PC does it poorly, the official may well turn in the character. Likewise, if the character does it well, the official will probably take the bribe.

Criminal (I): The character knows how to get in touch with the local criminal underground, and how to deal with them once the contact is established. A critical
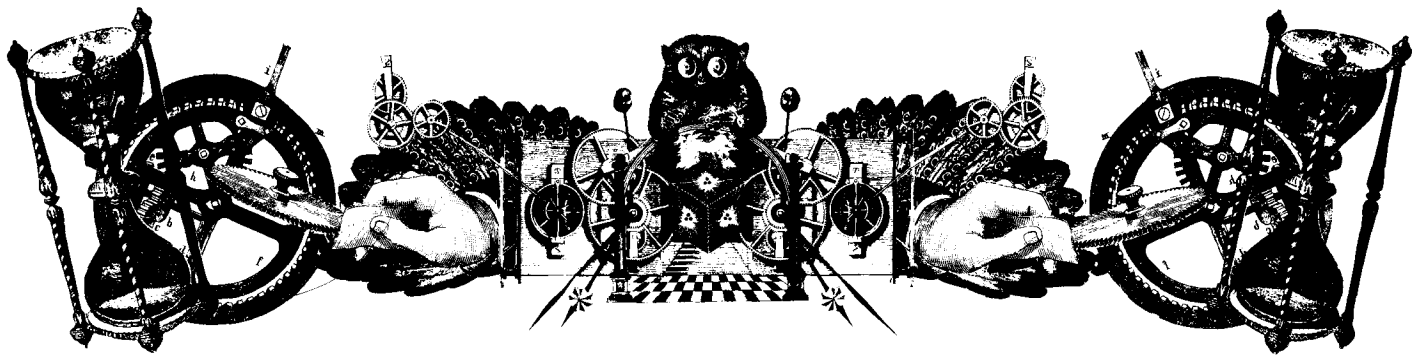
failure indicates that the character has actually contacted an officer of the law in disguise. Critical: -/F8

Deals (C): The character can haggle with storeowners and customers for the best price. If the character makes a successful skill roll, she can talk a shopkeeper down by 30%, or a customer up by 30%.

Disguise (Po): The PC can attempt to make a disguise, personal or for another, to make someone look like a different member of the same species. The character cannot make one species look like another, unless they are extremely close in appearance. A critical success means that the character has created a perfect disguise; no one will be able to recognize the disguised one. A critical failure means that he has botched the job, and the disguise fools no one. There is additional -20 penalty to this skill if the character is trying to create a disguise resemble a specific individual. Criticals: S3/F7

Etiquette (C): This skill gives the character knowledge of how to behave in certain situations. This can range from an audience with the Emperor to haggling with a local youth gang.

Luck (Ps): As befits the space opera tone of The Galactos Barrier, Luck plays an important part in the lives of many heroes. This is a skill that allows the PCs to survive potentially deadly situations. In a situation where the character may die, a successful Luck check means she loses all but one point of Body. If there are any Stamina points left from the attack, the character remains conscious. This Luck does not necessarily apply to the PCs near the character. The GM is encouraged to be creative in how the PC is saved by Luck.

If, for example, the character has been cornered by lupirals in the mountains of Mk'om (certainly fatal), a successful Luck roll could trigger a rockslide, carrying her down the hillside to fetch up in a ravine. Though she has but one Body point left, she can crawl to civilization and safety.

The character with Luck may use this skill a number of times equal to her Psyche divided by 10, per adventure (round down). If the character wants to push her Luck, she may make additional Luck rolls past this number. However, the first roll is made at 1/2

Psyche, the second at 1/4, the third at %, and so forth. If this push is ever failed, disaster strikes as the character's Luck finally switches for the worse. The GM is encouraged to be as inventive for the bad Luck as for the good.

Physical Disciplines

Acrobatics (R): The character has incredible balance and coordination, and, with a successful skill check, can use these to juggle three items, walk a tightrope for 10 meters, and fall 10 meters or less without damage.

Gravity Maneuvers: These skills allow a character to function effectively in different gravities. High Grav relies on Fitness because it requires an inordinate amount of strength to remain upright in heavy gravity; Low Grav requires Reflexes because the character must learn how to distribute her weight to best maneuver in the strange environment.

Hand-to-Hand Combat: The character has learned to fight hand-to-hand, a rare thing in a Galaxy where most of the killing is done long-range. There are two types of hand-to-hand: barehanded, and with weapons.

Barehanded

Brawling (F): The character charges into combat flailing, not using much of any sort of technique to beat her opponent senseless. These are not refined methods of fighting, they are simple maneuvers designed to hurt the opponent as much as possible.

Martial Arts (R): The character relies more on speed and agility to snake inside an opponent's guard to cause damage. Where Brawling is a purely physical exercise, Martial Arts requires a great deal of hand-eye coordination and dexterity to inflict the greatest possible damage.

Melee Weapon

Primitive (F): The character has learned how to fight with sticks, stones, and ancient swords.

Modern Weapon Type (R): This is the skill that Musicians use when they get involved in hand-to-hand combat. They use their Fugues against
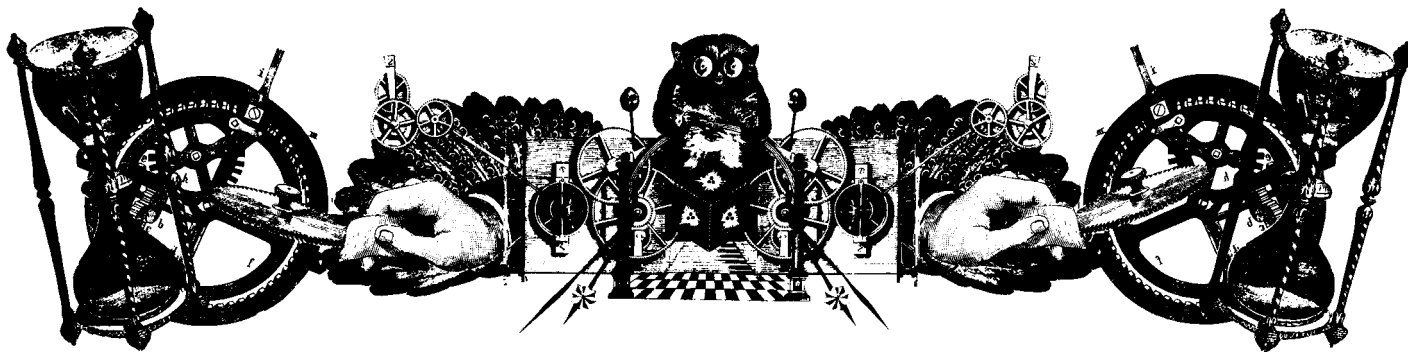
one another, seeking to get past their enemy's guard to destroy him. There are weapons similar to the Fugue that also use this skill; they are weapons designed to emulate the Fugue that require no Musical ability.

Stealth (R): The character has learned to sneak around. It allows the PC to sneak up behind guards, gaining a +15 to attacks, or to escape an area without the guard noticing. Unfortunately, this does not work for sensors; the character must have skill in Security Systems to pull that off.

Survival (W): The character knows how to survive in the wilds. This applies to all normally inhabitable planets, though different degrees of difficulty may apply for different planets. This skill allows the character to get water, food, shelter, and clothing for herself. Other characters will have to fend for themselves, for the needs of the first character will consume all her time.

Science

The character knows the intricacies of the various sciences, and can use them effectively to investigate many things. Xeno-biology refers to studying alien life forms. EPhysics gives the character knowledge of the strangeness of eSpace and eDrive. The character knows how to maneuver through eSpace to elude pursuers.

Vehicles

Those who take skills in the Vehicles pool are trained in the operation of various ships or ship's systems. They are familiar only with the operation, not with the repair and maintenance of these systems.

Gunnery (R): This skill allows your character to fire ship's weapons at opposing vehicles. Since the basic design of land and space weapons is similar, the character suffers no penalty when trying to use either one.

Piloting (R): The character can pilot a ship effectively, but must specialize in specific makes of vehicle, as well as specifying whether the skill is in atmosphere or space, for the two are immensely different. A truly well-rounded pilot knows how to pilot her craft in both, automatically adjusting from one to the other as the situation warrants. If the pilot wishes to be effective in combat, she must take a skill in that as well, for both atmosphere and space. Finally, most pilots take a skill in negotiating eSpace, so that they will not run the possibility of becoming lost in it.

Smuggling (I): This skill allows your character to carry contraband aboard a vehicle with little fear of being caught by standard port authorities; or, if your character wishes to search a ship for hidden compartments and the like, this is the skill to use. Every time your character wants to smuggle cargo, whether it be spices, money, black-market goods, or political refugees, he must make a successful skill check. Every point by which the character succeeds in the check is the penalty a searcher suffers when attempting to find contraband. Likewise, each point of a failed check is the bonus an inspector gains when searching. A critical success when hiding the goods means that the inspector must make a critical success roll as well; a critical failure indicates that the smuggler has left an obvious clue about the location of the hidden goods. Only a critical failure on the part of the authorities can fail to notice such a clue. *Critical Success/Failure:* S1/F8
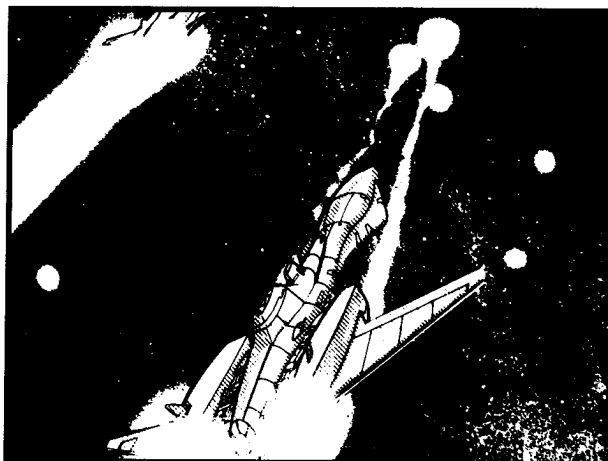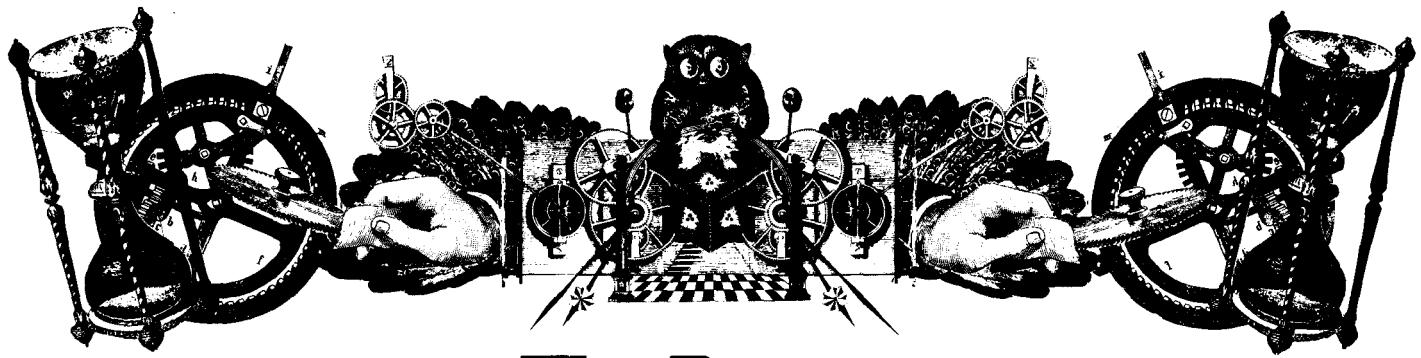
The Present

Old Man: "1 figure I'll sit this one out. 1 mean, I don't like the Domain much better than anyone else. On the other *hand,* 1 don't really relish the idea *of* being blown into atoms by imperial troopers, either. . . ."

Young Man: "Coward! You would doom us all just because you're afraid for your own *wrinkled hide!* Don't you see that the Resistance needs everyone it can get *if* it is to throw off the yoke *of* the Domain? Would you doom the Galaxy just because you're afraid *of* dying?"

Undercover Imperial Agent: "Well-spoken, young man! 1 tell you, I liked it so much that I'm placing you and your cautious friend under arrest. *Maybe* you *both* can tell us a little more about the Resistance, hmm? Gentlemen, *if you* wouldn't mind restraining these two, 1 *think* we'll be on our way."

-Conversation overheard in
The Grinning G'rax,
a saloon on the planet Mk'om.

The Frontier Mentality

There is a mindset among the beings of The Galactos Barrier called "the Frontier Mentality." This attitude persists largely *because* of the speed of communication *between* planets: that is, extremely slow. Since the *speed* of communication is only as fast as the fastest courier ship, each planet is *effectively* on its own. Though it falls under the dictates of the larger Domain, each area must, in effect, make its own rules. Each planet is *therefore* different from the rest, each with its own unique flavor.

The lack of communication also allows some amount of piratical or criminal behavior. As long as the *perpetrators leave* before long, and as long as they hit places where the Morione presence is weak, *there* is little chance of them being apprehended. Of course, they must always be wary of traps laid by the Domain's troops, for it is mainly through *these* that pirates and criminals are captured.

The Frontier Mentality also allows each citizen to carry a weapon of some sort. Since justice is always just a little slow, since the troopers of the Domain

seem to care more about maintaining the Domain than upholding the law, citizens have to take it upon *themselves* to provide for their defense. It is not an uncommon sight to *see* citizens wearing blaster pistols, though this is far less common on the Core worlds, and more common in the worlds toward the fringe of the Domain.

The Bureaucracy of the Domain has done its best to quash this *"rebellious* spirit," but so far has had little success. The Morione Domain is too far-flung to *effectively regulate* it all at once, and there are not nearly enough troopers in the Domain to control *every* planet with an iron fist. The law is therefore a loose thing; it can be avoided, but one would be best advised to make sure to get in and get out quickly. While the law is loose, it is also implacably hard.

High-Tech Toys/Low-Tech Fantasy

The *universe* of The Galactos Barrier has some extremely advanced technology. However, some of the logical extrapolations of the technology *here* are absent. Though players might wonder at this, it is for their own good. If the Morione Domain *were* equipped with the technology that should result from the technology of which they are capable, the PCs would *never* have a chance of survival; or, at least, their chances would be *severely* diminished.

If *there* are ever any questions about technology, or what should or shouldn't be allowed, the GM is the final arbiter. Some like their campaigns very high-tech, while others *prefer* minimal technology. This is a judgment calf best left to the GM, for *there* is certainly no room to describe all the miracles that could be *developed* by the old Empire or the Morione Domain. The GM should simply use imagination, picturing the flavor of the campaign, and allow technology based on that mental image. In a later chapter, you'll find a sampling of what the Domain's scientists are capable of inventing.
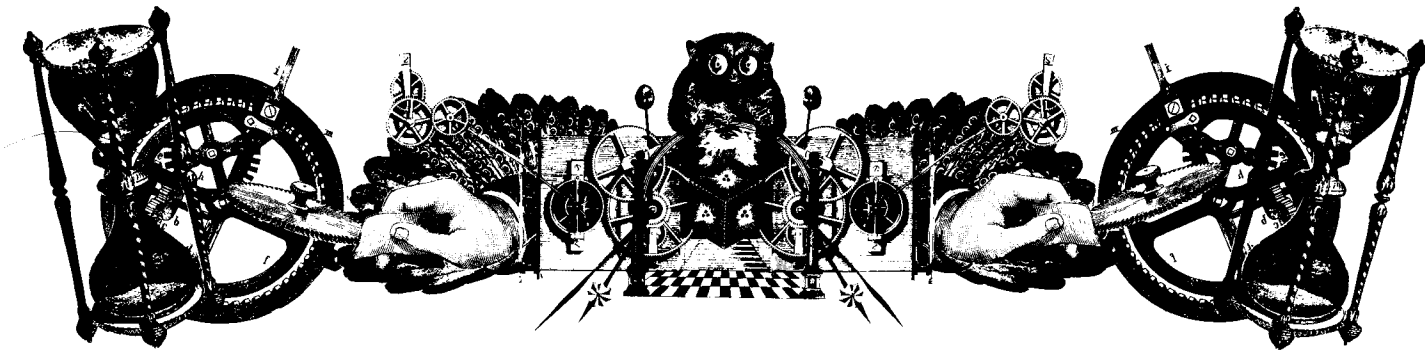
NPCs

Listed below are the templates and statistics for some of the Non-Player Characters the PCs are likely to encounter. Most of these have base numbers in their templates; these are the averages for NPCs such as this. If the GM wishes to adjust these one way or another, perhaps to reflect the differences between various citizens, that is perfectly acceptable.

The last few NPC templates do not provide these numbers. This is because these NPCs are all varied enough that the GM should develop the characters personally, as important NPCs, keeping the long-term goals of the campaign in mind. If, for example, the GM does not want to play with the alien invader scenario, the Alien Invader template can be revised so that it becomes a typical alien NPC, one who may have important information for the PCs.

Bureaucrat

Fit: 30	Lea: 50	Psy:30	Cha:30
Ref: 35	Int:40	Wil:35	Pos:55
Stamina: 2 3		Body: 10	

Skills: Communications (all aspects), History, Law, Etiquette.
Equipment. The Diode, access to all communications equipment, slave bands.
Description: The Bureaucrat is a servant of the Domain, existing, ostensibly, to ease the flow of information and services to the citizens of the Domain. In reality, bureaucrats have become parasites on the citizens, making their lives more difficult with endless rules and regulations. The average bureaucrat is smug and secure in his power, annoying because he can be without repercussions. When he is seriously threatened, he collapses into a whimpering mass, doing his best to expedite his antagonists' progress so that he can turn them in as soon as they leave.

Trooper

Fit: 50	Lea: 50	Psy:30	Cha:50
Ref: 55	Int:45	Wil:45	Pos:40
Stamina: 33		Body: 17	

Skills: Sidearms, Field Medicine, Military Protocol, Criminal, Brawling.
Equipment. Blaster rifle, monofilament knife, Medkit, Diode, body armor
Description: The standard Morione Trooper is one who has received some training in the use of a weapon and basic physical training. Though they are generally not a serious threat to a well-armed group of people, they serve to cow the populace of the Domain effectively. In combat, their preferred method is to simply swamp any opponents with their superior numbers; there are usually 10-40 troopers in a squad, and they respond quickly, if not always effectively. They are not cowards, however, and will usually sacrifice their lives for the Domain.

Elite Imperial Soldier

Fit: 65	Lea: 50	Psy:40	Cha:40
Ref: 70	Int:50 Wil:45		Pos:50
Stamina: 38		Body: 22	

Skills: Sidearms, Heavy Weaponry, Field Medicine, Security Systems, High-Grav and Low-Grav, Martial Arts.
Equipment: Monofilament sword, blaster, blaster rifle, medkit, body armor
Description: The Elite Imperial Soldier is one who been raised his entire life to serve the Domain, and, more specifically, the Emperor. He has been trained by the finest instructors of the Barsilate, and will sacrifice his life for the cause of the Empire and the Emperor. He is a fanatic, and only the most jarring of incidents will strip away his confidence in his cause. He has been trained to fight hand-to-hand, from afar, or from spaceships. There are few methods of death in which the Elite Imperial Soldier is not versed.
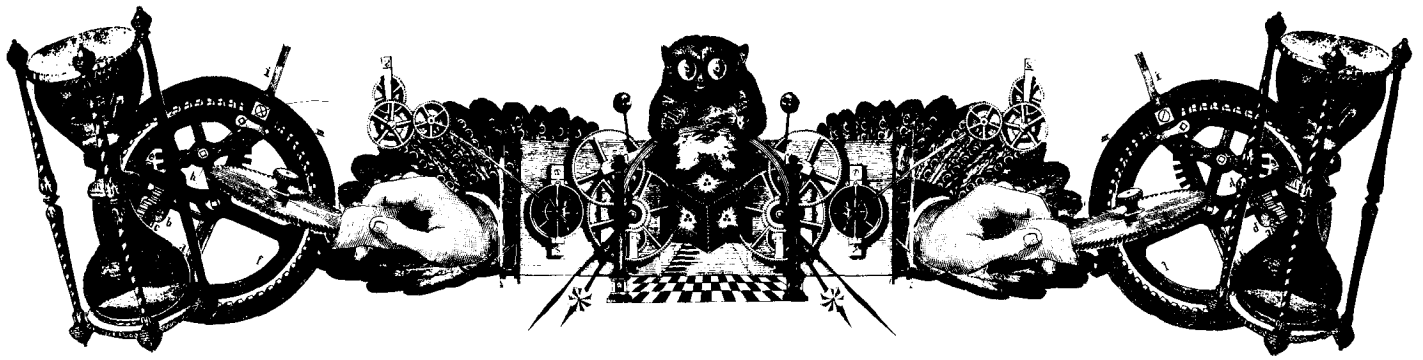
Resistance Fighter

Fit: 50	Lea: 50	Psy:30	Cha:50
Ref: 55	Int:45	Wil:45	Pos:40
Stamina: 33		Body: 17	

Skills: Sidearms, Planetary Communications, Field Medicine, Criminal, Planetary Combat Piloting
Equipment. Medkit, blaster, Tactical Relay Set
Description: The Resistance Fighter is someone who has devoted her life to aiding the Resistance. Through one set of circumstances or another, she has pledged her life to destroying the Domain and establishing a new reign. She might be someone working for anarchy, the descendant of a S'farnese pirate, or the daughter of a discontent noble who wants to strike against the Domain.

Civilian

Fit: 30	Lea: 30	Psy:25	Cha:30
Ref: 35	Int:35	Wil:30	Pos:25
Stamina: 17		Body: 10	

Skills: Monofilament Knife, random profession
Equipment: Monofilament knife, PersComm
Description: The Civilian is a typical citizen of the Domain. He is thoroughly unremarkable, the average person in the Galaxy. Though individuals might know something of value, most citizens are uninformed, leading their lives in a bubble of isolation. As long as they can live comfortably, they do not care how the Domain is run.

Pirate

Fit: 5d	Lea: 5d	Psy:4d	Cha:5d
Ref: 5d	Int:4d	Wil:5d	Pos:4d
Stamina:1/3(W+R)		Body: 1/3F	

Skills: Firearms, Piloting (Space, Combat), Bluffing, Criminal
Equipment: Blaster pistol, spacecraft, monofilament knife
Description: The Pirate is the outlaw of the spaceways, having forsaken an ordinary life to plunder the merchant ships that travel through space. He is usually found near inhabited worlds, though not the same one for more than several days. Pirates know the value of striking quickly and disappearing into space, constantly eluding the forces of Morione Domain.

Death Robot

Fit: 7d	Lea: 6d	Psy:0d	Cha:2d
Ref: 7d	Int:4d	Wil:0d	Pos:0d
Stamina: 1/3(W+R)		Body: 1/3F	

Skills: Sidearms, Heavy Weapons, Hand-to-Hand Combat (all aspects), Death Robot Engineering, Piloting (all aspects)
Equipment: Fitted with all sorts of death-dealing devices, ranging from stun weapons to heavy blasters.
Description: The Death Robot is one of the fine battledroids that. escaped into hiding when the Circuitry Wars ended. It has now returned, seeking vengeance for its lost kinsmen. Perhaps the PCs stumble across its hiding place on a remote arctic world, and become involved in a game of hide-and-seek, with their survival as the prize for escaping. It is, no doubt, one of the toughest foes the party will ever face, for it is designed purely for combat, and has no compunction about killing organic life forms.
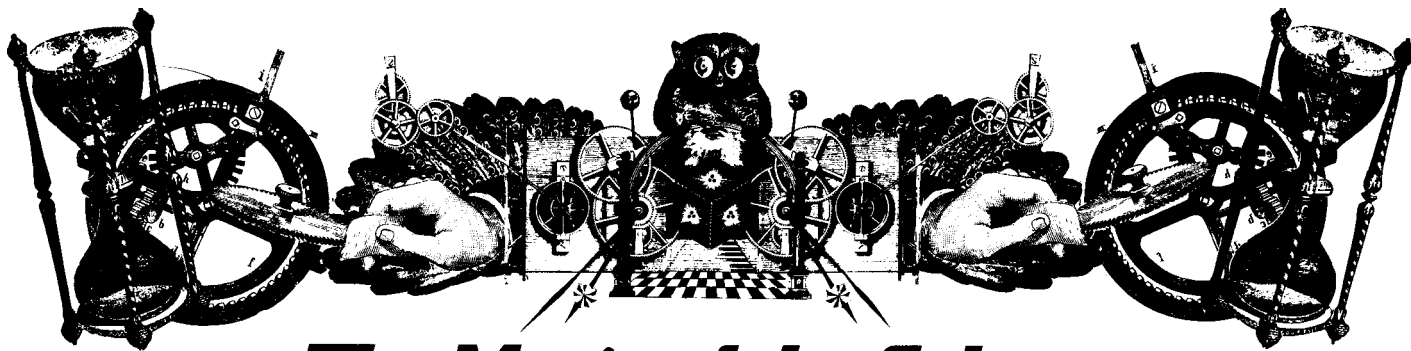
The Music of the Spheres

The *Music is* a beautiful harmony, flowing through all things. It is the *Music* that gives matter cohesion, the *Music* that provides life. And when used properly, it is the *Music* that builds the strength *of* me and my brethren.

> -Jayess Bokk, a Harmonian

The *Music is* a discordant jumble *of* notes, a loud roaring *of* glorious chaos. Its driving, tumultuous disorder is entropy, the force that challenges the universe every second. By embracing the Music, I challenge the rest *of* the Universe in my own way. I can use my Music-given power however I see fit, for good or for evil. Yet 1 feel as though 1 am the tool *of* the Music, working its will through my will. A glorious thought indeed!

> -Ygorra Stranvsk, a Discordian

Both the Harmonians and Discordians have it wrong. The Music is not a stable pattern *of* notes that conforms solely to their world views. The Music is a melody, a combination *of* Harmony and Discord. It is from this realization, the realization that the Music is just a matter *of* perspective, that we Followers *of* the Melody draw our power. While we do not have the awesome abilities that the fanatics on both sides can achieve, we certainly have a more healthy view *of* it than they do.

> -Gie d'Yeli, a Bassist Melodian

There is, some say, a tune that runs through the galaxy. Only a gifted few can hear it, and the potential for great power lies in their hands because of it. None are truly sure of the nature of the Music, for its nature defies description. It is, most believe, a music that emanates from all things, living and dead, animate and inanimate. It is the force of life and the force of entropy intertwining, matter and antimatter embracing. Anything that has ever existed and ever will exist combines to make the Music that echoes in the empty places between stars and reverberates through the heart of every living being.

With this said, it is easy to understand that the Music is far too much, far too big, for anyone to comprehend the whole. Yet although the true scope of the Music is beyond anyone, each can hear fragments of it. Every being with the ability pursues individual pieces of the melody, which varies depending on a being's personal orientation. There are three major schools of thought regarding the Music: the Harmonians, the Discordians, and the Melodians.

Each of these three groups can manipulate the universe through their understanding of the Music. What some would call magic and impossible, the Musicians call reality. Through their understanding of the Music, they can shape the universe to their will; or, put another way, they can cause the universe to be more like their fragment of the Music dictates.

The exact mechanics of Music are a mystery even to those who use it in their ordinary lives. Those who practice the Music say that when they see something that needs to change, or conceive of something that would make the universe more whole (as they perceive it), they open themselves to the Music and let it flow through them, making the changes it sees fit to make. Yet willpower seems to come into play here, shaping the Music as it emerges, pushing the Music into a form that is not entirely free of the user's needs. Each user's perceptions color the tone of the Music, forming the Music into Harmony, Discord, or Melody.

It seems that those who have the ability to hear the Music have always done so, yet they require some sort of training to bring it to its fullest potential. Those who go untrained have little idea of the possibilities that await them.

PCs who would follow the mystical ways of the Music of the Spheres must have Spirit as their major character Ability Pool. No matter their actual scores in Psyche and Willpower, they are the only ones who can use the Music to its fullest possibilities. Others may have a small amount of potential, perhaps enough to resist the Galactos Barrier. These must have Spirit ranked second. Those with Spirit ranked third or fourth have no
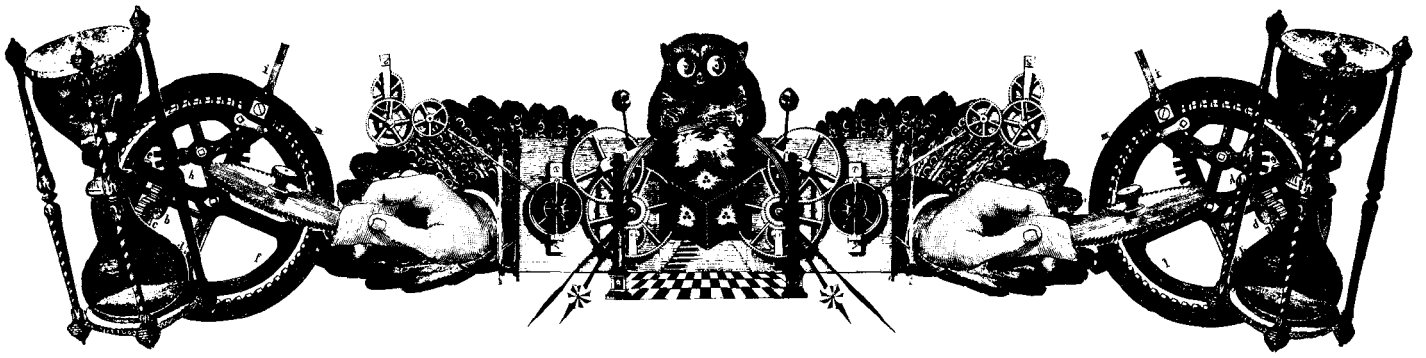
potential 'and cannot develop Musically, no matter how high their Psyche and Willpower might be.

Once you determine that your character has Musical potential, you have several options. The character can search for a mentor in one of the three groups. Or, PCs can elect to try to unlock their potential themselves. They can also ignore this potential; some would say that the power of Music causes far more trouble than it cures. This group, far larger than one would suspect, has seen the price playing with the Music can exact, and warns anyone it can from taking that path. Whatever choice the PCs make, it is sure to change their lives.

Creators' Note: *We suggest that you look at the "Glossary of Terms" on page 142 before reading further in this section. For those of you who have some musical training, this will lessen any possible confusion caused by the ways we use familiar terms. For those of you who don't know a staff from a coda, it won't really matter ... but you'll enjoy it anyway.*

The History of the Music

The Music has existed as long as the stars themselves; those who can hear it have existed ever since life first gained sentience. Until the days of the ancient Empire, when it was first categorized and more fully understood, those who heard the Music and could use it were called witches, magicians, and worse. Some of them, incorrectly understanding the Music, believed they dealt with creatures from other dimensions, and invented religions around their understanding of the Music. Others died horribly when their primitive, superstitious neighbors seized them out of fear.

To those with the potential, then, it came as a tremendous relief when a number of mystics codified and perfected the use of the Music, explaining to the rest of the Empire the mechanics of using the Music. While those without potential were still frantically jealous of the power they were denied, they no

longer feared it as something unholy, a throwback to earlier, more dangerous times.

The Emperor hired these mystics as tutors and professors for the Musical University, an interstellar institution for learning, open to all Imperial citizens with the ability to hear the Music. Early on, the University split into three Colleges, each studying a specific aspect of the Music. One focused mainly on Harmony, another on Discord, while the third sought the mysteries of the combination between the two, the Melody they created.

The massive influx of citizens seeking the power of the Music forced the three Colleges to move to different worlds, where each would have more space to experiment and teach. This separation proved to be the downfall of the Music, for without the cooperation the three Colleges had previously, they began to think that their way of study was the only way. The Music became their life, and any who disagreed with them were to be considered enemies. Eventually, knowing that the other sects were spreading "lies" about the Music, each of them began preparations for war.

When the Musical War erupted, it did so suddenly and bloodily. Hundreds of thousands perished as preemptive strikes destroyed the College worlds, and terror reigned as Musical fleets roamed the spaceways, searching for their implacable foes. The war wound down as the participants died, though it never ended completely. To this day, the three groups of Musicians fight bitterly, keeping the war going longer than any known space-faring civilization has survived.

The cost of the War was in more than lives. Many of the marvels discovered in the early days of the Music were forever lost to future generations, the disciplines that led to great power forgotten in the rubble of the War. Much of the potential of the early days was lost as each side struggled to find more and more potent weapons from the Music, forgetting the wonderful things that could be crafted for peace. In their never-ending vendetta against each other, the organized groups of Musicians doom the Music to a slow, painful end.
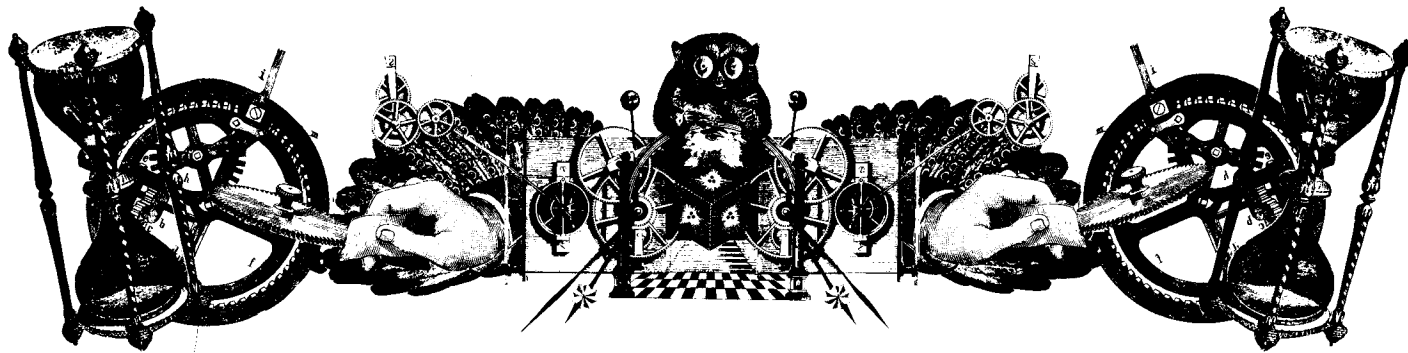
Unlocking Your PC's Potential

Though much harder than having the trained professionals of the various sects perform the unlocking, those who have managed to do it themselves claim far greater satisfaction than those who have let another do it for them. There is an additional benefit to self-training: owing no one allegiance.

However, the drawbacks are as severe. There is a chance of causing irreparable self-damage, and the members of the sects regard one who is self-trained as a renegade, one who is not to be trusted. Although they hate each other, the sects are united in their distrust for renegades. Though they do not actively hunt these renegades, they will never offer assistance unless it furthers their own goals.

As previously mentioned, any PC with the Spirit Ability Pool ranked first may attempt to unlock his or her potential. However, the chance of success for those who have lower Attribute scores is severely limited. PCs have a base chance of unlocking potential equal to the average of Psyche, Willpower, and Intuition; that is, add the three together and divide the result by three. The resulting number is the percentage chance the PC has of succeeding in unlocking Musical potential.

The ritual is demanding and very intense. If the roll fails, the character cannot try again until his or her Psyche has increased by 10 points. However, the PC suffers no ill effects unless the roll was greater than 85. In this case, consult the table below for the possible results of such a failure.

Potential Failure

Roll	Result
85-90	**Roll** vs. Psyche; failed roll causes permanent loss of 1 d10 points of Psyche.
91-95	**Roll** vs. Willpower; failed roll causes permanent loss of 1 d10 points of Willpower.
95-99	**Roll** vs. Intuition; failed roll causes permanent loss of 1d10 points of Intuition.
100	**Roll** vs. average of Psyche, Willpower, and Intuition. Failed roll indicates immediate death.

Though death is an extremely rare occurrence among those attempting to unlock their own potential, it is an effective deterrent to more than 99% of those who wish to explore the Music. This is at least part of the reason that the renegades of Music are looked upon with some trepidation, as well as no small amount of awe.

Scale of Temperament

Each person who follows the way of the Music must make a choice at the beginning of their Musical career as to which Scale they wish to follow. Even if they have not been trained by a member of one of the established Musical Colleges, their temperament will naturally lead them along one of the paths later described, unless they can find another means by which to be judged. Every untrained PC starts at the exact mid-point of this Staff (that is, in Melody), but they can move along the Staff, toward Harmony or Discord, or they can remain in Melody as their hearts desire after they jump onto the Staff.

PCs are not forced to stay within one group. However, they are more powerful if they choose one Scale and stay with it, rather than vacillating from end to end. Every time a PC permanently shifts into another Scale, forsaking his allegiance to the old, he takes a -5 penalty to all Musical endeavors for 15 workings of the Outer Fifth, or for 45 workings of the Inner Fifth. (See "Using the Music," the Inner Fifth and the Outer Fifth.) Also, the Musician's old group will seek his destruction for his betrayal of them and their tenets. They will not rest until that character is gone, for he carries the secrets of the group.

The Musical Colleges

Before any further discussion of these groups, it must be understood that they do not see themselves in terms of good and evil, though they are more likely to ascribe sinister motives to their opponents. The main difference between them is more of a philosophical nature, a debate on how the universe behaves, or at least, should behave. Their argument is based on
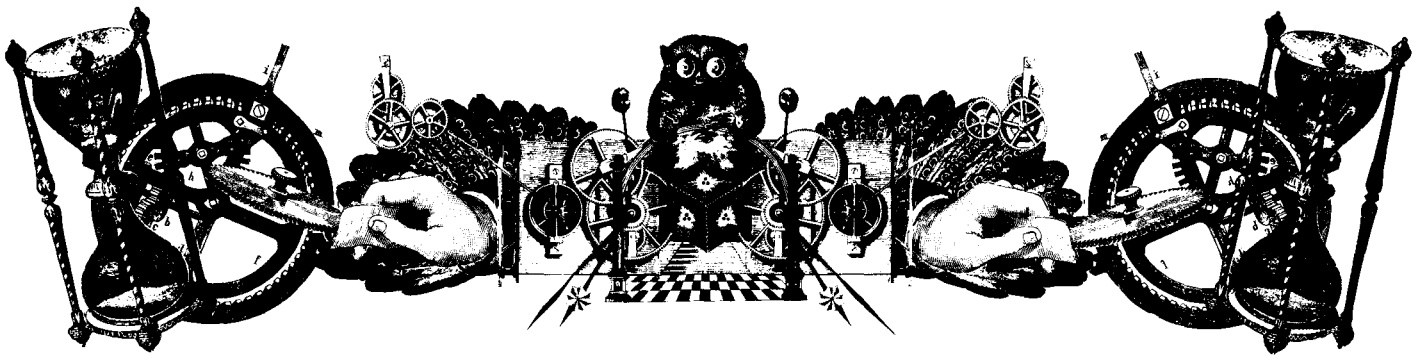
order and entropy, or an even synthesis between the two.

Because of the Colleges' different viewpoints, Musicians of one Scale often hate those of the others, feeling that their Music is working against the best interests of the cosmos. The more fanatical of each sect actively seek to bring about the others' downfall, so that their own might triumph.

Their conflicting desires give them different powers, as well. The Harmonians are more likely to have healing powers, powers that unite things into a more perfect whole, as well as those that promote stasis and stagnation. The Discordians have abilities that more perfectly stress individuality, keeping things from joining together, while also promoting entropy and anarchy. The Melodians champion a balance between the two, yet suffer in the area of great personal power; in making compromises between the two, they limit their potency.

The differing attitudes serve another purpose. They discourage Discordians from using powers that are more true to the Harmonian nature, while ensuring the same difficulty for Harmonians wishing to use the Discordian power. Any Harmonian attempting to use a power from the Discordian Scale (and vice versa) does so with a terrible penalty, which is more clearly defined later in this chapter. (See "Dissonance.")

The entries below describe the various Scales of the Music. Each has its own pocket summary. There are three distinctions among the followers of any given Musical College. Though they are not formal designations, they should serve the GM and players in defining the PCs and NPCs. The three distinctions are Mild, Moderate, and Fanatic.

Mild: Mild practitioners tend to be far more relaxed about things than their brethren. They do not take things to extremes, and often do not get involved in the affairs of their fellows. They are members of the sect in name only, preferring to live and let live. The least powerful of any group tend to be the Mild followers, since they have no real vested interest in preserving the power of the group.

Moderate: Moderate followers have no strong leanings one way or another. They are devoted to their sect, but generally not enough to go to war over petty differences. However, they can be persuaded by charismatic leaders to carry out some of the society's dirty work. They have fairly strong beliefs, but are not rigid in these beliefs.

Fanatic: Fanatics embody both the worst and the best qualities of the sect. On the one hand, they devote their lives to understanding the possibilities inherent in their choice of Music, and seek to bestow its benefits on the rest of the galaxy. On the other hand, they are close-minded and unwilling to accept new ideas, and especially hate those of rival sects. These are the ones who launched the secret wars that destroyed much of the Musical learning of the previous millennia.

By their very nature, the most powerful tend to be the Fanatics of the sect. Though this is not always the case, the nature of the Music is such that the more fanatical tend to flow toward the ends of the spectrum. Their devotion to their subject is such that they allow little to stand in the way of their quest for more power and more control over the Music.

The Harmonians

The Harmonians strive for law, order, and uniformity of purpose. The Music they hear is regular and paced, beautiful strains of perfect harmony. The Music they strive to bring into being reflects this harmony, though occasionally through their actions they cause tiny notes of Discord. Still, they do their best to promote harmony, and do so by promoting order wherever they can find it. For this reason alone, they support and are supported by the Morione Domain, the most powerful force for order in the Galaxy. Not all Harmonians support the Domain, but most do.

The most powerful Piece the Harmonians have, their Coda, is called the Galactos Barrier: a single, unwavering note of purest Harmony that has the potential to turn entire planets into calcified, unyielding statuary, spinning off into eternity as cold stone.
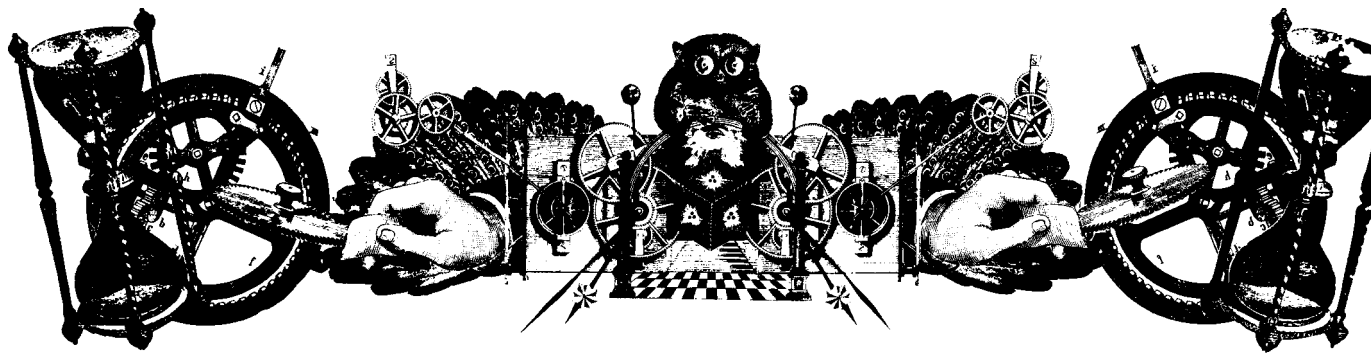
The Discordians

Discord strains toward chaos, for individuality and freedom. Its followers delight in paradox, in revealing the universe as a place that is not at all logical. They speak of things obliquely and indirectly, forcing people to see beyond the commonly accepted facade. This is but one of the reasons why, though they seek individual expression, they work together as a distinct group.

Though the Domain does not actively hunt down Discordians, it acknowledges them as enemies, for they constantly preach discord and anarchy. Discordians of Moderate or Fanatic leaning will never work for the Morione Domain; the very nature of the order-enforcing Domain is repulsive to the individualistic Discordians.

The Music Discordians hear and produce is jangling and sometimes irritating, the more so the more powerful the Discordian producing it. The Discordians revel in it, and seek constantly to make more.

The Discordians' Coda, of which they are most proud, is the Power of Entropy, the exact opposite of the Galactos Barrier. Instead of holding the molecules together for all eternity, Entropy destroys the bonds between them, utterly annihilating the object.

The Melodians

Melody seeks to balance between the two other groups, seeing both as too extreme. Though the others have the mighty powers on their side, the Followers see that the Harmonians and the Discordians have both limited themselves by failing to accept the good points of the other. Their Music is, most would acknowledge, an agreeable mixture between harmony and discord, a discernable tune emerging from the chaos of the discord, wrought by the magic of harmony.

However, they do not command the awesome energies the other two do. Instead, the Melodians draw their power from the fact that they can freely use many of the powers from the other two without damaging themselves appreciably. Their strength lies in their diversity.

The Renegades

The renegades are those who owe allegiance to no one group, instead following their own personal agenda. These are the mercenaries in the Musical War, glissading through the Score with little penalty. Their disadvantage, however, is that they cannot use the more powerful Pieces that the Musical groups command. A Renegade can use the Inner Fifth of am Scale without penalty, but suffers a -20 per step of the Outer Fifth, and she cannot even dream of using the Galactos Barrier or Power of Entropv.
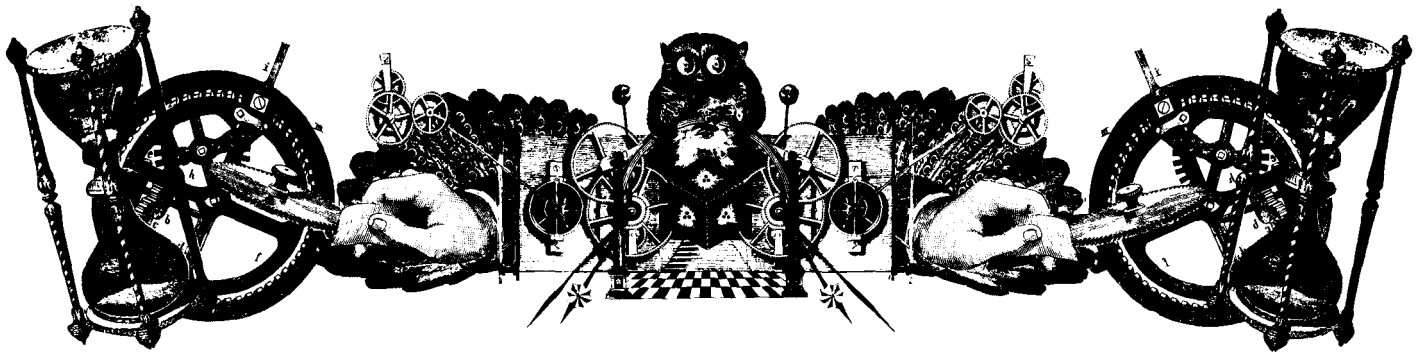
Using the Music

All Musicians have a certain amount of power they can summon to do their bidding, in the form of Musical Pieces. The quantity of the Music available to them is dependent on their Attribute scores. The power they can access is measured in terms of Decibels (dBs). The more powerful a Musician is, the more dBs at his, her, or its disposal, and thus the more Pieces available to the Musician. The **number of dBs a Musician has is figured by averaging the character's Psyche and Willpower.** Most characters will therefore not be able to access the more powerful Pieces; for this, they must use a device called a Crescendo (see later).

The Musician must spend these dBs before attempting the Piece. After the dBs have been spent, the Musician may then roll against Psyche to determine whether the Piece was successful. If the roll is too high, the Piece fails; likewise, if the roll was low enough, the Piece was successful.

The Crescendo

A Crescendo is a device used by Musicians to store extra power, to allow them to use the most powerful of Pieces. It is a device that each Musician must craft individually; the Crescendo is attuned to the Musician who created it and that Musician only.

The creation of a Crescendo is an arduous process, and one that is possible only for those who have stud-

ied the Outer Fifth. Those who can use the Outer Fifth automatically know how to create one of these, while those who have not achieved that level will never know.

The Crescendo can be empowered with up to half of the Musician's dBs, and it can store them until the Musician needs to draw upon them. When its store has been exhausted, the Musician can restore it simply by pouring his dBs into the device. The Musician can then regain dBs normally. Thus, with a fully charged Crescendo, a Musician has at his command one and one-half times his maximum number of dBs (half in the Crescendo, plus his full complement within himself).

The Crescendo can be any object larger than a finger and smaller than man-sized. The size of the chosen object has no meaning; all can store as many dBs as the Musician chooses. Most Musicians wear their Crescendoes around their necks as talismans, though there are some who have been known to use Fugues and even blasters as their Crescendos. If a Crescendo is destroyed, the Musician is free to make another. However, if it has been stolen, the Musician cannot make another-as long as the first is in existence, the Musician must reclaim it to use it.

The Inner Fifth and the Outer Fifth

Each Piece a Musician wishes to use has a cost in dBs. The more powerful Pieces naturally require more power, a greater expenditure of dBs. The Pieces are arranged on a Staff by Scale; that is, by Harmony, Melody, or Discord. The placement of a Piece on a Staff determines its difficulty. Those exactly in the middle between the two Staffs are called sotto voce, and are extremely simple to perform. Even untrained Musicians can use these Pieces without difficulty, at the cost of only 5 dBs. Then, moving into the Staffs themselves, the Pieces that are closer to the center, rather than the edges, are the easiest to perform.

The first 5 steps (lines and spaces) of each Staff, working from the center outward, are called the Inner Fifth. These cost 10 dBs per increment; that is, for 1st step Pieces, the cost is 10, 2nd step Pieces cost 20,

and so forth. The next five lines in each Staff are called the Outer Fifth, and many take more than mere dBs as their cost.

Speaking only in terms of power, there are two more distinct groups of Musicians. There are those who do not have the ability to achieve great works, and those who can alter the fabric of reality. Those who can perform only small feats of Music use only the inner Fifth of their Measure. Those with true power can use the full range of steps, both the inner and Outer Fifth.

The Musicians who wish to use the Outer Fifth must be trained in the use of the Outer Fifth; its secrets cannot be unlocked by mere study. Renegades may attempt to probe the Outer Fifth without training. However, the risks are great, far greater than unlocking potential without a mentor. Even renegades seek out more accomplished Musicians to discover the secrets of this greater power.

The ritual for unlocking the Outer Fifth is arduous, both mentally and physically. It demands a complete sacrifice of Musical practice for the week previous to the ritual, as well as a full stock of dBs. Immediately upon beginning the ceremony, the Musician must drain her entire stock of dBs into the surrounding air, to charge the air with Music. She then draws the power back into herself, suddenly. The character doing this must then make a Willpower check, with a penalty of -10. If the check succeeds, the character can use the Outer Fifth ... after a week's rest. If the check fails, the character may attempt to make one more Willpower check at -20. If this check fails, the Musician suffers complete and instant immolation, burning into ash within 10 seconds. There is nothing anyone can do to revive that character. Though this may seem a harsh penalty, no one requires Musicians to unlock this potential; they can remain content with the Inner Fifth if they do not want to risk themselves in such a fashion.

Bassists and Treblists

There are yet more divisions within the Scales. Some Musicians choose to specialize in one Clef, forsaking
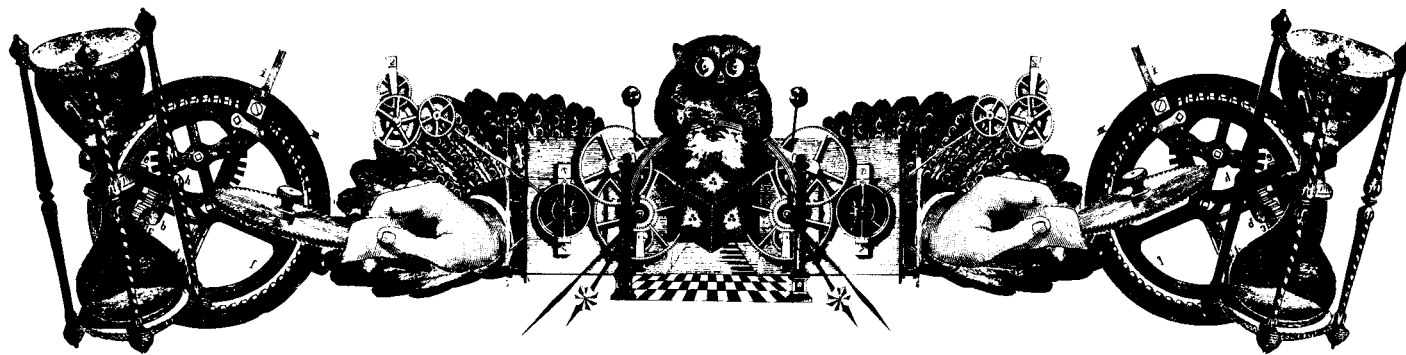
advancement in the other to pursue the abilities of their chosen Clef. Such folk are called Bassists if they follow the Bass Clef, Treblists if they study only the Treble Clef.

These specialists gain a substantial benefit for their intensive study: They gain a bonus of +10 when attempting to use a Piece from that Clef. This bonus applies only to the roll; they must still pay the full cost in dBs. However, they also suffer for their obsessiveness. Any Piece from the other Clef comes to them only at a -10 penalty, though they pay the standard Decibel cost.

Dissonance

Occasionally, Musicians will want to attempt a Piece from outside their Scale, an act known as "engaging in Dissonance." Though it is technically feasible, it is by no means an easy task. Not only do they suffer the approbation of their peers, they also take a substantial penalty for transgressing the Musical borders in such a fashion.

Each Scale they must travel outside their own to achieve the desired effect raises the difficulty immensely, even more so if they wish to use an effect from the Outer Fifth. A Harmonian must travel two Scales to use a Discordian Piece, and vice versa. A Melodian need travel only one Scale to achieve either Harmonian or Discordian Pieces.

The penalties incurred for engaging in Dissonance in the Inner Fifth are -15 per Scale traveled. The penalty is -30 for attempts to use the Outer Fifth. Thus, a Discordian takes a -60 penalty for trying to use the Harmonian Outer Fifth, while a Melodian suffers only a -30 when attempting the same Piece. Clearly, only Harmonians and Discordians of proven skill will even attempt to use a Piece from the other's Scale.

In addition, the use of a different Scale pushes the user in that direction. A Harmonian who uses an Outer Fifth from another Scale, or three Inner Fifths from another Scale over the course of two adventures, will find herself taking penalties when attempting to use Pieces from within her own Scale. Each

Outer Fifth from another Scale used results in a cumulative -5 penalty for Outer Fifths from one's own Scale. This penalty can only be removed by switching to a new Scale. Sotto Voce Pieces, those that fall between the two inner Fifths, are usable by anyone at only a -5 penalty. They bring no additional penalties or sanctions to someone outside the Scale who uses them. Though their use is frowned upon, they do not disrupt the Music significantly enough that the other types of Music would gain an advantage.

In addition, even if the Dissonance was undertaken in direst emergency, the Musician becomes ill-regarded by members of her group. After all, she has contributed to the Music of another group, and thus weakened her own cause. Punishment will be swift and painful, though certainly not deadly, should her group ever manage to find her to discipline her.

The exception to this rule is among the Melodians. Their usage of Dissonance does not affect their ability in their own Scale. As long as their use of Harmonian Pieces and Discordian Pieces is roughly equal, they have done nothing to advance either one, making the Melody, by default, that much stronger.

Recovering Decibels

Decibels return to the Musician at three times the rate Stamina Points return to a wounded character. That is, a Musician rejuvenates her dBs at the rate of 3d10 every eight hours. Of course, this assumes that the character is doing nothing else but resting; the rate is reduced if the Musician is engaging in strenuous activity.

Musical Pieces

This is a brief description of some of the many skills one can attain when using Musical powers. This is not a complete list, leaving room for the GM and players to devise new powers. This list should serve as a guideline for the powers available in each of the Steps.
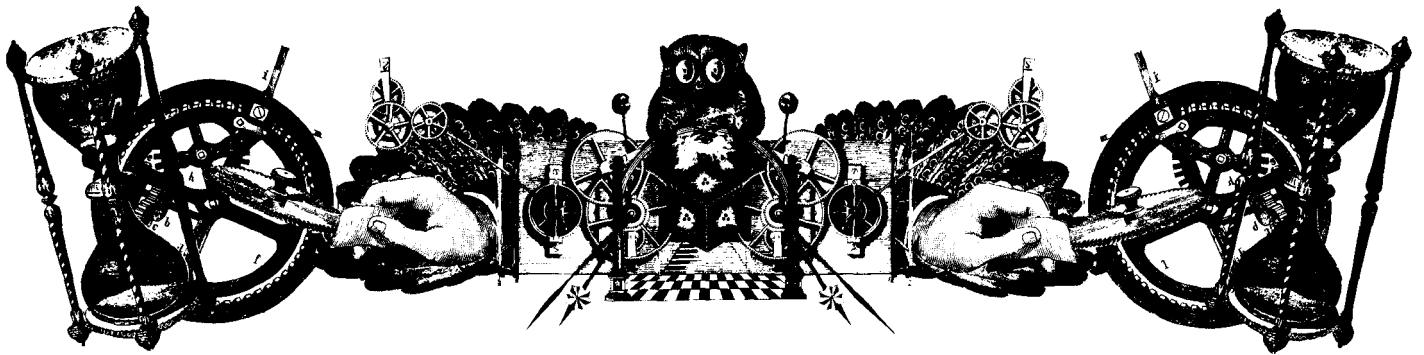
Clef: Denotes if the Piece is found within the Bass or Treble Clef.

Beat: This denotes how long the Piece takes from beginning to end; the amount of time it takes to bring forth the Piece.

Area of Effect: How large an area the Piece encompasses, measured in terms of meters. Some Pieces are personal, affecting only the Musician or one other, while others can literally span planets. Some Pieces offer two choices: focus on a single target for greater effect, or spread it out with a lesser effect.

Duration: How long the Piece lasts. Some are instantaneous, some are designed to last forever without intervention by another Musician.

Effect: What the Piece does, and what can be done about it. This describes the workings of the Piece; its exact function and its exact effect.

dBs: How many dBs must be expended to achieve the desired effect. If the user wishes to make the effect greater than usual, she may opt to expend more points. Each Piece, if applicable, describes the Decibel expenditures necessary to make it more effective. If the users cannot afford to pay the cost, they may wish to drain some of their Psyche or Willpower to use the power. Otherwise, the Piece is unattainable until the user's dBs return. One Attribute point, permanently drained from the character, will provide 5 dBs. This will lower the amount of dBs that can be regained, but sometimes such a sacrifice is necessary.

Some Pieces, such as the Galactos Barrier or the Power of Entropy, drain all the user's dBs and Attribute points from the beginning, being so powerful that a piece of the user's spirit must be sacrificed for the effect.

Criticals: The Pieces, like skills, can fail miserably or succeed gloriously. The numbers in this section provide the margin ratings necessary for success and failure. Like the criticals with skills, one must first succeed before one have a critical success, and one must fail before achieving a critical failure. Critical successes are called "sharps," while critical failures are called "flats."

Step Zero (Sotto Voce)

These are the Pieces that can be used by any Musician. They cost very little to use, and are minor in power. However, they do provide flashy effects, something to impress those who have never witnessed these things before. They also provide the basis of most Musical training.

Fugue

Beat: 1 second.

Area of Effect: The Fugue's "blade" extends for .5 meter or more, depending on how many dBs the Musician is willing to spend.

Duration: The Fugue can be maintained for as long as the Musician wills it, at the cost of 1 Decibel per turn.

Effect: This skill allows Musicians to call forth their personal Fugue, their Musical weapon. This power requires the possession of a Fugue handle (see "Technology and Money"). With this power and the Fugue handle, the Musician can bring forth a shimmering energy beam from one or both ends of the handle. The beam extends only .5 meter in a single direction (or .25 in both), and can cut through solid steel or absorb blaster bolts. It causes 2d6 damage, Lethality 5. However, the Musician takes no damage from his own Fugue, though others can harm him severely.

The cutting beam can become even more powerful or longer with the expenditure of more dBs. On a successful Modern Melee Weapons check (with a penalty of -25), the character can deflect up to 5 blaster bolts per turn with the Fugue. If the character becomes capable of using the Outer Fifth, the penalty decreases to only -15.

dBs: It costs 5 dBs to bring the Fugue into being. It takes an additional 2 to extend the blade by .5 meter (with a maximum extension of 2 meters), and 10 dBs to increase the damage by 1 d6. The more dangerous the Fugue, the brighter it gleams.

Criticals: None.
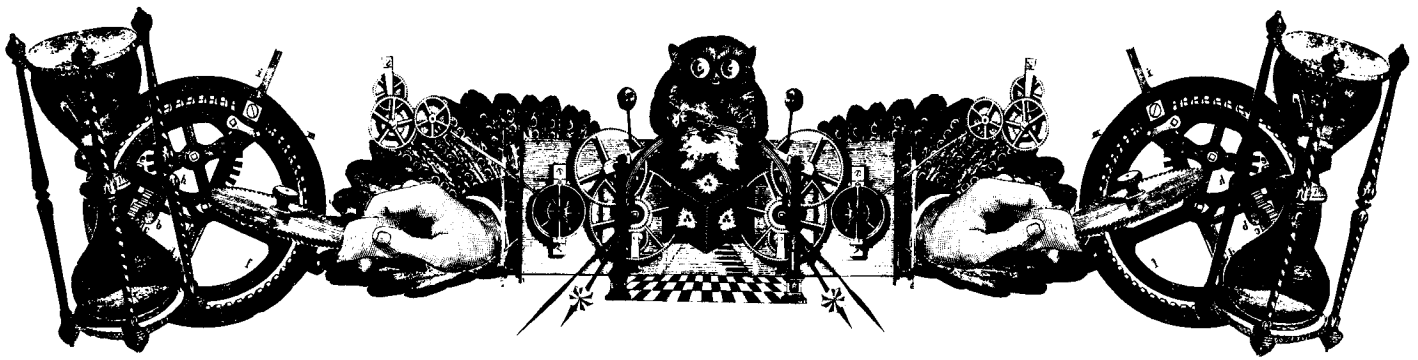
Jump

Beat: 1 second.
Area of Effect: Personal.
Duration: Instantaneous.
Effect: The Jump allows the Musician to jump or fall 5 meters without any ill effect, though what awaits the Musician at the bottom of the fall or the top of the jump (spikes, blaster fire, horrible creatures, etc.) may be harmful indeed. The Jump's range can be extended by spending more.
dBs: The Jump costs 5 dBs per 5 meters jumped, to a maximum of 20 meters.
Criticals: None.

Summon

Beat: 3 seconds.
Area of Effect: 10 meters in any direction.
Duration: Instantaneous.
Effect: Summon allows the Musician to move a small mass to where she wants it to go. The object, usually weighing less than 1 kg, floats quickly through the air to that place, usually the Musician's hand. However, Summon can also be used to hit small targets, distract other Musicians from their Pieces, and so forth. However, if used in such a fashion, it causes no damage.
dBs: 5 dBs per 1 kg. The Musician can increase the weight for an additional 5 dBs per kilogram.
Criticals: None.

Harmonic Pieces

The Inner Fifth

Step One (Solo)

Stun
Clef. Treble.
Beat: 2 seconds.
Area of Effect: 1 person.
Duration: 1 minute.
Effect: Stun allows the Musician to temporarily immobilize an opponent. Unless the victim can make a Psyche roll to resist the Piece, the Music knocks the recipient to the ground, paralyzed and unable to take action, for exactly one minute. If the victim is able to resist, nothing happens. In addition, the victim gains a +10 to all future rolls against a stun Piece performed by that particular Musician. This is a cumulative effect.
dBs: 10 dBs.
Criticals: 2/9. A sharp indicates that the victim receives no roll to resist. A flat means the Musician has not only failed to stun the target, but has also stunned himself for one minute.

Joining
Clef: Bass.
Beat: 5 seconds
Area of Effect: 1 square meter.
Duration: Permanent.
Effect: A joining seals together something that has been somehow torn asunder. The sealing is permanent, restoring the affected item to its original effectiveness. There are several limitations on this power. The first is that only something that has been torn apart can be joined together. Thus, while an ancient sword could be repaired, the weapon could not be grafted to a vehicle. The Piece does not work on flesh; only inanimate objects can be affected. Finally, the Piece only works on simple objects; that is, it functions only on objects that are of a single piece. It could not repair a blaster, though it would function on the hull of a starship.
dBs: 10. Each additional square meter costs 10 more dBs.
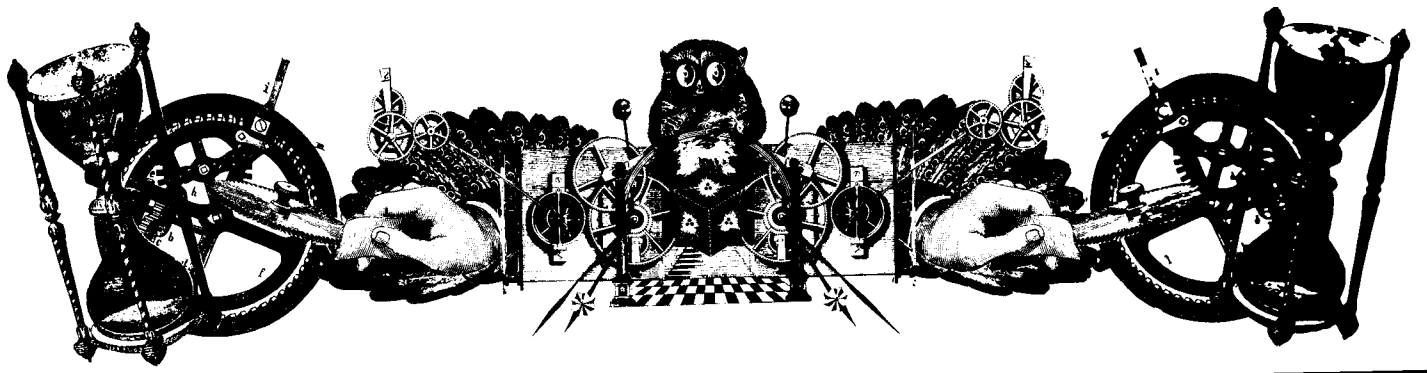Criticals: None.

Step Two (Duet)
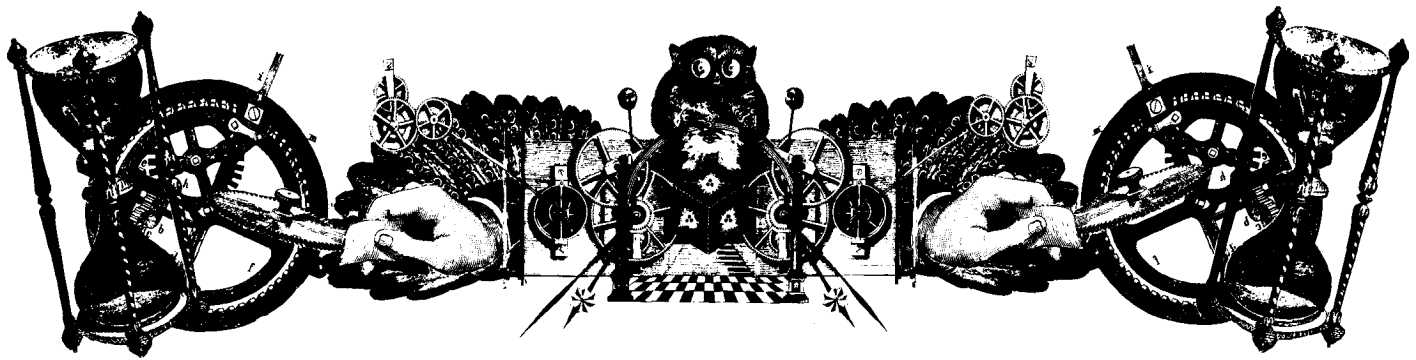
Danger Sense
Clef. Treble
Beat: 10 seconds.
Area of Effect: Personal.
Duration: 2 hours.
Effect: Danger Sense alerts the Musician when beings within 10 meters have hostile intentions toward her. This does not include those with generally hateful thoughts, but only those who are actively planning to

hurt the Musician. Only those who have been mentally shielded have any hope of remaining undiscovered. Also, any Discordian within that range triggers the mental alarm.

In game terms, this power automatically grants the Musician advantage in any combat situation where the power is activated. It also dispels any bonus for a flank or rear attack, for the Musician is able to detect the thoughts of those who would do her harm. Finally, it grants a +1 modifier to initiative to the Musician.

dBs: 20. For an additional 10 dBs, the Musician can also detect traps and the like aimed specifically at her. Traps more generic in nature, designed to catch the general populace, do not trigger the danger sense. Finally, the Musician can expand the range of the sense at the cost of 1 dB per meter.

Criticals: None.

Step Three (Trio)

Readiness
Clef. Treble.
Beat: 1 second.
Area of Effect: Personal.
Duration: 1 hour.
Effect: The Readiness piece allows the Musician to inherently grasp the tactics and strategies of his opponents. By harmonizing his mind with the cosmos, the Musician can feel what his enemies intend, and work to combat this. The Piece grants the Musician (and all included under its aegis) a +3 bonus to initiative for the duration of the Piece.
dBs: 30. Each additional person to be included costs 15 more dBs.
Criticals: None.

Minor Healing
Clef: Bass.
Beat: 6 rounds.
Area of Effect: One person.
Duration: Permanent.
Effect: The Minor Healing allows the Musician to heal wounds and cure diseases. The cost to activate

this Piece is 30 dBs, to which is added the cost of the healing. 10 additional dBs will cure most diseases. 20 additional dBs will rid the body of poisons. If a healing is desired, the cost is 2 dBs per Stamina point to be recovered, or 5 dBs per Body point.
dBs: Special (see above).
Criticals: None.

Step Four (Quartet)

Vision
Clef: Treble.
Beat: 10 seconds.
Area of Effect: Personal.
Duration: 2 minutes.
Effect: Vision allows the Musician to see through walls, though special linings (such as lead or other dense metals) prevent clear sight. The Piece does not allow the Musician to hear the sounds of the viewed room. It also only allows vision into an adjacent room; rooms farther away are impervious. Movement during the Piece will, of course, alter perspective, so the Musician using this Piece can move through rooms, seeing if there are dangers imminent. The Piece does not show the location of anything in the walls (traps, safes, etc.); the Musician simply sees right through the wall as though it were not there.
dBs: 40
Criticals: S1/-. A sharp allows the Musician to see through even specially-lined walls.
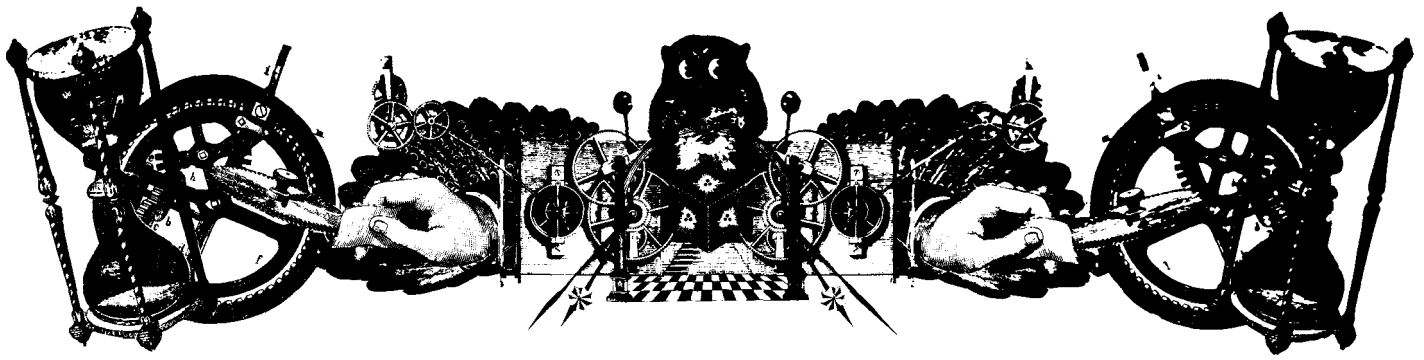
Body Cushion
Clef: Bass.
Beat: 4 seconds.
Area of Effect: One person.
Duration: 15 minutes.
Effect: The Body Cushion alters the blood flow of the Musician's body, being guided where the Musician wants it to go. In this way, the Musician is able to use bodily fluids as an organic shield against damage. This effect can also be produced in another person, though that person, not the Musician, controls the blood flow. The Body Cushion cannot be used in an

offensive way or to deprive vital organs of their fluids. It simply relocates the fluids from the extremities, constantly redistributing them, to absorb the damage from attacks.

The Body Cushion reduces all damage by 25%. Thus, if an attacker dealt 16 points of damage, the Body Cushion would reduce this damage to 12 points. In melee combat, the Cushion reduces lethality by 1 point. Energy and mental attacks suffer no hindrance. dBs: 40. The Musician can add another person to the Cushion by adding 30 dBs to the cost.
Criticals: None.

Step Five (Quintet)

Shield
Clef: Bass.
Beat: 5 seconds.
Area of Effect: 5' radius, centered on Musician.
Duration: 5 minutes.
Effect: Shield sets up a wall that allows only air through; it completely blocks physical projectiles (up to 50 points of damage per round, whether Lethal or Stamina), and slows energy attacks (that is, it reduces the damage of these attacks by 50%). It is, however, useless against mental attacks, which penetrate the shield as though it did not exist.
dBs: 50
Criticals: None

Body Control
Clef: Treble.
Beat: 5 minutes.
Area of Effect: Personal.
Duration: 3 hours.
Effect: The Piece Body Control allows a Musician to adapt and move in a hostile environment (such as high heat, cold, water, etc.). By adjusting the body's mass to and from the various extremities, and adjusting the heat input/output ratio, the Musician is able to withstand extremes of temperature, caustic atmospheres, and other hardships of new environments. This ability allows the Musician to move like a native through these unpleasantly harsh atmospheres. Body

Control allows the Musician to survive in heat up to 175° F, or cold down to -50° F. It also affords survival in atmospheres slightly more caustic than those of Conor (see "Space," Planets), though extremely acidic atmospheres are as painful and damaging as ever. Attacks made using extremes of heat or cold still affect the Musician as an attack; for example, a flamethrower would still burn the Musician, and liquid nitrogen would still freeze him. It is only the environment to which the Musician is made immune, not concentrated aspects of it.
dBs: 50
Criticals: None.

The Outer Fifth

Harmony currently has no 6th or 7th Step, instead concentrating its power on the more powerful steps. However, there are Harmonians who are seeking to remedy this through their personal researches.

Step Eight (Octet)

Mind-Probe
Clef: Treble
Beat: 5 minutes.
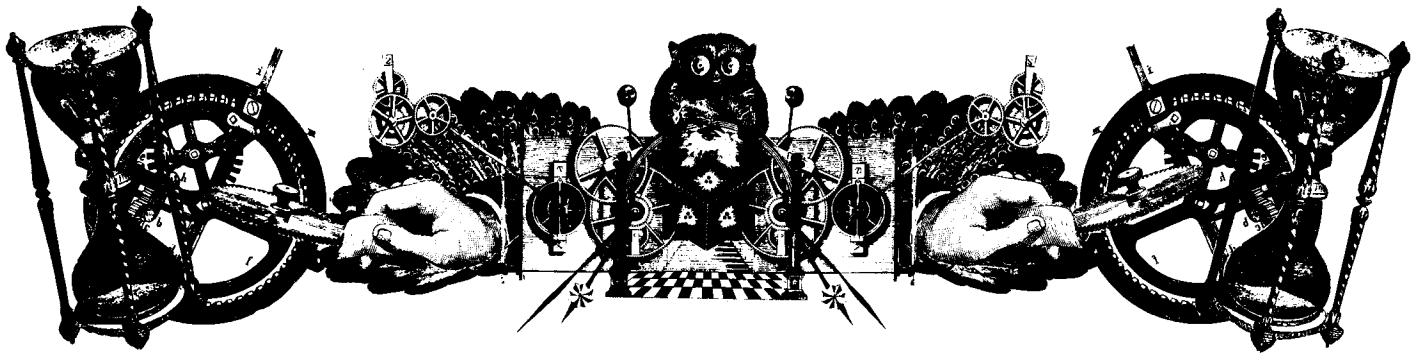Area of Effect: One person.
Duration: 10 minutes.
Effect: The Mind-Probe allows the musician to dig into someone's mind, both the conscious and the unconscious. The subject, if awake and unwilling, is allowed a Psyche roll at-25 to resist the probe. If unawake but unwilling, the resistance roll is-] 0. If the subject is willing, the probe succeeds automatically.

The Musician is able to explore one avenue of the subject's mind per minute, and retrieve an answer that is true, as far as the subject knows. Some answers may take longer to pry out (at the GM's discretion), but most should be able to be found within a minute. Thus, roughly five answers per probe can be expected. After that time, the probe ends, whether the Musician desires it or not.
dBs: 80
Criticals: None.

Invisibility
Clef: Bass.
Beat: 2 minutes.
Area of Effect: Personal.
Duration: 2 hours.
Effect: This renders the Musician and all her personal gear completely undetectable for as long as the power functions. No sensors, probes, or other means will pick up the invisible person, who is free to act in any way while invisible. Those wishing to attack the musician must do so at hand to hand distance at -40 (due to various clues, wind of passage, etc.) to the attack roll. If they attack from a distance, the penalty increases to -80.
dBs: 80 dBs. In addition, the Musician must make a Psyche roll at +10, or permanently lose 1 point of Psyche.
Criticals: -/F9. A flat "sense-blinds" the Musician for 1 d10 hours, leaving the Musician unable to see anything through any sense. This includes mental stimulation and technological or Musical enhancement of the other senses.

Step Nine (Chorale)

Elemental Arrangement
Clef. Bass.
Beat: See below.
Area of Effect: See below.
Duration: Permanent.
Effect: This Piece allows the Musician to manipulate things on the molecular level. By rearranging the component atoms, the Musician can change something from wood to lead, from iron to silicon.

The Musician cannot change the state of matter; that is, no changes from liquid to solid or gas, and vice versa. Likewise, atoms cannot be forced into making shapes and tools. The item worked upon by the Piece retains its same shape; it is up to the Musician to shape it in another way. In addition, this Piece does not work on living things (though once-living things can be affected). Robots are not classified as living, for they do not have the essential life force possessed by all other living beings.

This Piece is very good for weakening doors, increasing armor density, and so forth. It takes about 10 minutes to work 100 lbs., though this time can change depending on the original density and the ending density of the item. Since there are so many applications for this Piece, the GM will have to decide what the exact game effects of a particular arrangement are, keeping in mind that this is a Step 9 Piece.
dBs: 90 for weights up to 200 lbs., 30 per 200 thereafter.
Criticals: None.

Step Ten (Symphony)

Precognition
Clef: Treble.
Beat: 1 minute.
Area of Effect: See below.
Duration: 1 minute/30 minutes.
Effect: This Piece allows the Musician to foresee the probable outcome of events occurring nearby. The Musician must concentrate on the desired course of action for one minute, after which time the answer will be revealed. The answer appears in the Musician's head, running through the probable, personal outcome of the event. That is, the Musician cannot see the future of the Domain while trying to determine the opening of a door; the Musician can only view a personal future. This future extends up to one week (though the Musician can shorten the time voluntarily), and shows only the scene at the end of that time. That is, it does not show all the actions leading to this probable scene, but only the scene itself, and the emotions that are associated with it.

Naturally, the GM has a lot of latitude in determining what goes on. It should require some quick thinking and extrapolation of what's going on behind the scenes that might later affect the Musician. Of course, the scene shown may be that of the Musician's death, in which case the Musician must make a Psyche roll at -30 or be stricken for 1 d10 hours, unable to cope with the situation. During this time, the Musician will be utterly useless.
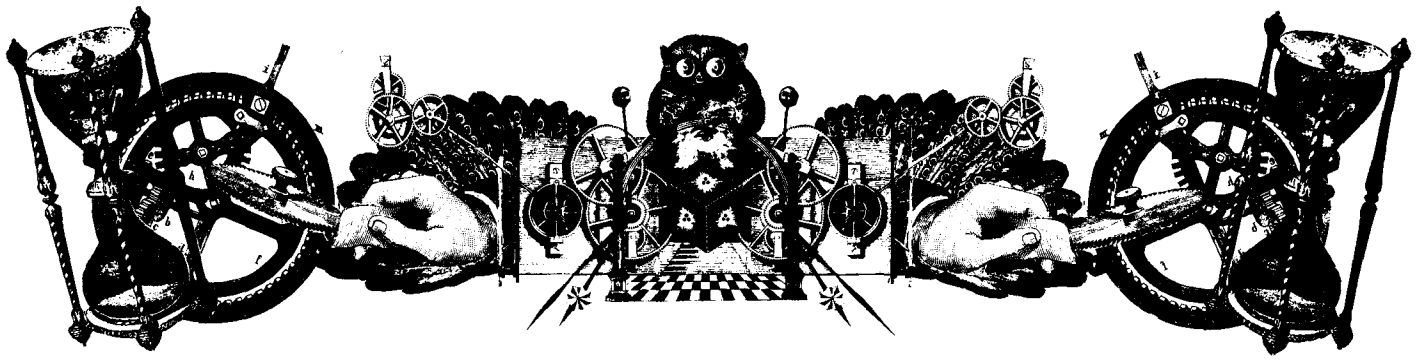
dBs: 100
Criticals: None.

Heal
Clef. Bass.
Beat: 20 minutes.
Area of Effect: 2d6 individuals.
Duration: Permanent.
Effect: This Piece allows the Musician to make her companions whole. By concentrating on the healing power of the cosmos, and the ability of the Music to make everything whole, the Musician can heal her comrades of all but 1d6 points of injury. There is an equal chance that this leftover injury will be to Stamina or Body.
dBs: 100. The Musician must make a Willpower roll, or permanently lose 1 d10 points of Fitness, having imparted this to her charges.
Criticals: S2/F8. If a sharp is hit, the Musician need not make the Fitness roll. If the Musician hits a flat, the possible Fitness loss is 2d10.

Coda: *The Galactos Barrier*

The Galactos Barrier, the Domain's greatest weapon, is nothing more or less than perfect harmony. It is an unwavering note that freezes everything that passes through its area of influence.
Clef: The Galactos Barrier is beyond Clefs, nearly beyond human comprehension. Though some say the perfect note is far above Treble, others claim that it is too far below Bass to be confused with Treble. Regardless, any Harmonians with the necessary power can use the Barrier, whether they study Bass, Treble, or both.
Area of Effect: Properly used, the Galactos Barrier can encompass an entire planet, rendering it lifeless and sterile, as well as doing so to any who venture across its bounds.
Duration: Permanent, until removed by the Discordian Power of Entropy.
Effect: The Galactos Barrier is the power to calcify one's opponents, turning them into brittle white statues that can be destroyed with only a modicum of

force. As mentioned above, it can encompass an entire planet (it has a range of 1 light minute), and any who set foot upon the planet later. However, the Musician has control of the area of effect, and may choose to concentrate it solely on a single individual, or may broaden the beam to include a starship. There is a chance to avoid the Barrier: a Psyche -80 roll will allow a person to resist its effects. If the victim does not have a Psyche higher than 80, there is no chance to avoid it. The victim retains consciousness as a statue, but can do absolutely nothing about it. The affected cannot even use Music; the Music will not work on someone who has been afflicted by the Barrier, unless it is the Power of Entropy, a Discordian power.

The Morione Domain employs several high-powered Harmonians whose job is to inflict the Barrier upon wayward peoples. When the people have become rigid, the Domain drops a concussion missile in their midst, thus ridding the Domain of potential trouble. This is a most effective means of destruction.

dBs: The Galactos Barrier sucks near the entire Psyche of its user as payment for the cosmic forces so unleashed. Where most Musical skills simply drain the dBs, the Galactos Barrier takes actual Psyche points from its user as well as dBs. The Galactos Barrier requires 80 Psyche and 80 dBs. If the user cannot pay the full cost of 80 points, he or she turns immediately and irrevocably into a calcified statue with no hope of return. If, on the other hand, the user can maintain the loss of 80 Psyche points, the points can be restored by the usual expenditures of Experience Points.

Criticals: The Galactos Barrier has no critical success. A critical failure (on a roll of 95-100) results in the Musican becoming calcified forever. Only the Power of Entropy can release one who has been so calcified, and no Discordian in her right mind would ever do so.
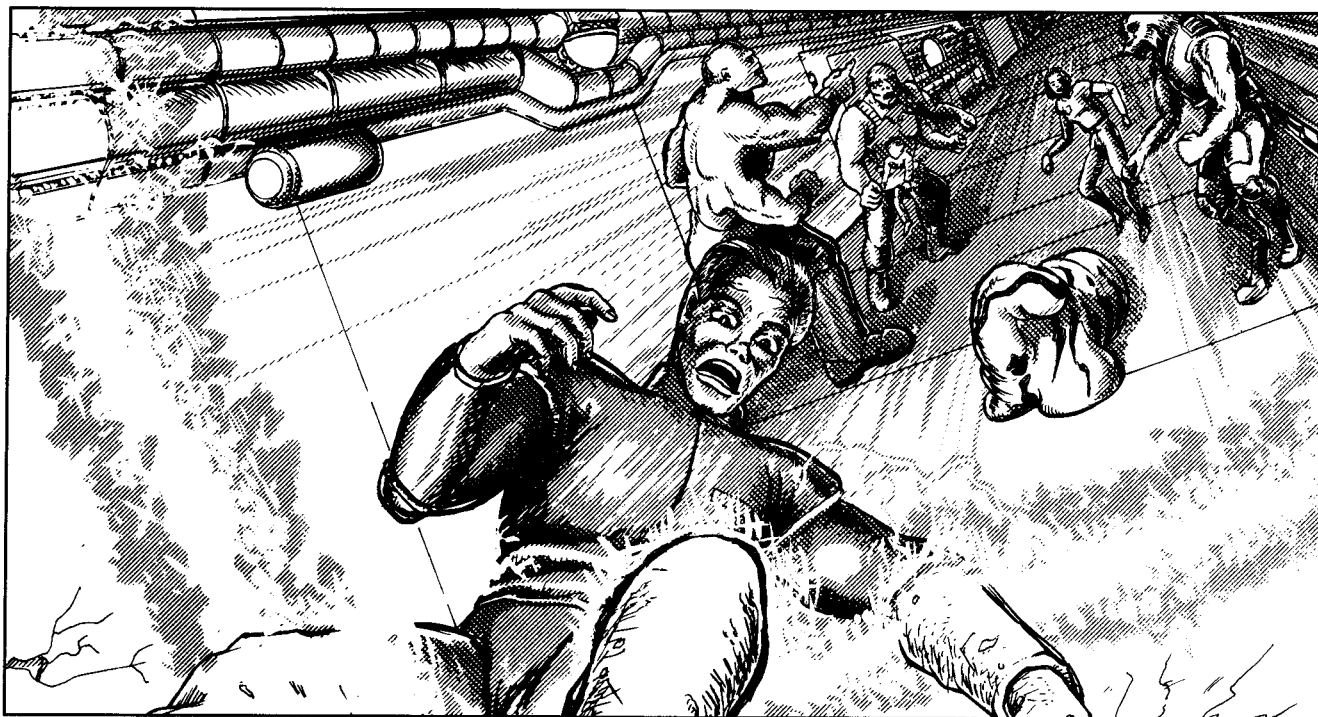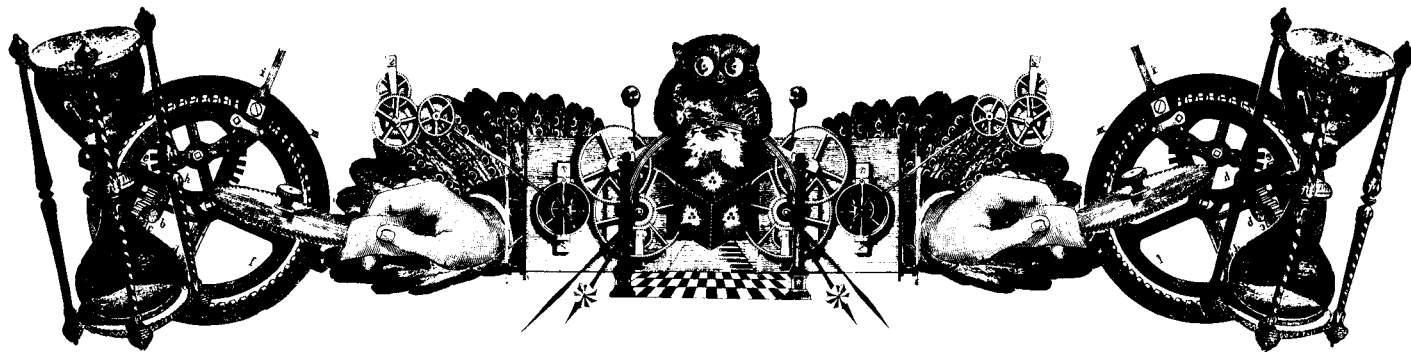
Melodic Pieces

The Inner Fifth

Melody has no 5th Step, preferring to use the Pieces from the other groups instead.

Step One (Solo)

Create Illusion
Clef: Treble.
Beat: 5 seconds.
Area of Effect: l0x1 0x10 meter cube.
Duration: 2 minutes.
Effect: This piece creates a simple illusion, affecting one sense only; additional sensations can be added at a cost of 10 dBs per sense affected. (GMs may wish to allow groups of Musicians to perform this Piece together, to affect all senses at once for fewer dBs per Musician.)

dBs: 10 plus 10 per additional sense.
Criticals: None
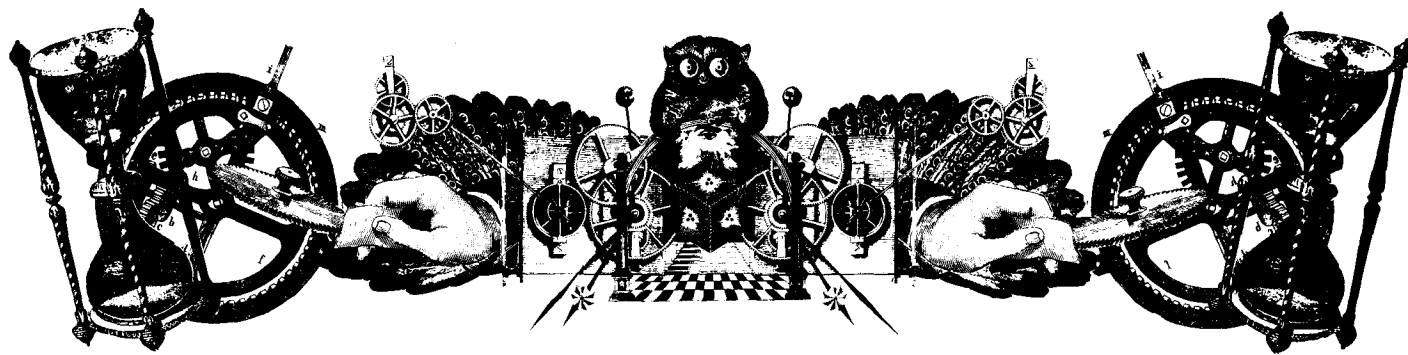
Ventriloquism
Clef: Bass.
Beat: 1 second.
Area of Effect: 5 yards.
Duration: 2 minutes.
Effect: Performing this Piece allows the musician to cast his voice up to 5 yards.
dBs: 10. For an additional 10, the Musician may cast his voice 5 more yards (cumulative price per increment). 15 yards is the limit of the Piece.
Criticals: None.

Step Two (Duet)

Levitation
Clef: Treble.
Beat: 15 seconds.
Area of Effect: Personal.
Duration: 2 minutes.
Effect: This Piece lifts the Musician at a rate of 1 foot per second, to a height determined by the Musician.
dBs: 20
Criticals: S2/F8. A sharp indicates that the Musician can lift another person and their belongings (up to 100 kilos). A flat indicates that the Musician loses grasp of the Piece halfway, and falls for 1 d6 points of damage (Lethality 3) for every 10 feet.

Navigation
Clef: Bass.
Beat: 30 seconds.
Area of Effect: Personal.
Duration: 30 minutes.
Effect: Performing this Piece grants the Musician the ability to "lock on" to one location or target of her choice for the duration of the Piece. Possible targets include an individual, a ship, a planet, the Musician's chambers, the hallway outside a rival's chambers, and so on. A three-dimensional grid appears in the Musician's mind, as if floating before her eyes; on that grid, she sees both her location and that of her target. She must then determine how best to reach her chosen destination; this Piece grants no kind of travel. Navigation always shows the correct relative positions of Musician and target.
dBs: 20
Criticals: None.

Step Three (Trio)

Melodic Control
Clef: Treble.
Beat: 5 seconds.
Area of Effect: 10x10x10 meter cube.
Duration: 5 minutes.

Effect: Musicians performing this piece can control sound. They can mute it to a whisper or bring it up to a roar; however, they cannot make the sound cause damage, unless the particular sound being altered already could. For example, a very high note could possibly shatter glass or eardrums, if it were loud enough. A note of insufficient pitch to cause this kind of damage, however, could only get louder; its pitch cannot be changed.
dBs: 30
Criticals: None.

Heightened Senses
Clef: Bass.
Beat: 10 seconds.
Area of Effect: Personal.
Duration: 20 minutes.
Effect: This Piece heightens one sense of the Musician's choice: sight, sound, taste, hearing, smell. The chosen sense becomes 10 times more effective than the Musician's normal one.
dBs: 30
Criticals: None.

Step Four (Quartet)

Melodic Sight
Clef: Bass.
Beat: 5 seconds.
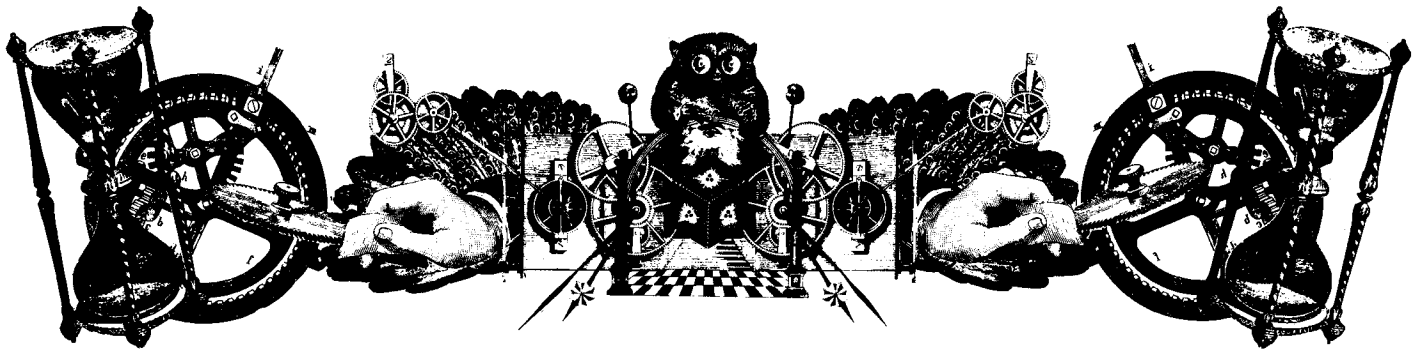Area of Effect: Personal.
Duration: 10 minutes.
Effect: This allows the Musician to see sound as colors and shapes. These are interpreted by the brain as sounds, thus providing an interpretation of sound to a deafened Musician.
dBs: 40
Criticals: -/F9. A flat causes the colors to shift toward the infrared end of the spectrum, perhaps resulting in incorrect interpretation by the Musician seeing the sounds.

The Outer Fifth

The Followers of Melody also have no 9th Step. They do not perceive this as a loss, for they can easily use the 9th Step from either Harmony or Discord.

Step Six (Sextet)

Melodic Creation
Clef: Treble.
Beat: 1 minute.
Area of Effect: 30x30x30 meter area.
Duration: 20 minutes.
Effect: Performing this Piece allows the Musician to create sound, bringing it from out of nowhere. Such sound can be slightly damaging if of the proper pitch; trying to determine the source of this created sound can drive non-Musicians crazy.
dBs: 60
Criticals: None.

Step Seven (Septet)

Control Light
Clef: Treble.
Beat: 30 seconds.
Area of Effect: 20x20x20 meter area.
Duration: 10 minutes.
Effect: This Piece allows the Musician to bend rays of light in various ways, making this a more powerful version of create illusion. Objects can be rendered invisible by bending light around them.
dBs: 70
Criticals: S3/F9. A sharp doubles the area of the Piece, while a flat indicates that the Piece was poorly done, and thus unbelievable.

Metahearing
Clef: Bass.
Beat: 30 seconds.
Area of Effect: 120 meter range (selective).
Duration: 3 minutes.
Effect: This Piece grants the Musician clairaudience, allowing her to hear through a wall of her choice.

Any wall is affected by this: paper, plaster, titanium, brick, stone-all are as nothing to the Musician who has performed Metahearing.
dBs: 70
Criticals: S2/F8. A sharp doubles the range of hearing, while a flat temporarily (1 d10 minutes) deafens the Musician.

Step Eight (Octet)

Energy Cage
Clef: Treble.
Beat: 3 seconds.
Area of Effect: Personal.
Duration: 10 minutes.
Effect: This Piece contains energy. Performing it focuses energy within the body of the Musician, who can use the stored energy to emit a field of light surrounding his physical body. This Piece has been proven useful for defending against blaster bolts. The field absorbs up to 30 points of damage before overloading. When the field overloads, everyone within 5 meters must make a Wil roll at-10; failure indicates the victim is blinded for 1 d6 rounds by the intense burst of light.
dBs: 80
Criticals: S1/F9. A sharp allows the Musician to emit one burst of energy himself, as a blaster pistol would. This immediately drains the Musician of all stored energy; the attack roll is made at Psyche -15. A flat means that the Musician is unable to release the energy, and takes damage as though from a blaster rifle when the accumulated energy finally explodes.
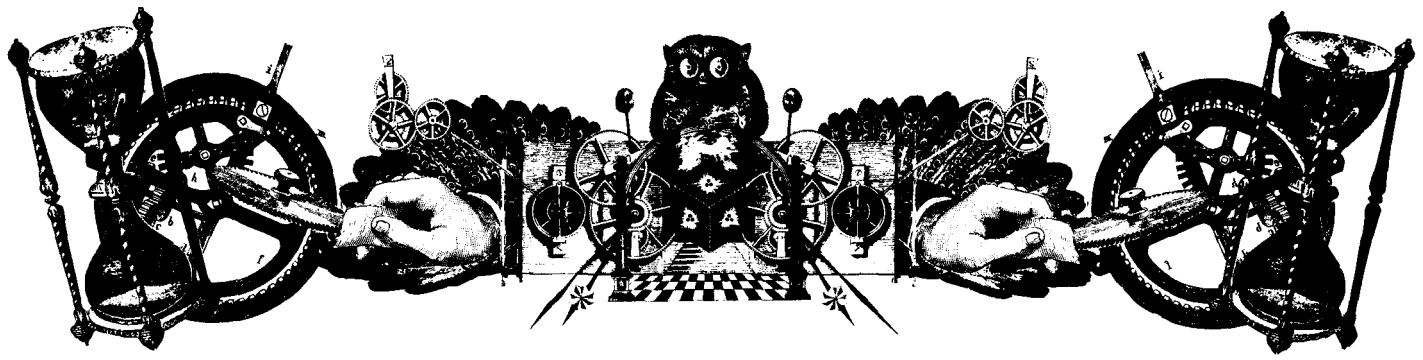
Soundburst
Clef. Bass.
Beat: 20 seconds.
Area of Effect: 100 meter range.
Duration: Instantaneous.
Effect: The Musician who performs this Piece can project force. It is a powerful version of Energy Bolt (see Discordian Pieces, Step One), manifesting as a sustained note pattern that disrupts the victims' ears.

dBs: 80
Criticals: S2/-. A sharp increases the Lethality of the soundburst by 2.

Step Ten (Symphony)

Teleport Other
Clef: Treble.
Beat: 5 minutes.
Area of Effect: One other being and its belongings.
Duration: Instantaneous.
Effect: As the name suggests. The destination must be within the stellar system. Up to 1,000 kg can be moved with this Piece (allowing the Musician to transport aliens, robots, etc.).
dBs: 100
Criticals: None.

Teleport Self
Clef: Bass.
Beat: 5 minutes.
Area of Effect: Personal.
Duration: Instantaneous.
Effect: Same as above.
dBs: 100
Criticals: None.

Discordian Pieces
The Inner Fifth

Step One (Solo)

Charm
Clef: Treble.
Beat: 5 seconds.
Area of Effect: One person
Duration: 2 minutes.
Effect: This Piece brings the mind of the subject under the Musician's control. The target makes a Psyche roll; success indicates no effect.
dBs: 10
Criticals: S3/F7. If a sharp is hit, the Musician can control the subject for twice as long. If a flat is hit, the subject knows what is being done, and will regard the Musician with extreme distaste.

Energy Bolt
Clef: Bass.
Beat: 1 second.
Area of Effect: One person or object.
Duration: Instantaneous.
Effect: See Harmonian Piece Soundburst; the only differences are in the Beat and Area of Effect.
dBs: 10
Criticals: None.

Step Two (Duet)

Weaken
Clef: Treble.
Beat: 1 minute.
Area of Effect: .5 x .5 x.5 meter area.
Duration: Permanent.
Effect: According to some Galactic lore, this is the precursor of the Discordian Coda, the Power of Entropy. This Piece weakens molecular bonds of everything within the area of effect, making the affected objects (people, items, etc.) easier to destroy. The weakened area is more susceptible to blows and other physical attacks (+2 to damage).
dBs: 20
Criticals: None.

Misdirect
Clef: Bass.
Beat: 10 seconds.
Area of Effect: One person.
Duration: 10 minutes.
Effect: This Piece causes the victim to become momentarily confused. If tracking an individual, the victim "loses the scent." If traveling, the victim becomes befuddled and takes a wrong turn (or something similar). If questioning a suspect, the victim makes one or more incorrect inferences, resulting in a false conclusion. The GM is encouraged to adjudicate this Piece in whatever manner is most entertaining to the players and best serves to move along the plot.
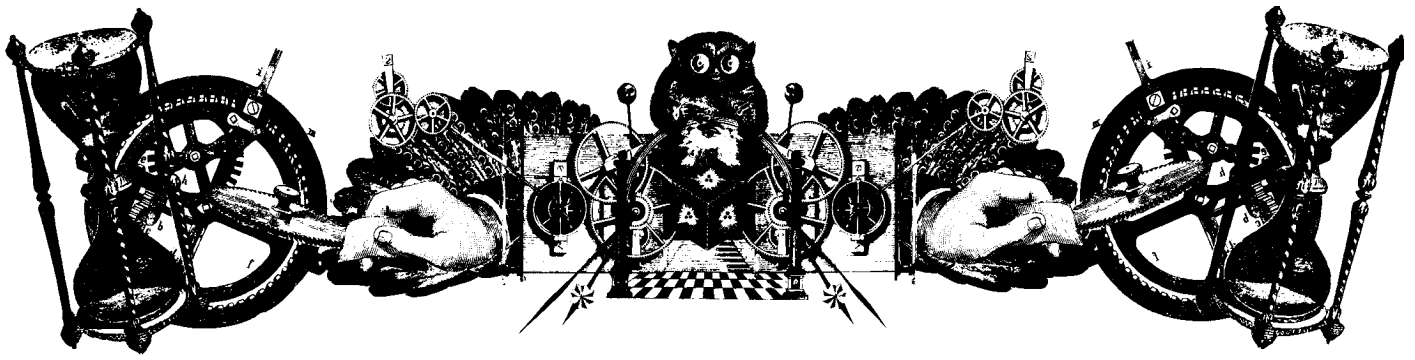
dBs: 20
Criticals: None.

Step Three (Trio)

Suggestion
Clef: Treble.
Beat: 20 seconds.
Area of Effect: One individual.
Duration: 15 minutes.
Effect: This is a higher form of Misdirection. Rather than simply causing the victim to make a wrong move, this Piece transmits specific information to the victim (much like hypnosis). As with hypnosis, a victim cannot be made to perform an act that is self-destructive or that goes against his or her personal beliefs. (In other words, this Piece cannot be used to force someone to commit suicide, or to kill her family members without due cause.) It can, however, make the victim believe that she is being tracked, that her food has been poisoned, or that she is now a three-toed sloth and must find a tree immediately.
dBs: 30
Criticals: S2/F8. A sharp indicates that the victim receives no roll to resist. A flat means that the victim is aware of the suggestion attempt, and will either attempt to flee or attack the Musician.

Physical Missile
Clef: Bass.
Beat: 5 seconds.
Area of Effect: One person or object.
Duration: Instantaneous.
Effect: This Piece uses the sotto voce Summon in reverse, and much faster. It is effectively a ballistic attack, sending an object or person zooming away (generally) from the Musician in a direction chosen by her at a high rate of speed. This can be used to fling opponents into walls, cause items to fly off walls into opponents, and such mayhem.
dBs: 30
Criticals: None.

Step Four (Quartet)

Atomic Exploitation
Clef: Treble.
Beat: 1 minute.
Area of Effect: 1 x 1 x 1 meter area.
Duration: 5 minutes.
Effect: This is a more powerful form of the Piece Weaken. The area affected is twice the size (one cubic meter as opposed to half a cubic meter). The weakness caused by this Piece allows a blow to more easily break the object that has been manipulated (+5 to damage).
dBs: 40
Criticals: None.

Step Five (Quintet)

Atomic Provocation
Clef: Bass.
Beat: 2 minutes.
Area of Effect: 2 x 2 x 2 meter area.
Duration: 10 minutes.
Effect: By causing molecules to move more quickly, this Piece can make paper ignite, skin blister (GMs must determine severity of damage; perhaps 1-2 Stamina points for a minor irritation), etc. Note that everything in the target area is affected; there are no "called shots" with this Piece.
dBs: 50
Criticals: None.

The Outer Fifth

Step Six (Sextet)

Discord has no 7th Step. Discordians' power is varied enough throughout the rest of the Scale that they see no serious lack here.

Adrenalin Rush
Clef: Treble.
Beat: 5 seconds.
Area of Effect: Personal.
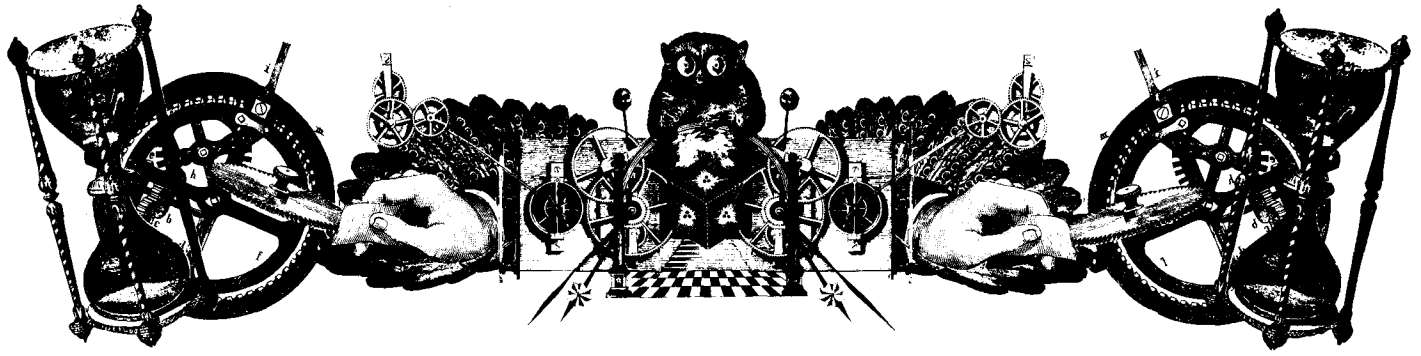
Duration: 10 minutes.

Effect: This Piece allows the Musician to control her body's release of adrenalin. It can either calm her in an excited situation or give her the "rush" required to perform a difficult physical task (like the little old woman who picks up the grand piano to save her cat from being flattened).

dBs: 60

Criticals: None.

Control Body

Clef: Bass.

Beat: 3 minutes.

Area of Effect: One person.

Duration: 1 hour.

Effect: Unlike the Harmonian Piece body control, which grants the Musician greater control over his own body, the Discordian control body gives the Musician greater control over someone else's body. Effects are basically the same, within this framework.

dBs: 60

Criticals: None.

Step Eight (Octet)

Wipe

Clef: Treble.

Beat: 10 minutes.

Area of Effect: 1 d6 people.

Duration: Permanent, until restored.

Effect: This Piece completely barricades the contents of the targets' minds. Musicians are unable to recall how to perform their Pieces; names and places are forgotten; Intelligence and Willpower scores suffer penalties of -10 until the mind is restored. Note that the mind's information is not removed or erased, it is only "fenced off," rendered inaccessible, until the casting Musician (or another Musician, working at a -25 penalty) performs the restoration.

dBs: 80

Criticals: None.

Complete Control

Clef: Bass.

Beat: 3 minutes.

Area of Effect: One person.

Duration: 5 hours.

Effect: The Musician performing this Piece gains control over the victim's body and mind for the duration of the Piece. The victim may be controlled from a distance, like a marionette, or may be made to accompany the Musician; there is no extra cost or savings for either situation. The victim's movements may be more jerky than usual, and his speech might sound slightly slurred; the crafty Musician will cover this up with appropriate ruses ("He's had a little too much to drink;" "That last mindwipe really messed him up."). As with Suggestion, the victim cannot be made to perform self-destructive acts.

dBs: 80

Criticals: None.

Step Nine (Chorale)

Explode

Clef: Treble.

Beat: 15 seconds.

Area of Effect: One person or object, no more than 400 kilos.

Duration: Instantaneous.

Effect: This is a ballistic version of Weaken. The affected item or person literally explodes (instant kill result), its molecules having been thrown apart by the Music. Thus, this is also a weaker version of (and precursor to) the Discordian Coda, the Power of Entropy.

The GM is free to assess damage caused by the exploding target to the surrounding area in the way she or he sees fit.

dBs: 90

Criticals: S3/-. A sharp allows the Musician to affect up to 800 kilos.
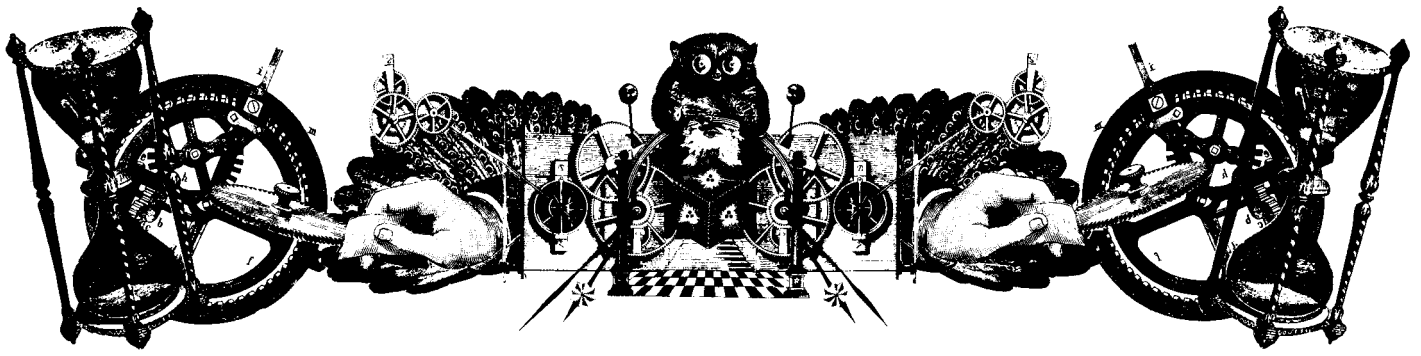
Step Ten (Symphony)

Life Drain
Clef: Bass.
Beat: 30 seconds.
Area of Effect: 1 d6 organic beings.
Duration: 1 minute.
Effect: This Piece effectively creates a death field, an area within which the life force is removed from all beings. This affects all species available as player characters, but not robots or plants. Affected beings slump to the ground, dead. Brain activity ceases; autonomic nervous system functions stop. At the end of the Piece's duration, the beings affected are irrevocably dead. (Note, however, that a robot or robots could be sent into the area affected to remove the victims, so that appropriate medical treatment can be given.)
dBs: 90
Criticals: S3/F9. A sharp allows the Musician to affect 2d6 people, while a flat means that the Musician dies along with the targets.

Coda: The Power of Entropy

The Power of Entropy is the exact opposite of the Galactos Barrier. Instead of a sustained and perfect note, it is a conglomeration of notes, a rapid-fire disharmony so intense that it utterly destroys those things it affects, causing the component atoms to fly into nothingness.
Clef: Like the Barrier, Entropy cannot be classified as either Treble or Bass. As the perfection of Discord, it logically contains both the highest Treble and the lowest Bass. Bassists, Treblists, and purists can use Entropy if they have the training and the power to do so.
Area of Effect: If used properly, the Power of Entropy can affect an entire planet.
Duration: Permanent, though it can be reversed by a Harmonian using the Galactos Barrier at the location of the dispersal. The reversal is effective for up to 100 years.
Effect: The Power of Entropy is a disintegration on a huge scale. When focused, it separates the atoms of the subject to the galactic winds. There is a small
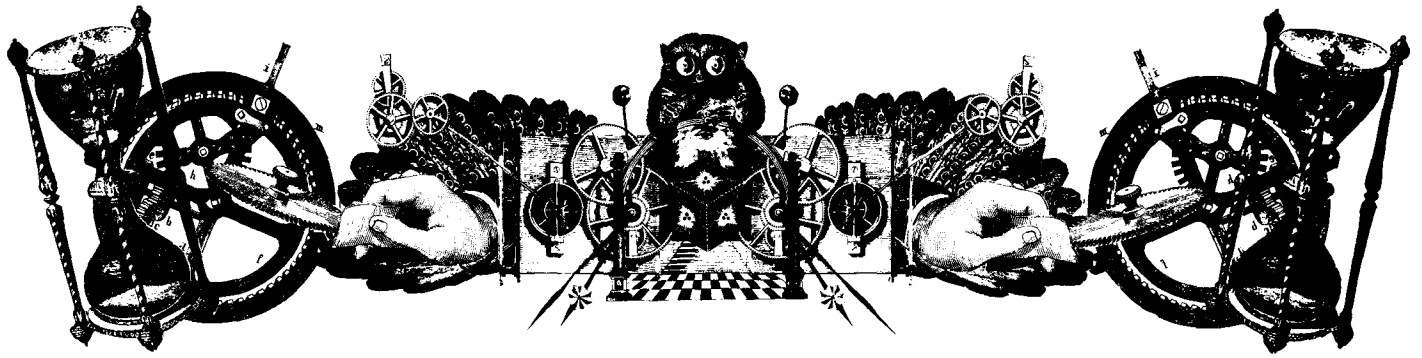
chance that anyone caught within the area of effect can fend off the influence of Entropy-a successful roll of Psyche-80 indicates that the individual has warded off the Power of Entropy. Unfortunately, the person in question is very likely floating in space with no means of support....

dBs: Like the Galactos Barrier, the Power of Entropy drains 80 Psyche points from the user, as well as 80 dBs. Unlike the effects of that Coda, a Discordian who exceeds her available Psyche points does not calcify; she explodes into her component molecules, with no chance of recovery. The lost Psyche points of someone who can spare the loss can be regained by the usual expenditure of Experience Points.

Criticals: There is no critical success for the Power of Entropy. However, a critical failure results in the same outcome as a Discordian with too little Psyche attempting the Power: total destruction of the Musician. Critical failure occurs only on a roll of 95-100.

Making Music

There might come times in characters' lives when they might wish to do something with the Music that is not delineated in the Pieces described above, in effect, creating their own Music. If they can conceive of something that would not unbalance the game if introduced, and you as GM see no problem with it, allow it.

There is a method for introducing new Musical Pieces, which is much the same as introducing new skills:

• No Musical Piece should be such a bonus to the characters that they are invincible. Always consider what advantages the Music might provide the PCs.
• Though the PCs might think they are the first ones to develop this skill, chances are someone else has thought of it first, and is using it themselves. Have an NPC try out the Piece first, and if you are not completely comfortable with the results, don't allow it.
• No Piece should rival the power of the Galactos Barrier or the Power of Entropy. Since these are

potentially planetwide Pieces, they are among the most powerful things known to sentient species. If the PCs develop a Piece as powerful as these, make sure the cost is as much or more than the previous two.

Miscellaneous Musical Rumors

What follows are rumors among Musicians, spread throughout the Music. The truth of these rumors will have to be determined by the GM, who might not want to include the true versions of all of them into the campaign.

1. It is rumored that various Renegades have been experimenting with different Scales, realms of power completely foreign to the established Scales. Word of 12-step Scales, 20-step Scales, "ultrasonic," and "subsonic" experiments has been drifting into the Musical Colleges for decades, causing no end of worry among the Masters of the Music. The powers and Pieces produced by this new Scale vary wildly from the accepted norms; some variations are for the better, some for the worse. Of course, none of the reporters of these facts have witnessed them personally, and thus the Musical Colleges have no idea of the veracity of the rumors.

2. Galactic "strings" have been discovered by talented Musicians. The strings emanate trom certain stars, black holes, and nebulae, and can provide a nearly-limitless source of dBs for the enterprising Musician. Strings emitted from stars are usable by Harmonians, those from nebulae by Melodians, and those from black holes by Discordians. If a Musician were to discover a way to harness this power, no Piece would be beyond reach.

3. Quasars are being used by some renegades to allow them to perform their Pieces at a faster Beat than usual. The pulsations of these phenomena can be "tuned into" by certain renegades; not only is the Beat of any given piece lessened by multiple factors, it is also rumored that the effects of such "enhanced" pieces are much more devastating than usual.
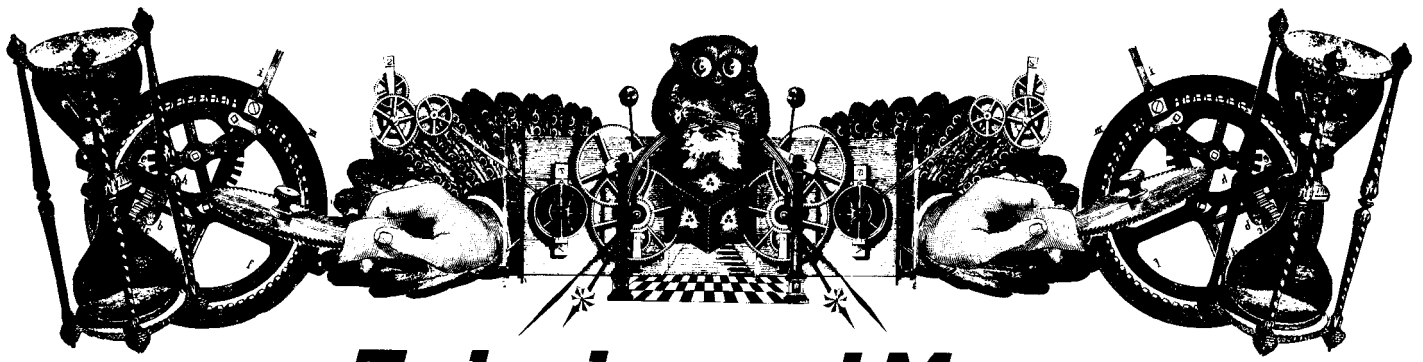
Technology and Money

In what can 1 interest you, my good friend? We've got a wide selection of just about anything you could ever lay your eyes on, and all for a special low price . . . just for you!

Looking for gifts, are you? If your friend is interested in weaponry, this Amarak 11 blaster is the hottest thing to hit stores this year. If you're looking for something even heavier, I'm afraid you'll have to go look someplace else ... especially if you're a Morione agent. I run a nice legal shop here, see?

Anyway, I also have some nice antiquated Musicians' weapons, which are perfect if your friend is a collector of any sort. Yeah, all the old hand-to-hand weapons. 1 still can't believe that any of these would do any good against, say, one of these Amarak IIs. You'd really have to be a fool to even think it ...

Hey, you only get to play with the weapons if you're going to buy-urrrk!

                -Shopkeeper Amon Toran (deceased)

s discerning consumers of the Morione Domain, it is the citizens' duty to acquaint themselves with the technology available to them. Otherwise, they may very well find themselves stuck on some desert world with some horrible fate rushing down at them and no conceivable way to avoid it.

There are several categories of items from which PCs can buy, though there are some articles that do not fall easily into any category. The major categories are **Combat Gear, Communications, Electronics, Medical, and Miscellaneous.** Not all of the described gadgets are available for sale, but are included for the sake of the players, so that they might understand as much as possible about the galaxy in which they live.

Money

The standard currency in the Domain is based on gold. Gold can be spent anywhere, though it is rare enough that shopkeepers will probably take note of the person spending it. For ease of use, the Domain has minted trillions of debit markers (DM), or "debs," which act in place of the gold. Each marker is printed on yttrium (a silvery metal element) disks. Each disk is 3 centimeters in diameter and about 5 millimeters thick. Each DM is marked with a number denoting its value; they are minted in denominations of 1, 5, 10, 25, 50, 100, 500, 1,000, and 5,000. Anything more expensive is usually paid for in gold.

Each DM is marked with laser- and acid-etching, designed to be counterfeit-proof. The truth of this matter has been tested many times, even though the penalty for counterfeiting is death. Each denomination bears the head of a different Morione Emperor on one side and the representation of a star traversed by a ship on the other.

Explanation of Terms

The equipment in this section varies considerably, from weapons to medical gear. These items nevertheless do have some attributes in common, and thus can be classified with standard headings describing the item in question. The descriptions are explained as follows.

Cost: This is the price a PC must typically pay for this item. Remember, this is the standard price on the core worlds. Prices may vary on outer worlds, according to current legality or the actions of the character attempting to obtain the item. Merchants do not have to stick to any rigorous pricing code; haggling is expected, even encouraged.

Weight: How much the object weighs, measured in kilograms.

R.O.F.: An abbreviation for rate of fire. This lists the number of times a weapon can fire in a round.

Ammo: The number of shots a weapon can fire before the clip (or charge, as the case may be) is empty.

Damage: The damage a weapon does to its target, followed by the Lethality rating of the weapon.

Range: The listing is for short, medium, and long distances, measured in meters.

Initiative Modifier: (for hand-to-hand weapons only) This represents the speed at which various hand-to-hand weapons can be wielded. A large staff is going to be significantly slower than a small knife; the modifier reflects this.
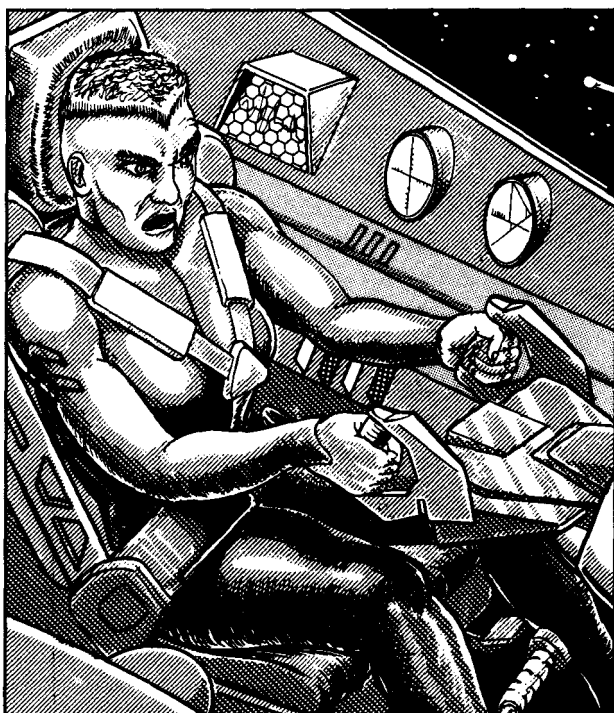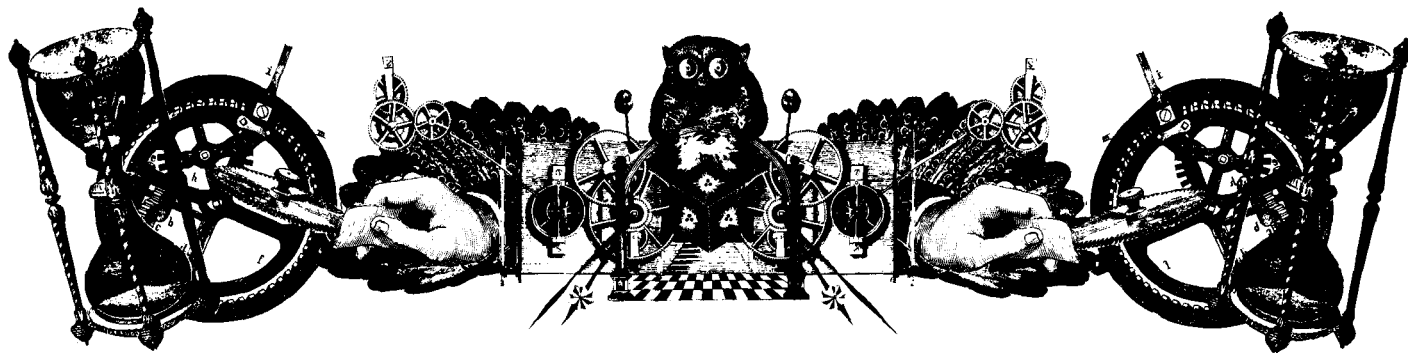
Legality: Most of the items listed hereafter are legal, but there are a few notable exceptions. There are three symbols used to denote legality:

Y: indicates that the item is generally legal on all Domain worlds. There may be exceptions, as the GM sees fit to enforce.

N: indicates an item that is strictly illegal on most, if not all, Domain worlds. Penalties for possessing these objects vary from world to world, but they are invariably stiff.

?: denotes an object whose legality varies from world to world. Travelers are advised to check planetary law before they set down carrying any of these items.

Appearance and Use: This is a brief description of how the item looks, as well as its application.

Combat Gear

Most weapons listed here are ranged beam weapons. Indeed, the majority of the civilized galaxy uses ranged weapons to settle any disputes. However, there are some who are either hopelessly primitive or simply archaic who insist on using melee weapons. The hand-to-hand weapons are included for those who can find no other recourse than these.

Amarak II Blaster

Cost: 200 DM.
Weight: 1 kg.
R.O.F.: 3.
Ammo: The Amarak II's energy cell can hold 10 shots before it needs to be replaced and recharged.
Damage: 2 d 10/6.
Range: 100 m.
Legality: Yes. Anyone can carry this weapon for self-defense.
Appearance and Use: The Amarak II is a simple blaster pistol. It is bulky and not easily concealable. The way it works is simple: Point it at people, and pull the trigger until they are dead. The charge for the blue bolts is found in the handle; the cell is easily replaced, and costs a mere 10 DM per charge.

Kelimar V Blaster Rifle

Cost: 500 DM.
Weight: 5 kg.
R.O.F.: 1.
Ammo: 15.
Damage: 3 d 10/5.
Range: 200 m.
Legality: ?. Most worlds only allow Morione troops to use the blaster rifle, due to its high power. However, worlds toward the fringe of the Domain are more lax in enforcing this law; after all, life is rough on the frontier.
Appearance and Use: The Kelimar V Blaster Rifle is a high-speed molecular agitator. In other words, its greenish bolt speeds up the molecules of its target,

Amarak II Blaster

Slave bands

Kelimar V Blaster rifle

Personal shield generator

Tactical Relay Set
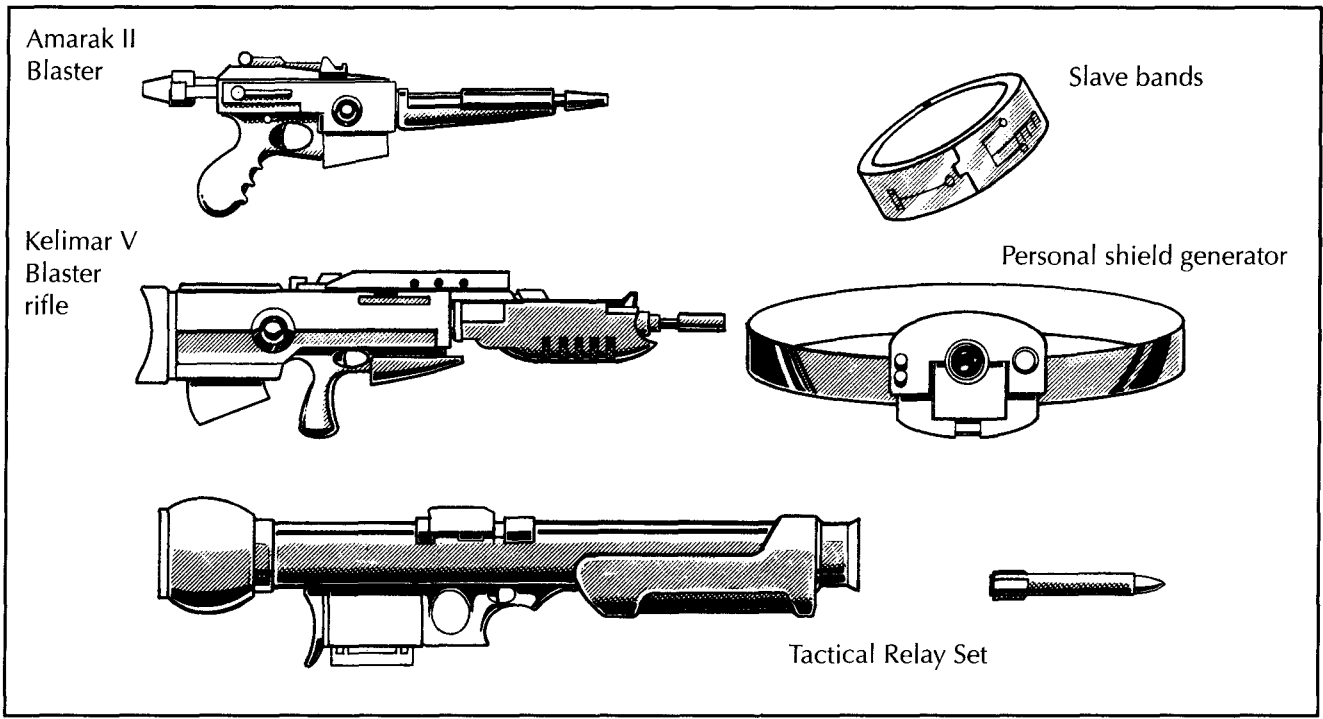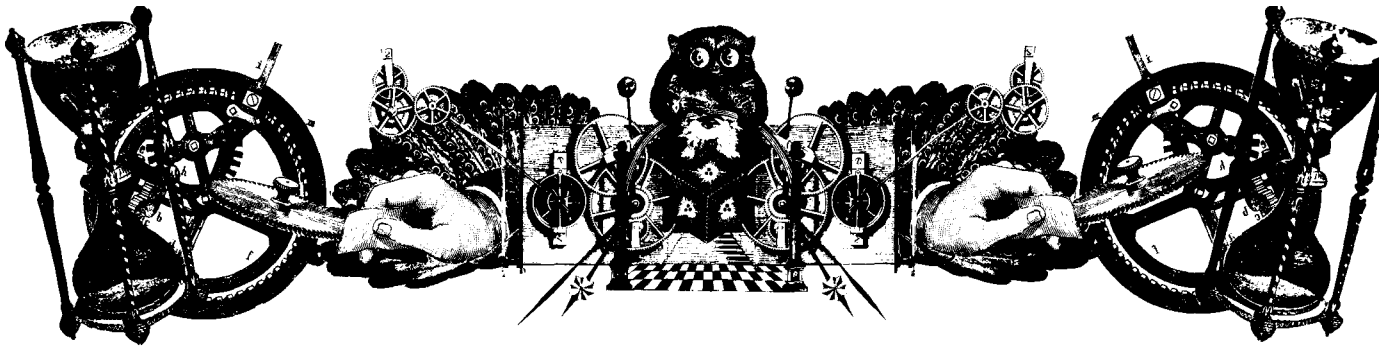
and bakes them to incredible heats. It is a long, blocky tube, with protrusions along its 1 meter length designed to heat the bolt. It has a collapsible shoulder stock, so it can be held in both hands or rested on the shoulder. Its operation is as simple as any rifle: point and pull.

High-Energy Jet Pistol

Cost: 1,000 DM..
Weight: 2 kg.
R.O.F.: 2.
Ammo: 6.
Damage: 3 d 10/6.
Range: 200 meters.
Legality: N. The Domain has outlawed the use of these powerful weapons.
Appearance and Use: This is one of the few distance weapons of this time that does not rely on simple energy bolts. This weapon hearkens back to the

ancient days, when propelled missiles were all the rage. The High-Energy Jet Pistol requires specialized ammunition, each bullet costing 50 or more DM. The bullets provide as much acceleration as the gun.

The HEJP is a slender, elegant pistol and is more easily concealable than the standard blaster. It is, however, very heavy. It is a favorite weapon among both Resistance and Domain spies.

Monofilament Blade

Cost: 100 DM.
Weight: .25 kg.
Damage: 1 d10/2.
Initiative Modifier: +2.
Legality: ?. All persons in the Domain are entitled to defend themselves, but this is a weapon most often chosen by thieves, assassins, and others with evil intent.
Appearance and Use: The monofilament blade is a
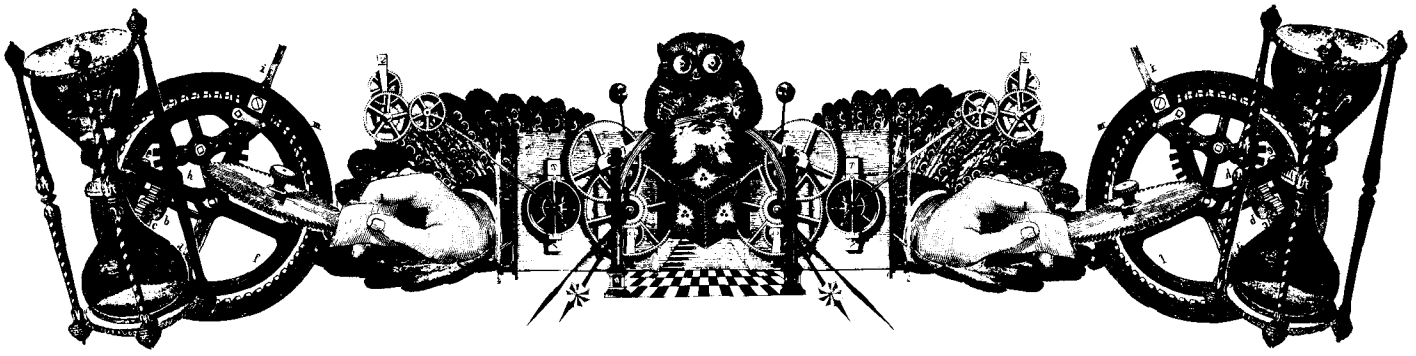
one-handed weapon. It appears as a simple hilt, with a crosspiece protecting the hand. There is a small stud hidden on the underside of the crosspiece. There is no visible blade; when activated, there is only a thin shimmering of energy encasing a one-meter-long, one-molecule-thick blade, gathered from the surrounding air and brought into alignment and stasis by the energy cell in the hilt. When the blade is deactivated, the molecules return to the air, and it is safe to hide the hilt within one's clothes.

Body Armor

Cost: 500 DM.
Weight: 4 kg.
Initiative Modifier: -2.
Legality: Y.
Appearance and Use: The body armor available in the Domain is bulky and uncomfortable, though lightweight. Its padding has been distributed to the most vulnerable points of the body, leaving the wearer looking like a bulky representative of its species, with broad shoulders and protruding chest and stomach.

The armor provides protection against all forms of attack. Against physical attacks, it subtracts 6 points of damage and 2 ratings of Lethality. Against energy weapons, it protects against 8 points of damage and 1 Lethality rating.

Fugue Handle

Cost: 200 DM.
Weight: .5 kg.
Damage: None, by itself.
Initiative Modifier: +2.
Legality: Y. To most, they are simply collector's items, a piece of history. Only Musicians who can perform the Fugue Piece are able to use them. (This means, naturally, they are a favorite of many, many Musicians....)
Appearance and Use: The Fugue handle appears as a .3-meter-long, leather-wrapped steel bar, with slight indentations on the end. To use it, one needs to be able to bring forth the Musical Piece Fugue. Otherwise, it is simply a piece of metal.

Communications

The main communications network of any planet consists of at least one Tactical Relay Satellite, or Tacsat. Larger, more populated planets can have up to 10, depending on the amount of daily communications. The Tacsat routes all planetary communication to its proper destination, as well as to the Planetary Offices of Communication and Regulation, where a copy is made of every transmission.

The Tacsat also is the only communicator capable of broadcasting signals from the planetary surface to other planets in the system. Due to the technological hysteria of the Circuitry Wars, radio technology became severely restricted. Therefore, there are no known broadcasting facilities that can both escape atmosphere and broadcast intelligent signals to another planet within the system. Neither are there any methods known for instantaneous interstellar communication. All methods of communication must bow to the speed of light.

The Tacsat is a small sphere approximately .5 kilometer in diameter. Within, it contains the necessary components to route the millions of calls that pass through it each day. It also holds operations rooms and living spaces for the crew of 20 who handle the routine maintenance and defense of the station. Since Tacsats are favorite targets of the Resistance, the Domain has found it necessary to equip each Tacsat with a battery of defensive weaponry.

The defenses on a Tacsat include a battery of heavy lasers, moderate shielding, and some armor. They also include devices that allow the operators to target their weapons on those who try to illegally tap into the Tacsat to broadcast unauthorized messages. The Tacsat's weapons can home in on any broadcast technology (such as radio transmitters) and destroy them; most of the job of Tacsat operators is not so much to maintain the station as to police the planetary communication bands.
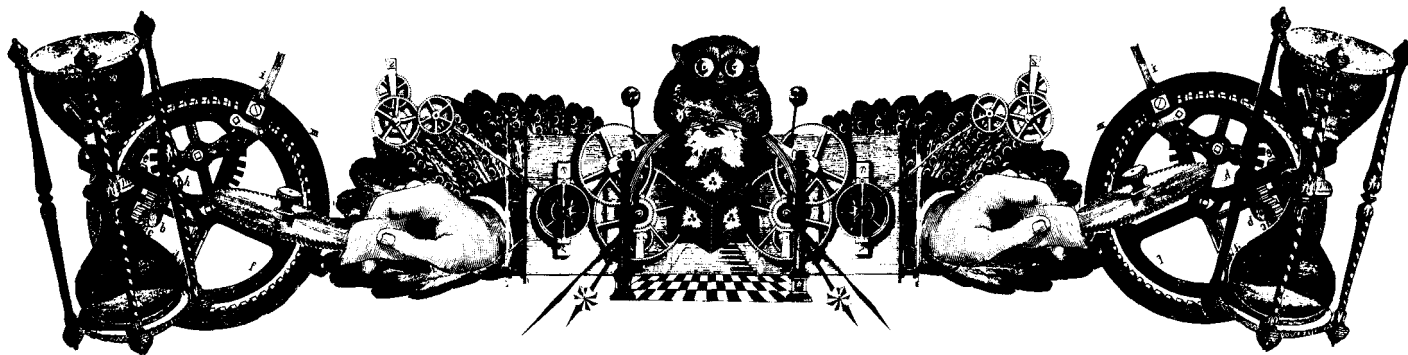
Tactical Relay Set

Cost: 3,000 DM.
Weight: 3 kg.
Legality: N. The tactical relay set was developed by the Resistance to illegally tap into the Tacsats. Domain authorities look very hard upon those possessing these devices; ownership of one is usually worth immediate death. Penalties are harsher on some worrds than on others.

Appearance and Use: The tactical relay set comes in two parts. The first, the launcher, is an elongated tube with one end open, attached to a handle/trigger assembly resembling a missile launcher. The second part is a self-guiding electronic "missile" which contains message storage and equipment capable of tapping into the Tacsat. To use the tactical relay set, one merely programs a short (1- to 2-minute) message into the missile, drops it into the launcher, and fires it toward the horizon. Not only does this enable the user to launch an illegal message (for it does not record in the Planetary Offices of Communication and Regulation), it also prevents the Tacsat operators from tracing the signal to the user's original position. Though the message missile can be destroyed by the lasers within 2 minutes (thus the necessity for a short message), the Domain has not yet found a way to trace the missile to its source.

Courier Drone

Cost: 1,500 DM.
Weight: 100 kg.
Legality: Y, as long as it is registered with the Planetary Offices of Communication and Regulation before it is launched. A special prefix code is attached to legal drones to keep them from being destroyed by planetary defenses. Unregistered drones are not legal, and run the risk of being destroyed both when they leave the planet's atmosphere and (should they survive that phase of the trip) when they reach their other-planetary destination.

Appearance and Use: Courier drones look like small missiles, with jets in the back and on the side for maneuvering. To use a drone, one needs only to speak or encode a message into the crystal encased on its back, lock the message into the "brain" of the drone, program the address (within the same stellar system, and usually on the same planet), and push the "Deliver" button. The drone then seeks out the address imprinted into its memory, and waits until the authorized person retrieves the message. It will not yield its message except to the person with the correct Personal Identification Code (found on the Pers-Comm, q.v.). A small laser (Dam 2d10, Lethality 3) protects it from any who would attempt unauthorized removal of the message crystal.

The Diode

Cost: 800 DM.
Weight: Negligible; approximately 3 grams.
Legality: The Diode is legal everywhere, as the Morione Domain recognizes the necessity of allowing trouble-free communication when two different species meet.

Appearance and Use: The Diode is a small disk that is "skin magnetic," rendering it usable by any species regardless of fur, feathers, scales, or hair. When applied to the surface (regardless of intervening fur, hair, etc.), the Diode automatically activates, providing instant translation of precisely 431 languages, including local dialects. In game terms, the GM can rule on exactly how obscure the language is. It is recommended that only the most outdated languages be beyond the reach of the Diode. Sign languages and written instructions do not translate, nor do telepathic commands. The language must be primarily spoken to translate well. Nuances of face and body, likewise, do not translate-the Diode translates exactly what it hears and no more.

The Diode runs out of operating power after 1 month, after which a new one must be bought. Old ones can be recharged and programmed to store new languages for analysis later, but it takes a successful Diode Computer Electronics skill roll to do so. Rumor has it that criminals have implanted explosives in some Diodes; let the buyer beware.
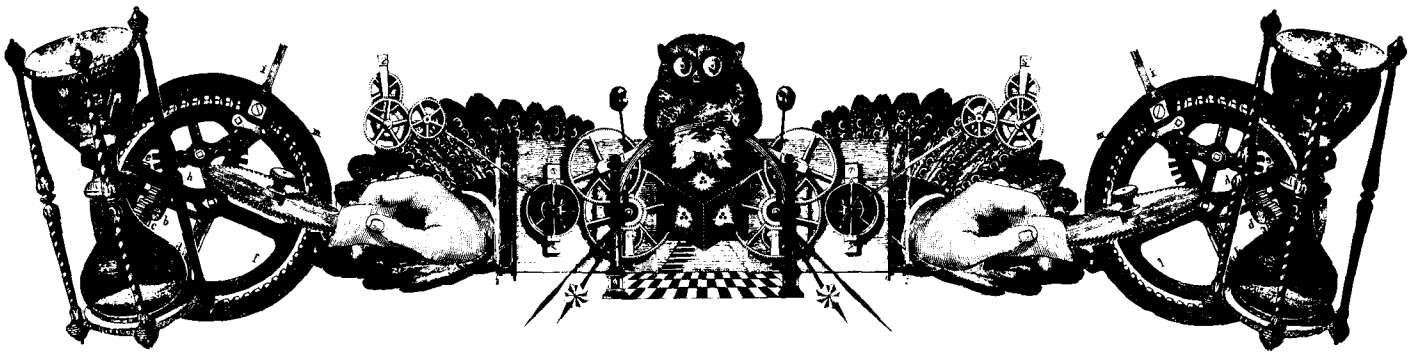
PersComm

Cost: 200 DM.
Weight: Negligible.
Legality: Y. Indeed, everyone who is anyone in the Domain carries one of these. They are issued by the Domain's Bureaucracy, and can be used to trace someone's whereabouts.
Appearance and Use: The PersComm appears as a slim card, with a hologram of the owner imprinted upon it. Also imprinted is the owner's Personal Identification Code (PIC), which enables the Domain, courier drones, and other messengers to find the owner.

The PersComm also allows communication within a 100 km range. The owner merely places a digit over the sensor, and speaks the name or the PIC of the person with whom he wishes to converse. If that person also has a PersComm and is within range, the two can conduct their business. However, the airwaves can be tapped, which explains the emergence of the courier drones as communication devices.

Rumor has it that the black market sells bootleg versions of these, untraceable by the Domain, though they still use the network. These rumors have yet to be verified.

OmniComm

Cost: 5,000 DM.
Weight: Negligible.
Legality: Y.
Appearance and Use: The OmniComm is a bulkier version of the PersComm. It is the size of a small box, which can easily fit into a large belt pouch. It is used much the same way as a PersComm, but projects a real-time holographic image of the person to whom the user is talking, thus providing the owner of an OmniComm with visual and audible clues about the person on the other end. The range of an OmniComm is 300 km. Again, rumors persist of bootleg versions of the OmniComm, though the Domain denies that they are true.

OmniDeck

Cost: 15,000 DM.
Weight: 100 kg.
Legality: Y.
Appearance and Use: The OmniDeck is designed to be installed in homes and starships, and provides communication with a range of several light-years (with the standard time lag for eSpace communication). The transmission is completely holographic, and in addition includes the background and sights, smells, and sounds of the other end, providing the receiving party has the equivalent of an OmniComm or OmniDeck. The party broadcast through the OmniDeck truly appears to be present, with none of the holographic flickering typical of lesser models. However, no damage can be caused to the projection by physical or energy weapons (though sonic weapons are another matter).

This device provides face-to-face communication even across the depths of space, and does not require the Domain's net to function.

Electronics
Data Crystal

Cost: 100 DM.
Weight: .25 kg.
Legality: Y.
Appearance and Use: The data crystal is a small (palm-size), flat device that can record sights, sounds, and even electronic information. The small studs on the sides allow the user to switch between the record and playback modes. Data crystals have a range of 2 meters, recording both sight and sound, or they can slip into computers or attach to another's PersComm device to record pertinent information.

Despite their appearance, data crystals are tough to destroy. A good solid strike will crack one, destroying the data kept on it, but the crystals can withstand many glancing blows before leaking their data. They effectively have 4 Stamina and 3 Body points.
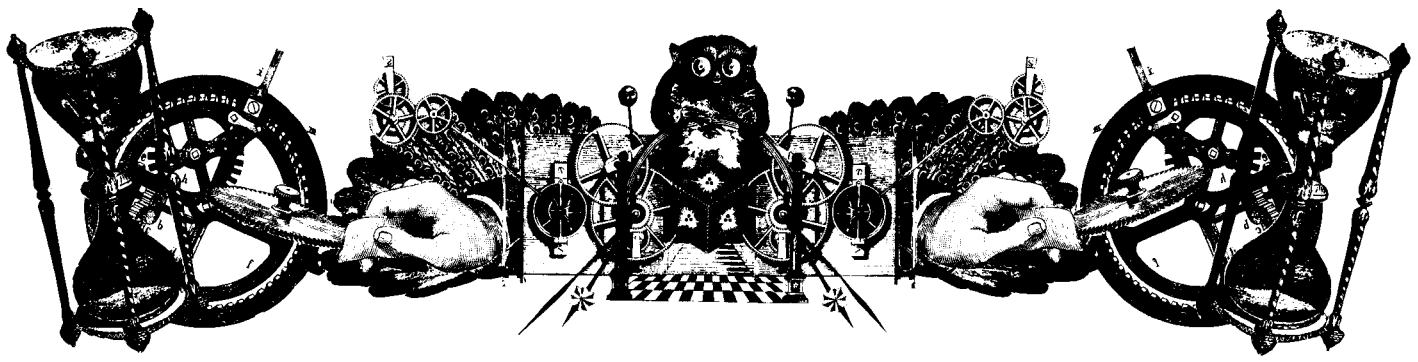
Medical

Omnix

Cost: 1,000 DM.
Weight: 1 kg.
Legality: Y.
Appearance and Use: This small case can be locked either by PIC or with a simple physical key. Inside, it contains several shots of serum, which vaccinate against the known diseases of the Domain, or that act as effective detoxification agents for many of the hundreds of poisons in wide use in the Domain. Many of these diseases and poisons require vaccinations after the fact, and thus the wide popularity of the Omnix.

Medkit

Cost: 750 DM.
Weight: 2 kg.
Legality: Y.
Appearance and Use: This thick case carries the necessities of medical care, though its contents are not as complete as a regular medical facility. However, the medkit holds enough supplies to provide healing and release from pain for 10 people (or one person 10 times, or any variation thereof). It contains injectors for vaccines and antidotes, a small selection of dressings and bandages, and coagulants for the main species of the Domain (though species-specific kits can be bought). In all, it is quite a handy and useful tool for those who engage regularly in dangerous activity.

Hover Gurney

Cost: 1500 DM.
Weight: 75 kg if off, 0 kg if activated.
Legality: Y.
Appearance and Use: The hover gurney is a medical bed designed to ease the carrying of the sick and wounded. The bed length can extend up to 3 meters long, or contract as short as 1 meter. Small energy repellors located below the gurney sense the wounded individual's weight, and compensate to keep the bed floating an even meter above the ground. There are also sensors in front of the gurney that constantly scan the ground ahead so that it can compensate for uneven terrain and adjust to give the patient a smooth ride.

Atop the gurney are several electronic sensors. One of them monitors the life signs of the being on the gurney; another monitors the pressors that keep the patient from thrashing about, though they do allow for minimal, gentle movement; yet another automatically injects the patient at the appropriate times with any serums the presiding doctor may have inserted into the gurney's injectors.

In all, the hover gurney is absolutely indispensable when moving a severely injured patient or a patient who has a tendency to move about. It is also useful for transporting any heavy goods, for it can carry up to 500 kg before the repellors give out. However, its speed is poor, as it travels only as fast as a normal human can walk. If towed, it has a tendency to drag a bit.

Miscellaneous

Skill Dose

Cost: 2,000 DM.
Weight: .1 kg.
Legality: N. This is still something under development by the Domain military, and those who are caught with it are executed on charges of espionage.
Appearance and Use: A skill dose appears as a small ampule filled with a colored gel. A tiny injector at the tip introduces the skill dose into the bloodstream. Once injected, the dose begins its work.

Skill doses come in four varieties: Fitness, Reflexes, Learning, and Intuition. They enhance the performance of the Attribute for 1 d6 hours, giving a +15 bonus to all skills within that Attribute. After this period has expired, all Attribute checks suffer a -30 penalty for an equal duration. (Example: An ability score of 30 will be raised to 45, then drop to 15.)
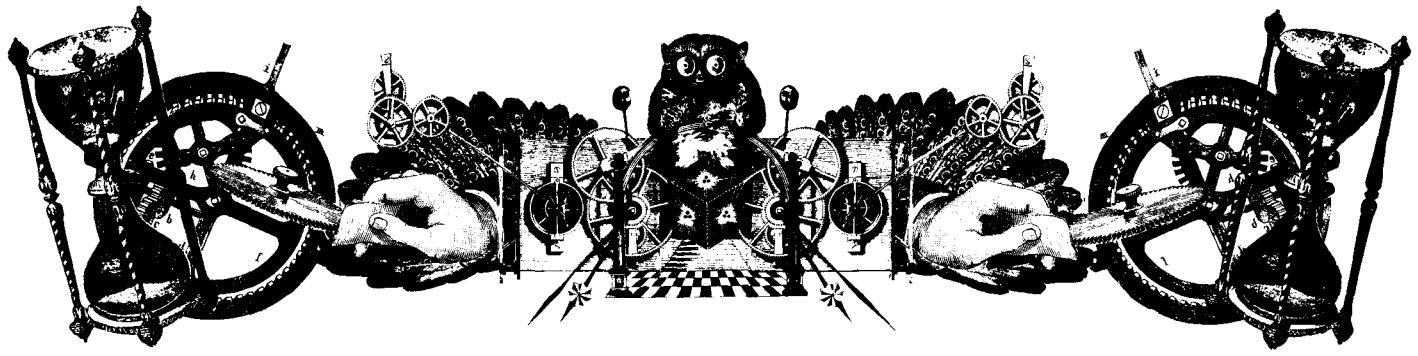
However, many pirates and smugglers discount these disadvantages when they can use the benefits to outrace and outgun most Morione lackeys.

Personal Shield Generator

Cost: 5,000 DM.
Weight: 1 kg.
Legality: ?. Only licensed individuals are allowed to carry shield generators.
Appearance and Use: The shield generator is a wide, flat belt that can easily be hidden under a loose tunic. The belt buckle holds three studs. The first activates a shimmering shield around the contours of the user's body, protecting her from 10 points of damage and reducing Lethality by 2. The second increases this field, protecting against 15 points of damage, reducing Lethality by 3. The third button turns the generator off. Unless the user is familiar with the studs, it takes a Reflexes check at-15 to hit the correct button. Of course, trial and error will suffice, but by then it might be too late.

The problems with the generator are that it runs on a limited amount of time (the stronger the shield, the more quickly time runs out), and that the tougher the shield, the more visibility is reduced. The generator can run for 10 minutes on the first setting, but only 3 minutes on the second. Recharges cost 250 DM each, but many see this as a small price to pay for their lives.

The shimmering of the shield increases dramatically on the second setting. While the first setting allows one to see nearly normally, the second reduces visibility to maybe 10 meters. The second setting is thus often seen as a waste of time unless one is in life-or-death melee combat.

Poison Spores

Cost: 5,000 DM.
Weight: 1 kg.
Legality: N. The slathorp are valued citizens of the Domain, and the Morione government officially discourages the use of a weapon geared at one of its politically active groups.
Appearance and Use: This is a small vial of slathorp spores, genetically engineered to bond onto slathorp infiltrators. Though they "scent" the same as all other slathorp spores, these are designed to incapacitate or even kill slathorp. Where normal slathorp spores bond to a passing shapechanger, causing the slathorp to give forth baby buds, the poison spores wreak havoc on the creature's system. If it fails a Willpower check at a -20 penalty, it must immediately revert to its protoplasmic form. It also immediately takes 5-10 (1 d6+4) points of Body damage. The spy can flee the area at its normal movement rate, but the spores remain with the slathorp until it has them surgically removed.
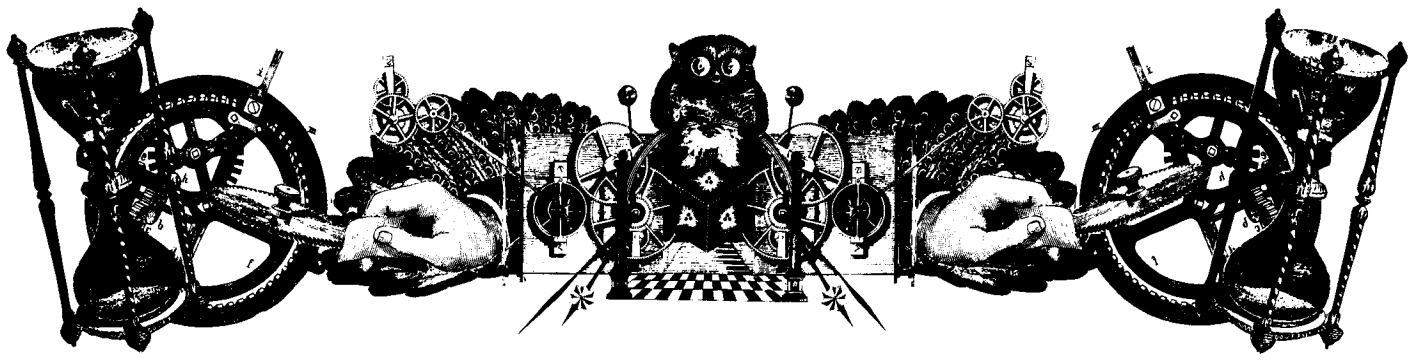
The spores will continue to spread throughout the disabled slathorp, causing an additional 1 d4 points of Body damage per week. Though this is only a slow decline, giving the slathorp plenty of time to recover, it also leaves the creature in a state of constant agony. It is because of these spores that slathorp are far more cautious about their mating, generally never doing so except on their home planet.

Slave Bands

Cost: 100 DM.
Weight: 1 kg.
Legality: ?. Only those of Gentry level Position or licensed bounty hunters are allowed to possess slave bands.
Appearance and Use: Slave bands are simple, adjustable titanium rings that can fit around the neck of any known sentient species. They have a built-in microprocessor that tracks and reports the movement of the band to the master rings. This allows owners of slaves to keep constant watch over them to ensure that they do not escape. The variant for shapechangers is an implant that bonds to the creature's cells, instead of a band.

There is an added feature: The owner can release voltage through the microprocessor into the slave's neck to prevent uprisings. This causes 1 d10 points of Stamina damage. Also, the slave cannot approach within 5 meters of the master; doing so results in 1 d10 points of Lethal electrical damage, increasing by 1 d6 per additional meter approached. The titanium band cannot be cut without endangering the life of the one to whom it is attached; there is a 50% chance that the character inside will also take the 15 points of Lethal damage it takes to remove one. Only those with Electronic Engineering skill can remove these fairly safely (at a penalty of only -15; failure indicates that both the slave and the liberator take 1 d10 points of Lethal damage). The best way to remove one of these is to acquire the master rings that go with it.

Vehicles

Nearly every character, no matter how poor, has access to some sort of vehicle. Though this generally means borrowing Dad's skimmer to run a few chores in town, the potential for travel is there. More prosperous characters might latch onto an old spacecraft, or, if they are lucky, actually be able to afford a new one. This chapter presents some of the vehicles available to transport your character around the planet, if not the galaxy.

Planetary Vehicles

In an age of technology as advanced as that of *The Galactos Barrier,* few want to take the time necessary to walk any great distance. They feel that if the means of transportation are convenient, they should not have to waste their time and energy on walking. What follows is data on two standard planetary vehicles. Though this seems like a limited number, these two vehicles come in variety of shapes, sizes, and makes. Those described here are merely the basic vehicles, and can be modified or traded in for more advanced versions.

Skimmer

Drive: Solar or electromagnetic.
Weight: 1-10 tons.
Speed/Maneuverability: I I IN.
Weaponry: None; can support 1 missile rail and *2* light lasers.
Defenses: None.
Maximum Passengers: *2-10*.
Maximum Load: *200-1,000* kg.
Cost: *6,000-40,000* DM.

The skimmer is a generic name for any surface craft that hovers 1 to 10 meters above the ground. Skimmers come in all shapes and sizes, including passenger-sized vehicles and two-person speeder models. Most skimmers are sleek and aerodynamic, with interior steering. Some are convertible, so that the owner can speed along in the open air. Some are also submersible, able to remain underwater for up to one hour.

Most skimmers are powered by the electromagnetic field of their planet, and are tailored to the frequency of the world. In places where the field is too weak, skimmers rely on solar power to maintain their function. Each skimmer carries cells capable of keeping the skimmer afloat for over 1,000 km, after which they must recharge in bright light for one hour. They can traverse any surface with less than a $60°$ slope, including water. It is not, however, recommended that one attempt an ocean crossing during a storm, for the skimmer rides the surface rather than maintaining a constant height. This can make for a bouncy ride over rough terrain; special all-terrain skimmers cost an additional *5,000* DM.

Skimmers are never made with weaponry attached, though there are weapons mounts on both the front and back of the skimmer, with an area for a rotation turret. Skimmers are notoriously bad in combat; though they are highly maneuverable and can be outfitted with weapons, they have no defenses to speak of. Their power will not support much armor, and any armor that will significantly aid in combat comes only at the sacrifice of maneuverability.

Aircar

Drive: Solar or fusion.
Weight: *4-30* tons.
Maneuverability: V/.
Weaponry: *2* light lasers or 1 missile rail.
Defenses: A single Kenophobe's Aegis protects the entire vessel.
Maximum Passengers: *4-40*.
Maximum Load: *500-3000* kg.
Cost: *55,000* DM.

The term "aircar" encompasses all vehicles that can rise above the 10 meter maximum of a skimmer. Not only do they have a greater vertical range, they also have more powerful engines to enable them to go more places more quickly. Almost all aircars are enclosed, and some of them have space capability (*+20,000* DM). However, this is strictly in a suborbital capacity, for aircars do not have the room for
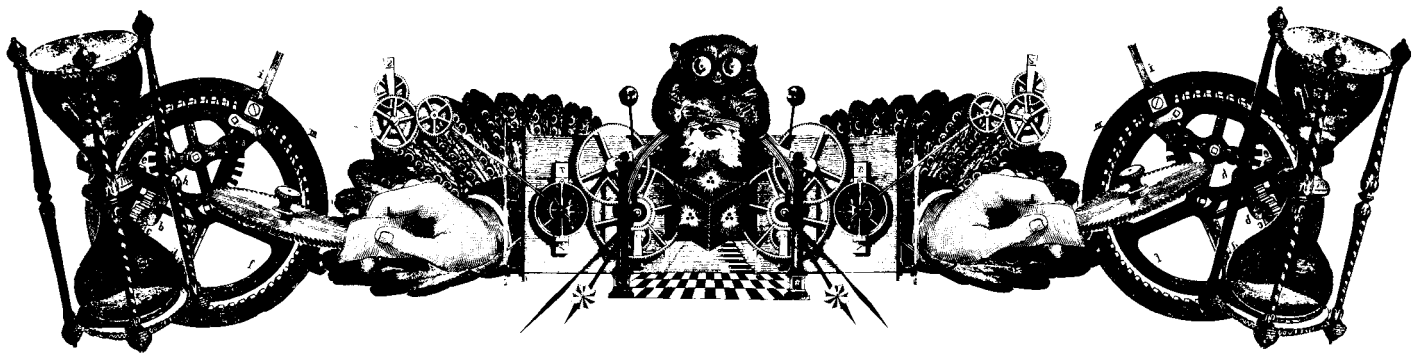
an eDrive or the durability for the voyages through eSpace. Indeed, they even have difficulty with atmospheric re-entry, and so cannot be used except as ferries to orbital stations. Many aircars are also submersible, allowing the aircar to take a tour in an undersea environment or to dive into water to escape a tenacious foe. This option adds only 7,500 DM to the overall price of the aircar.

Given the Domain's history of war, it is not surprising that most aircars come standard with two light lasers, one fore, one aft. These lasers are not powerful enough to damage a city badly, given that they are generally heavily policed in areas where citizens are likely to run amok, but are powerful enough to defend the vehicle against any pirates who might deign to enter the atmosphere in search of prey.

Also, a smaller version of the screen known as Kenophobe's Aegis (see later) comes standard on aircars. The single generator on the aircar covers all sides of the aircar. Unfortunately, this means that when the defenses on one side go down, they all go. There is no armor on aircars, for the same reason that there is none on skimmers: It is simply too bulky to add and still have an effective aircar.

Spaceships

Sooner or later (most likely sooner), the characters will tire of being on a single planet and will look to the skies for new adventure. The only problem is, those with smaller resources will not have the wherewithal to purchase the large ship of which they have dreamed for so long. This chapter details some of the various makes that these characters might eventually own. Remember, they need not have their own ship to take to the stars: some of the finest warriors of the galaxy rented space on battered cruisers before they ever gained their own vessels!

The worlds of the Morione Domain have a multitude of ships that they manufacture every year. To detail every make, model, and option would be impossible. This chapter, instead, details some of the most prominent and interesting varieties available. If there is a vessel you, as GM or player, want to design,

simply follow the guidelines established in the ships below, and be prepared to pay a hefty sum for a custom-designed spaceship.

There are three generally accepted divisions of spaceship: small, medium, and large. Small ships usually seat no more than four, are light on weapons and defenses, and are extremely fast and maneuverable. Medium ships can hold up to 40 people, have some defenses and more powerful weapons, and compose the majority of ships found in the galaxy. Large ships are any that hold more than 40 (some can hold thousands). Large ships are, for the most part, dreadnoughts, carrying vast amounts of firepower, armor, and shields. They are transport ships, battleships, and spaceborne cities, all in one. There are few people in the galaxy who will willingly tangle with a large ship, unless the larger ship is overwhelmingly outnumbered.

Space is so vast (and there is a great deal of space just within these close systems) that it seems very unlikely that two ships would ever meet or ever affect each other, but it does happen-especially near inhabited planetary bodies. It is often impossible to determine who is in what ship. Since no one can truly trust anyone else, almost every ship carries at least one external weapon to defend itself.

The most common weapons are the standard laser cannon (a weapon that uses lased light), the acceleration gun (a weapon that accelerates objects of iron to incredible speeds), or a missile rail (a weapon that houses, targets, and fires missiles of all sorts). The acceleration gun and missile rail are both on the way out, but many vessels carry them to protect against pirates who have developed defenses against laser blasters. Along with weapons, ships need to protect themselves from the rogue missiles that have long-missed their former targets, the laser fire from a privateer, or the missile launch from an Imperial Space Marine.

Space travel is a costly venture, one not undertaken lightly by those setting out for the first time. You will notice that the cost of a spaceship rises dramatically above that of a planetary vehicle. This is largely because of size and maintenance costs, as well as the
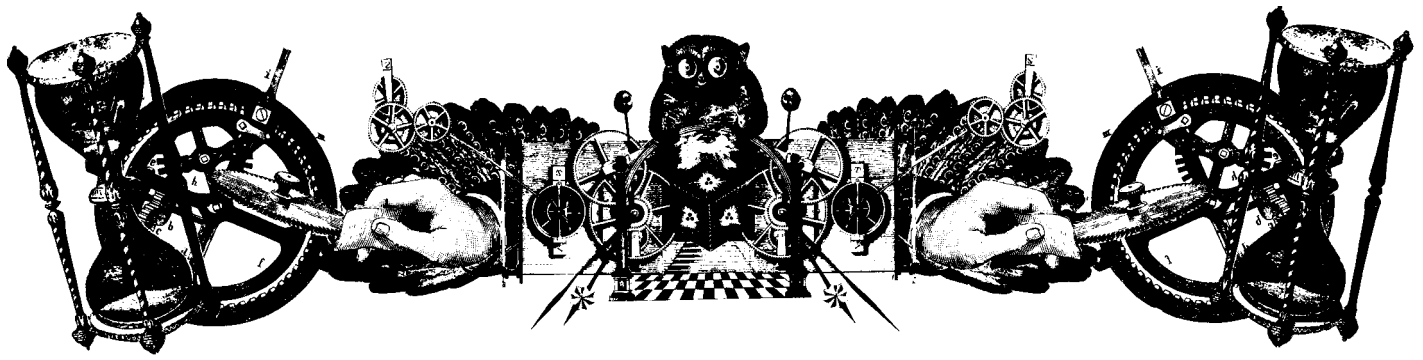
necessity for the seller to make a profit on the ship. Finally, the Domain wishes to restrict the number of ships in space, mostly limiting their ownership to the rich, for the Domain feels that they are the ones least likely to use their ships for harm.

The cost of the ship and fuel are the least of space ship owners' worries-they must also worry about pirates and defending themselves in the void, and must therefore purchase at least a good suit of armor for their ships. Weapons to fire back at the pirates are ideal. Repairs on a ship are also costly. In the end, anyone wanting to take to space in their own ship must have a large chunk of money they are willing to spend.

Alharutian Transport Model T12

Used by: Kellinon Duchy

Attributes:

Drive:	eDrive, ion drive
Fuel:	Fusion w/ E3 tritium injectors
Crew Minimum:	18
Crew Maximum:	5,000

Secondary Traits:

Tonnage:	5,000
Length:	1,000 m
Width:	450 m
Height:	220 m
Cargo Capacity:	4,000 tons
Cost:	1,300,000 DM

Operational Statistics:

Stamina:	150
Body:	50
Speed Code:	VII
Maneuver Code:	III

Defenses: Kenophobe's Aegis, starfield projector, light refraction screen, aligned casing, apportionment shield (10 plates)

Weaponry: Acceleration gun (aspect: all), two medium lasers (aspect: fore)

Description: The X12 Alharutian Transport is a boxy craft without aesthetic trappings. Crews aboard the vessel tend to be grumpy and despondent due to the dismal accoutrements and the general lack of warm lighting. The living quarters are metallic and cold, much like the prison cells on Altair Seven.

The heat transfer system just inside the exterior hull is loud; apparently the designers of this craft did not have access to the newer heat-conveyance systems that are almost noiseless in their operation. The method used in the transfer of heat from the hot side of the ship to the frigid side of the ship does not use the standard liquid polymer. Instead, the ship designers tried to save time, space, and resources by using the crew's drinking water instead. The unit that purifies this water before release to the crew removes heavy metals and odors; it does not remove the rusty-brown color or the stale, metallic taste.

With the same inept qualities, the air purification unit removes the carbon from carbon dioxide. Instead of removing odors and foreign particles from the recycled air, the unit attempts to deodorize the air by releasing a small amount of ozone through the ventilation system. (To this date, the Alharutian captains cannot understand why everyone on board complains of olfactory discomfort.)

The majority of the ship's interior space is taken up by cargo cubicles. These cubicles are individually sealed and protected from each other, allowing the ship to carry a multitude of different cargo types without the worry of having relatively harmless substances mix with other harmless substances to create a possibly volatile compound-and situation.

Viewed from the outside, the craft looks like nothing so much as a floating wreck with plates welded into place to hide a multitude of containment breaches. The command module is a small, polyhedral dome attached to the undercarriage of the craft, allowing the pilots to easily maneuver the craft into a parking position or to land the craft without damage (after all, the crafts in the Alharutian fleet are far more valuable than mere pilots, explaining the positioning of the command module).

The X12 Alharutian Transport is a large vessel with a
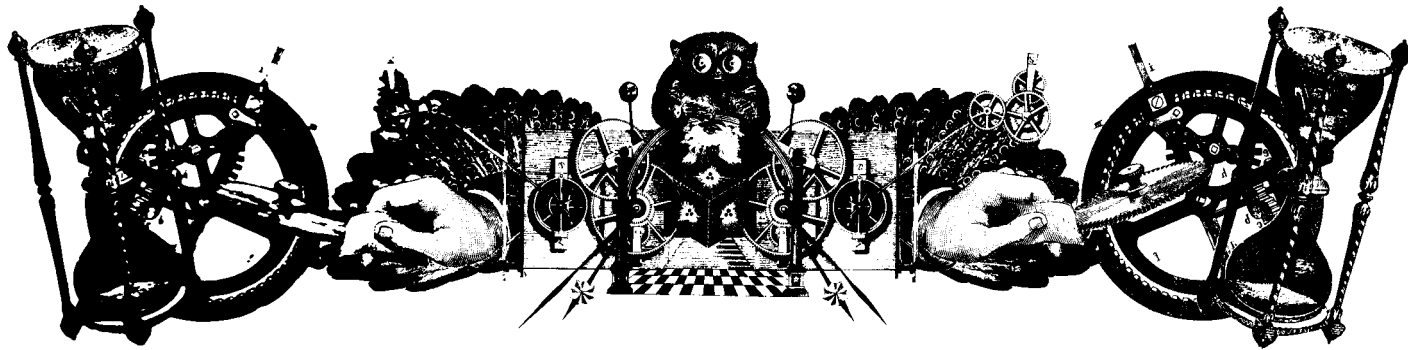
relatively short range. The E3 tritium injectors used on the fusion reactor powering the eDrive create a great deal of energy, but at the cost of inefficiency. The eDrive powered by the E3 injector is able to thread through eSpace 50% faster than the normal eDrive unit, but it also uses 100 percent more fuel. This limits the ship to a range of 30 light-years' travel per use. Thereafter, the tritium scuttle needs to be recharged.

G12 Marauder XX

Used by: Morione Domain and galactic rogues

Attributes:

Drive:	eDrive, accelerated ion drive, jet technology
Fuel:	Fusion w/ E3 tritium injectors
Crew Minimum:	2
Crew Maximum:	20

Secondary Traits:

Tonnage:	50
Length:	45 m
Width:	25 m
Height:	4 m
Cargo Capacity:	40 tons
Cost:	500,000 DM

Operational Statistics:

Stamina:	50
Body:	20
Speed Code:	IV
Maneuver Code:	X

Defenses: Kenophobe's Aegis, magnetic bubble, light refraction screen, titanium crust armor

Weaponry: Two medium lasers (aspect: fore), missile rail (8 missiles) (aspect: fore)

Description: The G12 Marauder XX is a favorite vehicle among the rogues of the galaxy, but it is also the major spacecraft in the Morione Domain's space marine fleet. Fast and maneuverable, the Marauder can literally dodge out of harm's way without its pilot breaking a sweat. The comfortable seats and the plush interior help to counter the normal-and excessive-vibrations from the engines.

The ship uses a strange passive heat transfer system that is deathly quiet. This silence, however, is offset by the thundering accelerated ion drive used in normal transit. This drive mechanism can propel the ship forward with enough force to crush the ribs of a normal human (about six Gs).

The Marauder is aerodynamically designed with a sleek nose, slightly forward-swept wings, and a tall stabilizer. This design does not help the ship whatsoever in the vacuum of space, but within the atmosphere this configuration produces a ship so aerodynamic it can reverse course almost instantaneously.

When weapons are mounted on the craft, they are usually located under the nose. This allows the copilot seated to the right of the pilot to easily "gain a bead on" (target) an enemy craft. Missile racks are usually placed under the wings along the flat surface. The missiles are never placed on the upper surface of the wing since this would severely interfere with the craft's aerodynamics while in atmosphere.

Whether this craft is in the hands of the Morione Domain or in the villainous grasp of pirates, the Marauder is rarely seen singly; those who pilot such craft prefer to travel in groups. Easily blown out of existence by large weapons, the Marauder needs the strength of numbers to compensate for its small size and relatively low firepower.

Tau Plagiarizer

Used by: Interplanetary "cruise lines"

Attributes:

Drive:	eDrive, apportioned solid fuel drive
Fuel:	Fusion, solid hadryx fuel
Crew Minimum:	20
Crew Maximum:	1,000

Secondary Traits:

Tonnage:	1,000
Length:	400 m
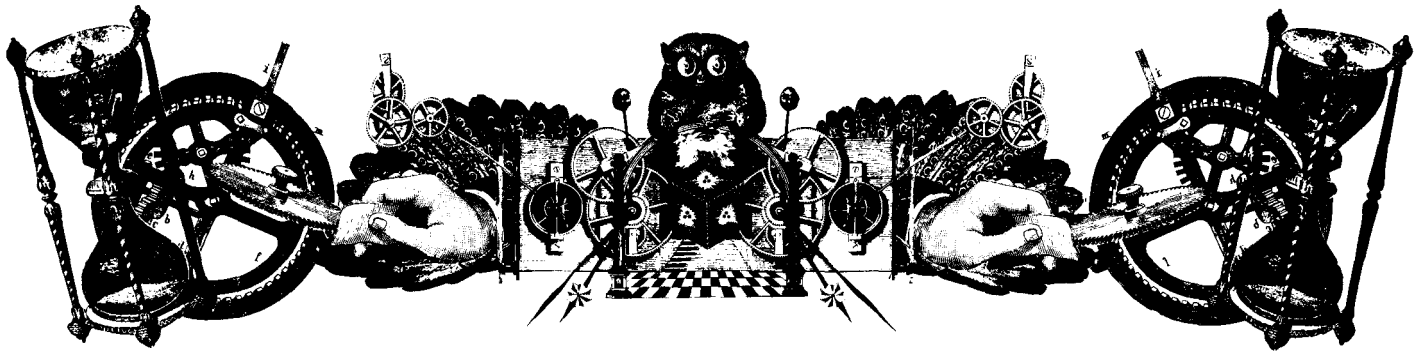
Width: 150 m
Height: 20m
Cargo Capacity: 500 tons
Cost: 5,000,000
   Operational Statistics:
Stamina: 100
Body: 35
Speed Code: VI
Maneuver Code: V

Defenses: Thorium electroplate, apportionment shield (10 plates), titanium crust, reflective segments, deceiver shield

Weaponry: Acceleration gun (aspect: all), 2 medium lasers (aspect: fore), 1 large laser (aspect: aft)

Description: The Tau Plagiarizer is a beautifully designed ship with very sleek lines. It is impossible to determine whether the craft is right side up or upside down since the ship is identical on both sides. The reason for this is simple; the designers of the ship constructed two identical sections and welded them together.

This design gives the ship two identical engineering sections, analogous weapons on either side of the ship, and two functional command bridges. Neither one of the bridges is considered the master bridge, since they both have equal priority to ship functions.

Inside the ship, the lighting is bright and cheerful, and pleasant music is continually piped through the loudspeakers. The gravitic stabilizers perpetually check the stability of the artificial gravity, creating a very comfortable, ideal, planet-like environment for the crew and passengers.

Several dozen small portals throughout the ship's exterior can be opened upon demand, releasing long antennae and palpi of varying widths and lengths. When exposed, these jutting, odd protrusions produce an almost porcupine-like look. Individual palpi can be lengthened, shortened, or their placement can be altered slightly.

When exposed, the ship's deceiver shield can be activated, creating a holographic image around the ship, making it appear to be what it is not. The size of the new ship cannot be larger than the fullest extent of the deceiver shield palpi, but the ship can always be made to appear smaller-or even appear that it is not even there.

This version of the deceiver shield, with its palpi, can make the ship appear to be from twice its normal size to completely nonexistent. Running invisible, or nonexistent, is not suggested, since other ships (without the proper sensors) cannot detect the presence of the ship and may very well run into it.

Lucretia TCS

Used by: Whatever pirate has her hands on it at the moment

   Attributes:
Drive: eDrive, accelerated ion drive
Fuel: Fusion w/ E3 tritium injectors
Crew Minimum: 40
Crew Maximum: 4,000
   Secondary Traits:
Tonnage: 4,000
Length: 800 m
Width: 450 m
Height: 275 m
Cargo Capacity: 2,000 tons
Cost: Priceless/Unique
   Operational Statistics:
Stamina: 120
Body: 40
Speed Code: V
Maneuver Code: VI

Defenses: Thorium electroplate, apportionment shield (15 plates), reflective segments, titanium crust, Kenophobe's Aegis, magnetic bubble, deceiver shield

Weaponry: 2 acceleration guns (aspect: fore), 4 light lasers (2 port, 2 starboard), 4 medium lasers (2 port, 2 starboard), 2 heavy lasers (1 top on turret, 1 bottom on turret), 2 missile rails (capacity 20 each) (1 fore, 1 aft).
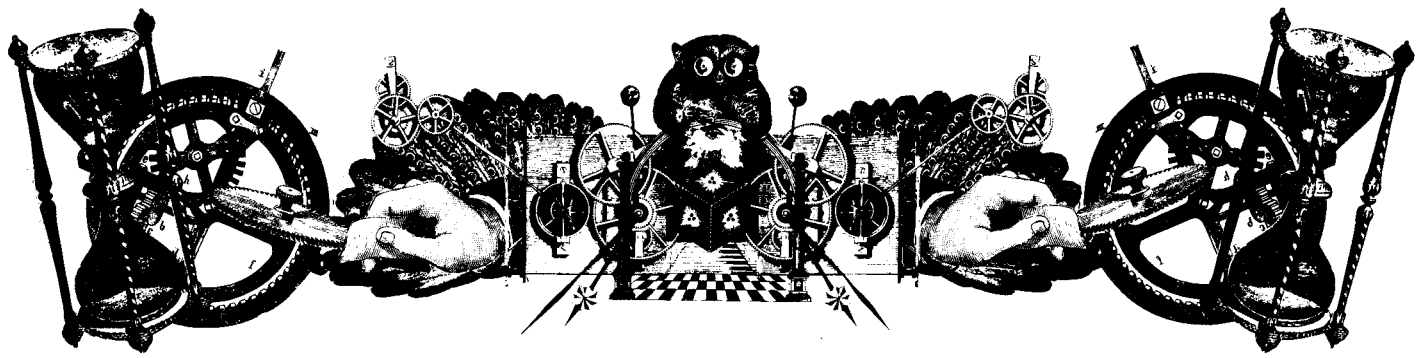
Description: The Lucretia TCS is an outlaw craft from the S'farna system. Its only purpose is piracy; the craft is good for nothing else. The Morione Marines are under strict orders to either demand the immediate surrender of the crew aboard the Lucretia, or simply destroy the craft.

The Lucretia TCS is shaped like the hammerhead shark. Long, stout, and tall, the craft has a great deal of internal space-enough for over 4,000 people to live comfortably. The internal chambers of the ship are connected by curved hallways and accessways that slant up or down to meet adjacent levels; there are no elevator shafts anywhere on the ship.

The ship designers tried to make it easy for passengers and new recruits to find cabins and conference rooms by numbering the rooms according to their location from the bridge. For instance, a cabin with a room number of +200-125 is located 200 meters behind and 125 meters below the command bridge.

The chaotic array of accessways and shafts makes for very interesting air currents in the ship. The circulation blowers are able to pipe fresh air easily into some parts of the ship, but other sections drown in dangerously high concentrations of carbon dioxide.

The bottom of the ship is spoked and spined, much like the flesh of a blowfish. The four spines are eight feet in diameter, each ending in an auger-like protrusion. When the ship is used to attack and loot a merchant ship, the Lucretia TCS's pilot simply steers the craft above the opponent's ship and holds the target helpless with tractor beams. The auger-bit spines burrow into the flesh of the opposing ship, sending the opponents ricocheting off the bulkheads (the crew of the Lucretia, on the other hand, are protected by the buffeting effects of collision due to the craft's inertia dampeners). Once imbedded in the opponent's ship, the spines expand at the order of the Lucretia's pilot, creating a seal. The auger bit end of the spines spin open, allowing the Lucretia's crew

LaG4/5 Renovation Waystation

Used by: Entrepreneurs, Scions, and the Domain

Attributes:

Drive:	Staying jet ion drives
Fuel:	Solar with fusion backup
Crew Minimum:	450
Crew Maximum:	450,000

Secondary Traits:

Tonnage:	500,000
Length:	235 km
Width:	145 km
Height:	1 km
Cargo Capacity:	4,000,000 tons
Cost:	Inconceivable

Operational Statistics:

Stamina:	400
Body:	150
Speed Code:	I
Maneuver Code:	I

Defenses: The Waystation incorporates every known shield and screen as part of its defenses, as well as a few that have not yet been released to the general public. They are practically impregnable. There has never been a recorded case of a Waystation falling due to an outside attack.

Weaponry: 10 batteries of light lasers, 8 batteries of medium lasers, 6 batteries of large lasers, 20 batteries of missile rails (10 missiles each), 15 acceleration guns. (Aspects apportioned at GM and player's discretion.)

Description: Flat, archaic-looking, gauche, and frightfully expensive to produce, Renovation Waystations are the chop shops that repair and refuel spacecraft, repair space stations, recondition newly acquired vessels to owner's specifications, and perform other similar services. These craft are so large, any vehicle or ship can easily land upon their upper (or lower) surface.
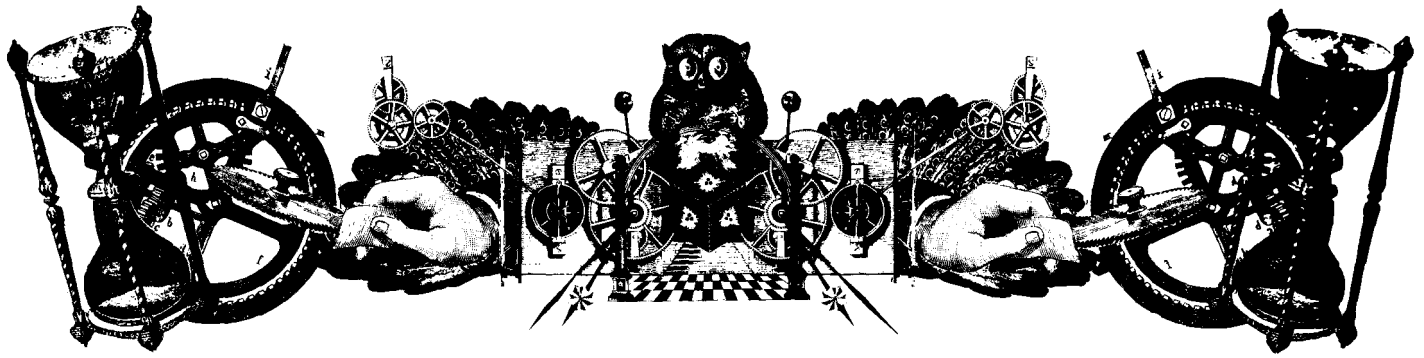
All Renovation Waystations in working order are located in planetary LaGrange points, always facing the sun. (Please note that planetary LaGrange points are points shared between a planet and its sun. LaGrange points are also located near moons, but these huge stations are never found near those.)

Renovation Waystations use a series of limited graviton initiators that create the sensation of gravity within the living quarters of the Waystation. Outside the Waystation, however, these initiators do not prevent the Waystation's large arms from grabbing and mooring ships and satellites of any size snugly to reconditioning ports for repair.

A typical Renovation Waystation can repair 1 Hull Integrity point to a vehicle every five minutes at the cost of 100 credits per point. This means a Waystation can repair 12 Hull Integrity Points per hour for 1,200 credits per hour. (The only problem facing characters with a vehicle is getting it to the Renovation Waystation.)

A Renovation Waystation uses a combination of sources to gain the power it requires. It has a series of fusion reactors and a large array of highly efficient solar panels. The fusion reactors use an isotope of hydrogen that is purchased from weekly supply ships.

The billing and requisitions department on a Renovation Waystation is generally run by a battery of Artificial Intelligence programs, but on a few Waystations, humans still work in these less-laborious positions. Most humans on the station serve in the repair and renovation department.

Most of the interior of the Renovation Waystation is taken up with storage. A good portion of the ship (approximately 20%) is taken up with the creature comforts for the crew, their families, passengers, and visitors. Gambling casinos, fine restaurants, sight seeing tours, entertainment houses, and a throng of other simple services attempt to make everyone as comfortable as possible, all the while making a great deal of money.

Morione Cruiser

Used by: The Imperial Navy of the Morione Domain

Attributes:

	Light	Medium	Heavy
Drive:	Each travels by ion propulsion, eDrive		
Fuel:	Solid hadryx, nebulae elements (Basard ramjets)		
Crew Minimum:	20	60	200
Crew Maximum:	200	1,000	5,000
Secondary Traits:			
Tonnage:	7,500	20,000	50,000
Length:	1 km	2 km	5 km
Width:	1 km	2 km	5 km
Cargo Capacity:	3,500	15,000	40,000
Cost:	-Not for sale		
Operational Statistics:			
Stamina:	175	250	350
Body:	75	100	150
Speed Code:	VI	VII	VIII
Maneuver Code:	III	II	I

Defenses:
Light: Reflective segments, titanium crust, aligned casing, apportionment shields (30 plates), thorium electroplate, Kenophobe's Aegis, light refraction screen, magnetic bubble
Medium: Reflective segments, titanium crust, aligned casing, curophagous rind, apportionment shields (40 plates), thorium electroplate, Kenophobe's Aegis, light refraction screen, starfield projector, deceiver shield, magnetic bubble
Heavy: Reflective segments, titanium crust, aligned casing, curophagous rind, apportionment shields (50 plates), mete finish, thorium electroplate, Kenophobe's Aegis, light refraction screen, starfield projector, deceiver shield, magnetic bubble

Weaponry: (Aspects: Any, due to spherical shape)
Light: 2 batteries of light lasers (4 lasers/battery), 4 batteries of medium lasers, 2 batteries of heavy lasers, 2 missile rails containing 5 of each type of missile (all
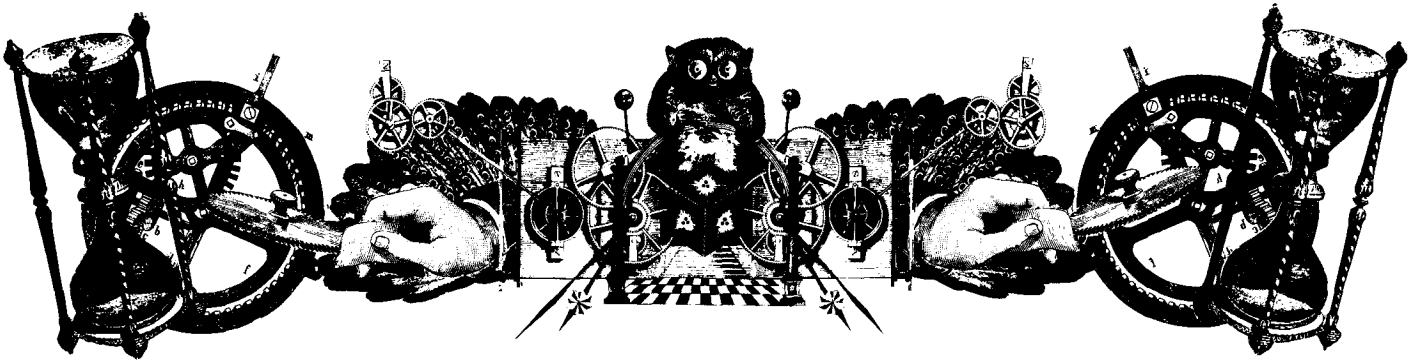
made of ceramic)

Medium: 4 batteries of light lasers, 6 batteries of medium lasers, 4 batteries of heavy lasers, 4 missile rails, each armed with a specific type of missile (all ceramic)

Heavy: 8 batteries of light lasers, 8 batteries of medium lasers, 10 batteries of heavy lasers, 10 batteries of large missile rails (capacity 40 missiles), each armed with 10 missiles of each type (all ceramic)

Description: All three cruisers are spheroid, with dimples marking viewports, weapon emplacements, sensor antennae, and the like. Since they do not generally enter atmosphere, the cruisers have no need to be aerodynamic. Each cruiser carries several ships capable of entering an atmosphere that carry supplies and troops back and forth between the surface and the craft.

The cruisers are the heart of the Morione fleet. The light cruisers make up the bulk of the fleet, patrolling the most-used spaceways and transporting Morione troops to troubled areas. The medium cruisers back up the light cruisers, generally remaining in orbit around planets that need a firm reminder of who, exactly, is in charge. They also travel the lesser spaceways, in hopes of catching smugglers and pirates trying to prey on those who travel through these ways. The increased firepower is supposed to make up for the smaller frequency of Morione ships traveling here.

The heavy cruisers are some of the most frightening ships in space to wrongdoers. They are the toughest ships the Domain has to throw at its foes, and they do an admirable job of removing those irritants. They serve as the command centers of localized battles, as well as the main exploratory ships of the Domain. Rumor has it that the Domain has actually lost some of these ships in the uncharted areas of the galaxy, though no official sources will confirm that rumor.

Customizing Your Ship

The ships described above are standard designs. True spacers will want to put some renovations on their ships to give them that special edge in space, one that might spell the difference between life and death. The items below can provide that edge, for the right price.

Weaponry

One of the most necessary additions to a ship in the galaxy is weaponry. Whether to repel pirates or to do a little pirating, your PC can never approach an unidentified ship in space safely without some sort of weaponry to back the character up. The weapons here are not the definitive list of weaponry, for there are many scientists and inventors at work on perfecting the next, greater weapon.

Many of these weapons are purely for use in space, while some can function both in vacuum and atmosphere. Those that serve both on planets and in space are noted in the description. The range for weapons in atmosphere is drastically reduced from their ranges in space; a weapon that could easily fire 10,000 km in space might fire only 1 km in an atmosphere. This is because the majority of these weapons were designed for use in space, and the designers did not take atmospheres into account. The density of particles in the air is almost infinitely greater than it is in vacuum, and it diffuses the beam or slows the projectile incredibly.

Ship weapons in The Galactos Barrier are rated the same as personal weapons in terms of combat value. That is, a weapon may cause 2d10 points of damage, with a Lethality of 5. This is relative only to ships, for, as mentioned in the "Combat" section of this Universe book, most shipboard weapons can easily destroy an organic being, and most ship's shields and armor are far tougher than the average being's. As with the personal combat system, each ship has a Stamina and Body rating. A ship's Stamina and Body are determined by its armor and shields.
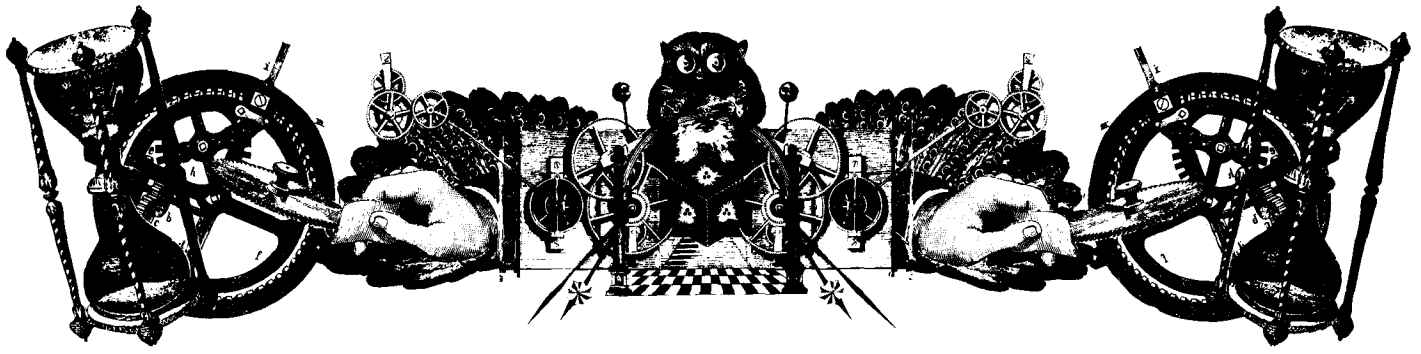
Acceleration Gun

Cost: **7,500 DM**
Effect: 2d10 (6)
Range: Medium in space. Ineffective in atmosphere.

The acceleration gun is a ship-sized version of the mass driver found on many low-atmosphere worlds and moons. As with the mass driver, the barrel of the weapon contains a series of electromagnets. When electrical current is delivered to the magnets, they literally pick up and hurl forward a large chunk of ion ore or raw iron. By the time it leaves the barrel, it's traveling at better than 50 miles a second-and in deep space, there's nothing to slow it down, except the hull of a ship or the surface of a planet.

The damage from the acceleration gun has been known to completely tear apart the average small craft. Fortunately, most pilots are able to dodge the projectile. The pilot gets to make a Piloting -10 roll to dodge it.

Missile Rail

Cost: 15,000 DM
Effect: Causes damage to enemy craft.
Range: Short in space, long in atmosphere.

In a typical episode of space combat, especially one involving medium- and large-sized ships, a lot of missiles fill the void between the combatants. However, just heaving a nuclear bomb in the general direction of a spacecraft isn't enough-most ships are hardened against the intense gamma radiation of deep space, and in comparison, a few kilotons of radioactive explosives is nothing. Also, most ships are able to target a simple nuclear missile and wipe it out with lasers at long range. Instead, ship-to-ship missiles are designed to do nastier, more subtle things.

In fact, a missile doesn't even have to collide with a target in order to do damage. Some missiles are specially designed to miss-but while making a close pass, they throw out a brutally intense magnetic field that wreaks havoc with the target's electronic systems.

Other missiles explode in the enemy ship's path, seeding the area with millions of tiny metal pellets. When the target slams into this micro-mine field, the pellets can shred a section of the hull.

A missile rail holds up to 20 missiles, and comes with a built-in targeting system that provides a +10 to the Gunnery skill. It has 25 Stamina and 10 Body points; if damaged beyond that, the missile rail explodes with whatever missiles remained inside. The ship on which the rail is mounted then takes the damage from these missile. Many experienced gunners choose to jettison all missiles once the rail has been successfully struck, rather than take the chance that the rail will detonate.

Missile Type	Ammunition Cost
Acid Missile	8,000
Ceramic Missile	x2
Debris Missile	2,000
Magnetic Missile	3,000
Kinetic Missile	4,000

Acid Missile: The acid missile's warhead consists of two special parts. First, the containment area consists of a highly corrosive acid that attacks and oxidizes almost every known metal and ceramic used in normal ship shielding. Second, this destructive acid is laced with a special bacteria that consumes the metallic and ceramic substances dissolved in the acid and releases oxygen as a byproduct. The oxygen is in turn used by the acid to dissolve the metal casing around the ship.

Once the acid begins to break down the ship's exterior, it causes 3 Stamina points of damage per combat round. The acid eats away at the ship's hull until a total of 20 Stamina points are consumed, at which point, the acid becomes inert and the bacteria die. If the acid has destroyed 75% of the ship's total Stamina points, the hull is breached.

Ceramic Missiles: These missiles were designed expressly to ignore the magnetic bubble screen and any other defenses that rely on magnetism to repel attacks. These missiles simply substitute ceramic for
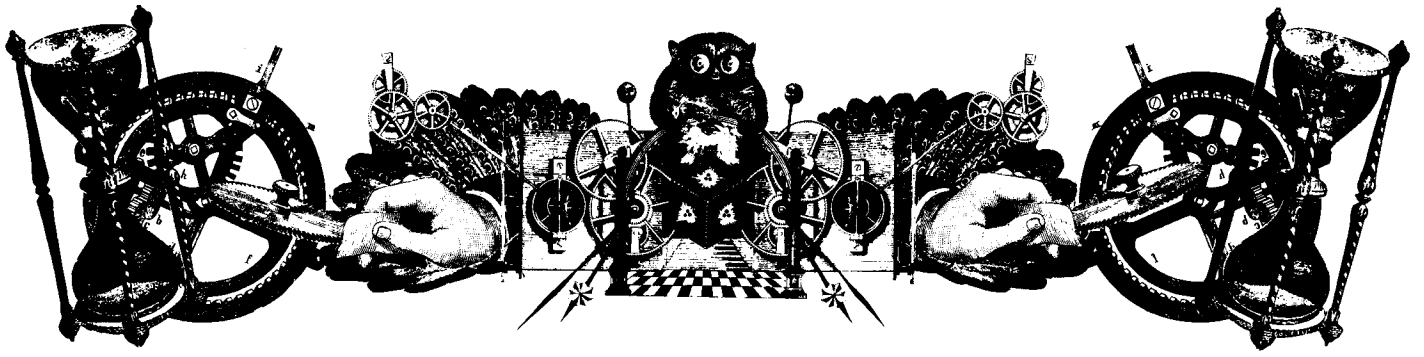
the metal shell of the other missile types; otherwise, they are exactly the same. All the missile types are available in ceramic at double the cost.

Debris Missile: The debris missile explodes directly in the path of the enemy's ship, creating a cloud of minute metallic particles (flak) that tear into the ship's hull. The missile causes 2d6 (3) points of damage.

Magnetic Missile: The magnetic missile incapacitates one random nonweapon system on an enemy's ship for 1d4 minutes.

Kinetic Missile: The kinetic missile is designed to thwart all attempts to destroy it through the means of lased weapons-the missile's hull is made of an extremely reflective material. When the missile impacts with an enemy's ship, it partially burrows itself in the hull before it detonates. It causes 4d6/3 points of damage as well as explosive decompression to the excavated area and all adjacent areas on the same deck, and half that damage to adjoining levels above and below.

Lasers

The laser is amplified light, refracted through crystals to enhance its power into the killing range. Ever since the ancient Empire learned how to synthesize naturally-occurring crystals, lasers have been the weapon of choice for most spacefarers. Not only are they unaffected by the vacuum of space, they cause a fair amount of damage to one's enemies. There are three divisions of space lasers: light, medium, and heavy. Every laser can fire 30 times before the crystal fractures. Almost all owners of lasers have automatic crystal reloaders; those who don't quickly find that they must spend far more time fleeing than fighting.

Light Laser

Damage: 3d6/3
Cost: 5,000 DM
Range: Short

The light laser is one that is most common aboard smaller vessels, such as skimmers, aircars, and one- or two-crew spacecraft. They are not so heavy that they significantly slow the craft's speed (many vehicles mount two light lasers), and are effective against both land-based troops and spacecraft.

Medium Laser

Damage: 4d6/4
Cost: 10,000 DM
Range: Medium

The medium laser is generally used only in the mid-sized spacecraft or as part of a ground-to-air battery, for only these can support the massive power which the medium laser draws. They are about five times as heavy as a light laser, and approximately four times the size.

Heavy Laser

Damage: 3 d 10/6
Cost: 20,000 DM
Range: Long

Heavy lasers, like medium lasers, are only found in large spacecraft and ground batteries. In spacecraft, they are usually part of a battery of lasers used both for defense and offense. They are formidable weapons which few dare to try their skill against.

Drive Enhancers

Of course, no discussion of a ship is complete without ideas on how to increase its speed and performance. The two items below boost the ship's performance immeasurably, though not without some cost. Also, they might be considered illegal in some ports; the pilot had best be knowledgeable in the law of each Scion before entering their territory with these enhancements.
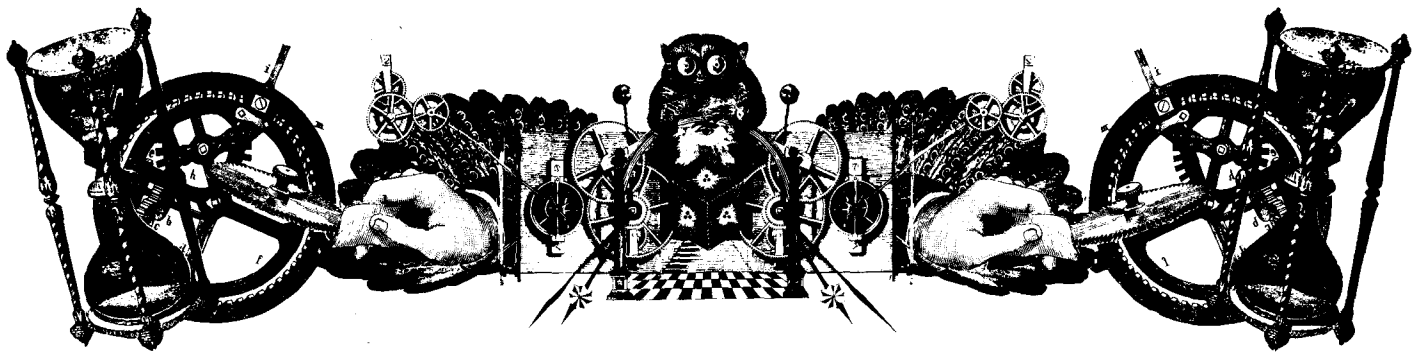
E3 Tritium Injectors

Cost: 10,000 DM
Effect: Reduces eSpace threading time by half.

The E3 tritium injectors, when used on fusion reactors powering eDrive motive engines, create a great deal of energy, but at the high cost of inefficiency. An eDrive powered by an E3 injector is able to thread through eSpace 50% faster than the normal eDrive unit, but uses double the fuel. This limits the ship to half its normal range. Thereafter, the tritium scuttle needs to be recharged.

After every 100 light-years' use, the eDrive's saturators should be replaced. This procedure generally costs 1,000 credits. The caustic reaction and extreme heat from the increased energy input from the E3 injectors causes premature deterioration in the saturators. If this is not fixed within 150 light-years of use, the saturators implode and the eDrive is disabled.

As a safety feature, the eDrive does not allow the ship to be suspended in eSpace. Should this happen, the ship would be irretrievably lost. Instead, the eDrive jettisons the ship out of eSpace as close to the intended target as possible. For instance, if the MDS *Swordfish* had 140 light-years on its eDrive and attempted a 17-light-year eSpace thread to Alpha Grid, the ship would travel 10 light-years and thread out of eSpace. The ship is forced to travel the next seven years on standard drive. Unfortunately, the crew that arrives at Alpha Grid will be the original crew's great-grandchildren.

Hadryx

Cost: 3 DM per liter
Effect: An efficient but lethal fuel source.

Hadryx is the latest high-powered fuel used by various spacefaring agencies. Processed from sea water and silt, hadryx is a seemingly endless energy supply, and a cheap alternative to all other fuel sources. Hadryx plants have sprung into existence on every salt-water coast throughout the Domain, and the smell of ozone has become a familiar olfactory assailant.

Hadryx, being the saving grace for space exploration and colonization, is not without its side effects. Its extremely high octane and volatile rating makes it highly lethal to any living thing exposed to it (even for a short moment). If any bacterium, plant, animal, human, insect, slathorp, etc,. is splashed by or otherwise touches hadryx, the living being dies. (Consider the damage to have a Lethality of 5, doing 10 Stamina Points per round of direct contact.) There is no cure for hadryx poisoning except immediate amputation of the affected limb or limbs, and the effects are irreversible.

The fumes from hadryx are also extremely poisonous. Those exposed to these fumes are treated as if being exposed to highly lethal poison (make a Fitness check; failure indicates Stamina damage of 6d6 points, Lethality 6). All within 1 meter for every exposed liter are affected by the fumes. One percent of the exposed hadryx evaporates every hour regardless of the amount exposed or spilled. This high toxicity is a concern to Domain citizens because large areas of contaminated ground are completely leached of nutrients and rendered totally sterile. Only years of cleaning and soil stripping or a century of hadryx abstinence can induce recovery.

If properly contained, hadryx can be used in any internal combustion engine with no danger. It can also be used to power any of the solid and liquid propulsion rockets and suborbital shuttles. One hundred liters of hadryx can transport a ship one light-year.

Armor

Armor is the last defense of a ship. If a ship begins taking significant damage on its armor, it would be best advised to flee the scene. Armor is the only thing beyond the ship's screens that keeps a ship's crew from assured death in space. If the lasers and missiles of an enemy are not threatening their well-being, the cosmic radiation of space is. In the early days of space flight, the threat of Van Allen belts and cosmic
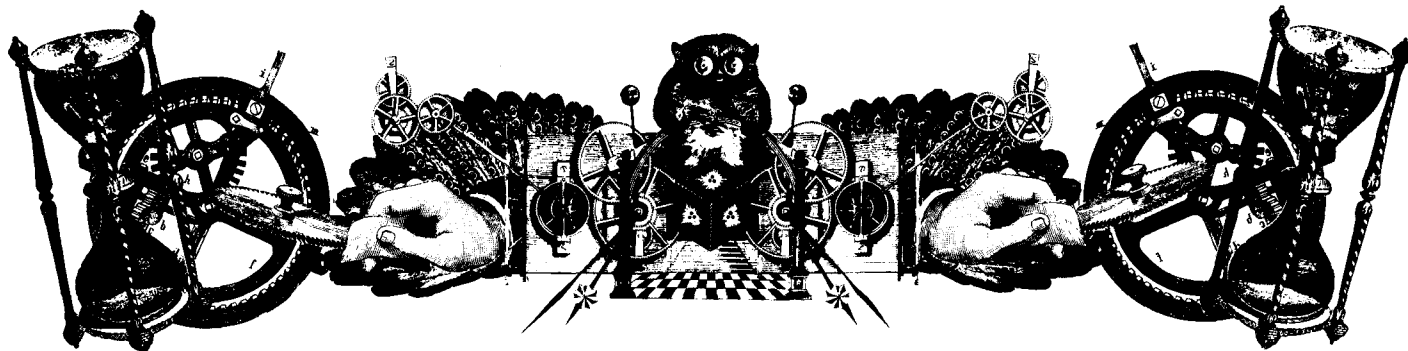
radiation were ignored until the best pilots and gunners started falling ill, in effect crippling the earliest space agencies. Lawsuits from widows and widowers did not help matters either.

To counter this ever-increasing threat from radiation, scientists created what was thereafter known as the curophagous rind. This protective layer lies just outside the internal bulkheads where it constantly shields the ship's internal space from the threats of radiation-both man-made and naturally occurring.

The seven armor types listed below are the most common, and several others are available; included in these seven is the curophagous rind, which is given greater detail than that given above. Please note that the Hull Protection is restricted to one, two, or three specific types of attacks, except in the case of thorium electroplate, which is proof against anything thrown at it.

Armor Type	Protects vs.	Hull Protection
Reflective Segments	Lasers	12, -3 Leth
Titanium Crust	Missiles	8, -1 Leth
Aligned Casing	Flak, Missile, Particle Blast	10, -2 Leth
Curophagous Rind	Radiation	10, -2 Leth
Apportionment Shield	Non-Energy	10 points.
Mete Finish	Chemical, Corrosive	8, -1 Leth
Thorium Electroplate	All	12, -3 Leth

Reflective Segments

Cost: 300 per panel; 1 panel protects 1 ton.
Effect: Armor versus laser fire.

Reflective segments are usually glued, welded, or electroplated onto the exterior of a spacecraft, making the ship, in effect, a flying mirror. With these plates installed, the ship is very easy to spot near suns, but nearly invisible everywhere else. If there are other armors attached to the ship, the reflective segments are placed over these. Though this means that the reflective segments are usually the first to go in a space battle, not only are they far less expensive than the other armors offered, they are also the most effective by far against laser fire.

The plates allow the ship to simply reflect the effects of laser fire off the ship harmlessly. The chance of a rogue laser blast reflected off such a surface striking another ship are so astronomically remote (pardon the pun-Ed.), it is not even a consideration. Reflective segments reduce the damage of lasers by 12, and reduce Lethality by 3.

Titanium Crust

Cost: 300 DM per ton of the ship.
Effect: Armor versus missile blasts.

Titanium crust is a thin shield of titanium that makes the ship less susceptible to the effects of missile blasts. With a titanium crust, the ship gains a copper and blue tint, changing colors as the engines heat and cool. The armor reduces the damage of missile blasts and particle weapons by 8, reducing Lethality by 1.

Aligned Casing

Cost: 400 DM per ton.
Effect: Armor versus flak, missile blasts, and particle weapons.

An aligned casing consists of dozens of thin metal plates that are created in a special process that forces the atoms to align themselves magnetically. Each layer of metal is aligned in a different direction. When these plates are molded together, they create an incredibly tough and durable hide. This type of armor allows the ship to forestall the horrid effects of flak, missile blasts, and particle weapons, giving the ship protection against 10 points of damage, and reducing Lethality by 2.

Curophagous Rind

Cost: 300 DM per ton.
Effect: Armor versus radiation.
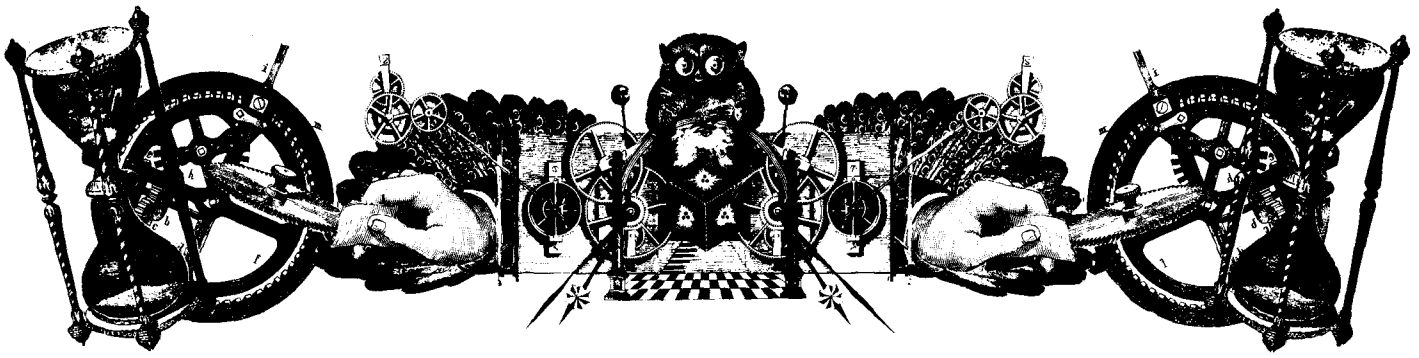
Curophagous rind is a special process that combines titanium, hafnium, and osmium into a super-tough shield that has an uncanny ability to thwart the effects of radiation. This shielding gives the ship protection against radiation to the tune of 10 points with a reduction in Lethality by 2.

Apportionment Shield

Cost: 20,000 DM, 1,000 per plate thereafter.
Effect: Armor versus non-energy weapons.

Apportionment shielding consists of nine servo motors, six sensors, innumerable tracks, and nine metallic and ceramic plates. The sensors locate the nearest objects larger than three-centimeters across, and notify the servo motors. The motors, in turn, align the ceramic and metallic plates between the ship and the object. Each of these plates can withstand 10 points before breaking up.

Once one plate is rendered useless, another is able to take its place until all the plates are destroyed. If the ship is being attacked from different vectors, the servo motors are able to protect the ship from as many angles as the apportionment shield has ceramic plates. The apportionment shielding does not increase the ship's Body or Stamina points, but instead absorbs damage that would normally be allotted to the ship. This type of shielding is ineffectual against laser or particle weapons.

Mete Finish

Cost: 500 DM per ton.
Effect: Armor versus chemical and corrosive weapons.

Mete (pronounced "meet") finish is a special paint, wax, and electroplate that shields the exterior of the ship from corrosive chemicals and acids. Using a tantalum-based glaze, the ship becomes, effectively, completely invulnerable to acids and other damaging chemicals.

One unfortunate point, however, is that the mete finish is relatively easy to destroy. Simply bombarding a craft with enough damage to remove one-fourth of the ship's Stamina points (with a minimum of 30 Stamina) causes a breach in the mete finish protection. Mete finish does not alter the ship's Body or Stamina points, though it does protect against 8 points (reducing Lethality by 1) of chemical and corrosive weapons damage.

Thorium Electroplate

Cost: 2,000 DM per ton, plus 1,000 per year maintenance.
**Effect:** Armor versus all attack types.

Thorium electroplate is the ultimate armor for any ship that travels the space lanes. Using thorium, yttrium, and zirconium compounds with several other strong metallic elements, this substance is able to thwart the effects of radiation, laser fire, and missile blasts. This shell protects the ship from 15 points of damage, and reduces Lethality by 4.

There is one major side effect to the use of thorium electroplate. The thorium (Th232) used in the compound is itself radioactive and decays, resulting in a continuous breakdown of the electroplate. Every year, the electroplate must be chemically treated and readhered to continue the protection. Should this maintenance be ignored, the electroplate is only half as effective in its second year of use, and completely useless on the third year. In addition, should the electroplate be allowed to decay for any significant amount of time (over two years), each crew member must make a Fitness check at-30, or suffer 1 d6 points of Stamina damage per day from radiation. Every 6 points of radiation Stamina damage results in the permanent loss of one Body point.

Screens

The screens are generally a ship's first line of defense, keeping the hull from damage, or the ship from being detected in the first place. Though they are not nearly as powerful as the armors listed earlier, they represent
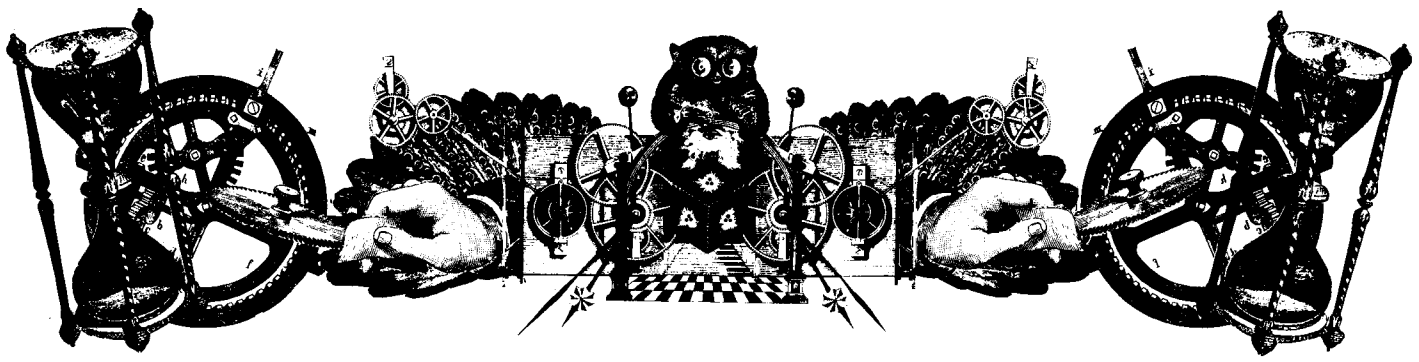
an easy method to avoid combat; two of the screens protect against actual physical combat, while the rest are completely defensive.

Screen	Protects vs	Cost
Kenophobe's Aegis	All	10,000 DM
Light Refraction	Lasers	4,000 DM
Starfield Projector	Visuals	2,000 DM
Deceiver Shield	Sensors	6,000 DM
Magnetic Bubble	Missiles and flak	7,500 DM

Kenophobe's Aegis: Kenophobe's Aegis is the technical name for the standard energy-deflection screens found on nearly all ships. It is known more commonly (and unimaginatively) among the crews as "the shields." There is generally at least one Aegis screen per facing of the ship, keeping the ship from being blown into pieces by hostile fire. It protects against 25 points of damage in a single combat before it shuts down. When it is not in use, it regenerates 10 points in an hour, so it will usually be functioning at full efficiency at the beginning of a battle.

Light Refraction: The light refraction screen both hides the ship and protects it from laser fire. By bending the path of photons around the ship, yet keeping the photons traveling in their original vector, the light refraction screen makes it seem that the ship is not there at all. Since light bends around the ship, it is impossible to receive visual images of the ship. In addition, lasers have no effect on a ship protected by such a screen, for they are simply beams of coherent light.

Other weapons work admirably against this screen. Missiles, pulse weapons, and particle weapons are not at all affected by light refraction; any ship that relies solely on light refractors is in dire trouble. Sensors have no trouble picking up such a ship, and any ship with non-visual targeting will be able to fire at this ship at its leisure, provided its weapons are not lasers. The light refractor functions for only 3 minutes at a time, after which time the ship can be easily hit. Also, the screen can only take 20 points of damage (Stamina or Body) before overloading.

Starfield Projector: The starfield projector is the poor spacer's version of the light refraction screen. It builds a hologram of stars around the ship, hiding it from casual visual inspection. Since many ships rely purely on visual inspection for scanning an area (sensor sweeps can be traced back to their origin), the starfield projector is a worthwhile investment for anyone traveling through areas where one must, perforce, be discreet. The starfield projector does not shield the ship in any way at all, and works best only when the ship is not moving at all.

Deceiver Shield: The deceiver shield is another hologram screen. It can magnify the ship, making it appear approximately two times its real size. Likewise, it can shrink the appearance of the ship, making it seem as small as half its size. This is primarily useful in negotiations, where one ship wants the other to think it is packing more firepower, or to minimize its threat. The deceiver shield can also protect against sensor scans of the ship, keeping enquiring spacers from obtaining a true measure of the threat the ship poses to them. It does not protect against damage of any sort, except in the sense that avoiding notice is the best way of avoiding damage.

Magnetic Bubble: The magnetic bubble is a screen that brings into being a fluctuating magnetic sphere around the ship, keeping odd bits of flak and stray missiles from hitting the ship. The screen's microprocessor automatically scans all pieces of incoming metal and constructs a field that repels the metal, no matter its magnetic polarity. The screen can also be wired to send pulses of magnetic energy on a successful Spacecraft Systems roll, keeping select pieces of metal further at bay. However, this version of the screen is not effective against masses of metal larger than half the ship's size. Also, it must be targeted, leaving the ship open to damage from other metallic objects. Therefore, it is nearly impossible to repel another ship attempting a boarding action with such a wired magnetic bubble. The magnetic bubble repels 30 points of missile damage before overloading and requiring repairs.
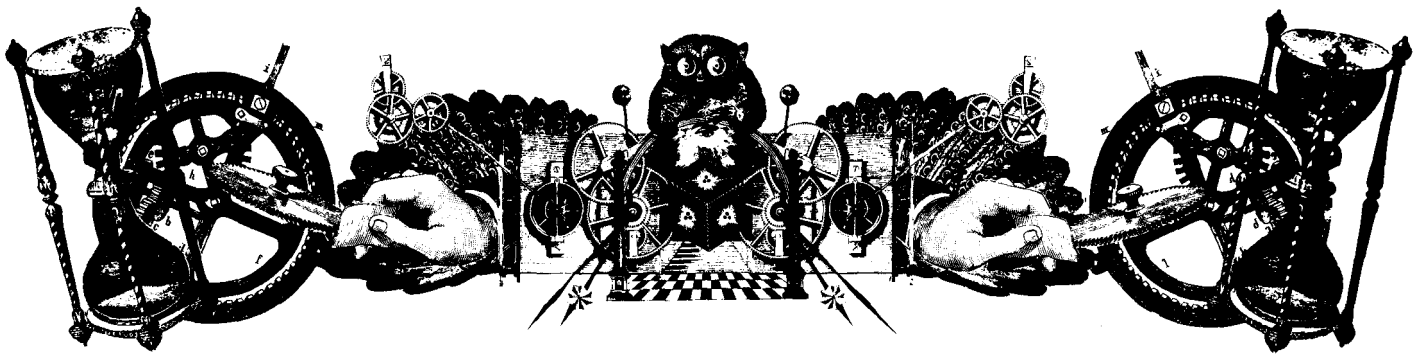
C ombat in The Galactos Barrier covers an extremely wide variety of actions, from blows of the fist and club on the most primitive of worlds, to battles between starshi.ps in space, to conflict between practitioners of Musical powers. This chapter explains the details of how to conduct all such combat-as well as how to recuperate from your wounds afterward. Note that combat in this game is most importantly a story element, so the focus of these rules is on quick play and high action rather than detailed tactics and number crunching.

The Combat Sequence

The combat round sequence in The Galactos Barrier is as explained in the "System Guide" portion of this book:

I. Roll for Advantage (first turn only)
11. Declare Actions
III. Determine Initiative
IV Resolve Actions

However, because of the wide range of combat situations possible in this game, the details of how advantage, actions, and initiative work in specific situations vary, depending upon whether personal or dogfighting combat is being conducted. For that reason, personal combat and dogfighting combat are covered under separate headings, below, each with its own explanation of how advantage, actions, and initiative work within its setting.

Personal combat covers those situations in which individual figures or ground vehicles are involved. It can also generally be characterized as two-dimensional combat. Personal combat follows the normal course of the AMAZING ENGINE game rules for turn sequence.

Dogfighting combat covers three-dimensional situations in which only flighted vehicles are involved. In combat between an individual figure and a flighted vehicle, use the personal combat rules. (For purposes of this game, submarine vehicles are also considered "flighted" in terms of their ability to maneuver three-dimensionally through water.) The exception to this is when combat occurs between vehicles in different mediums, such as a spaceship firing upon an aircraft from orbit, or an aircraft firing upon a submarine in the water below it. In such cases, the dogfighting modifications to the normal AMAZING ENGINE game turn sequence do not apply well, so use the personal combat rules.

When the dividing line between personal combat and dogfighting combat isn't perfectly clear, the GM will be called upon to determine when each system is to be used.

Personal Combat

As explained above, personal combat primarily involves conflicts between individual characters. It includes both hand-to-hand and ranged attacks.

Advantage

Advantage in personal combat situations is determined as explained in the "System Guide" section c this book.

Declare Actions

The possibilities of actions that can be taken in personal combat are as wide-ranging as your imagination allows. But given that a combat turn is only 10 seconds long, the GM will be the judge as to how much can be accomplished in a given situation, and exactly what skill or attribute tests must be passed in order to accomplish your desires.

As an aid to the GM, actions can be divided into the following types: move, attack in melee, fire a weapon, perform a Musical Piece, or other action. As a general rule, characters may combine any two of these into a course of action for the turn. Suggested exceptions to this rule are detailed below, but as always, high adventure is the goal, and the GM is the final arbiter in every case.

Move: Exactly how movement affects personal combat depends upon whether or not vehicles are involved.
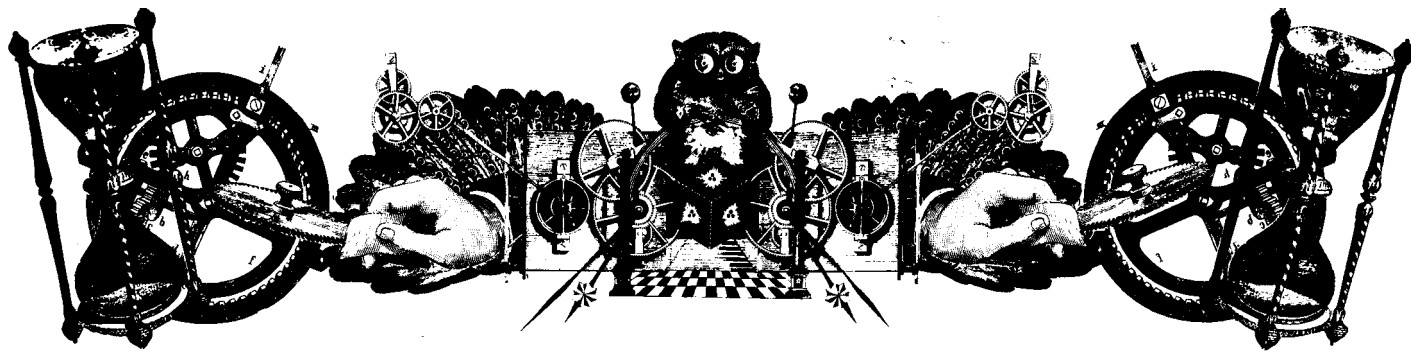
Foot Movement: Movement rates for walking, running, and sprinting are given in the "System Guide" section. For purposes of the two-action rule above, only one movement action may be chosen for a turn.

Obviously, the more time and energy devoted to movement, the less of them that remain available for other actions. Consequently, the GM may allow you to conduct more than one other action if you are moving slowly or standing still, or possibly no other actions if you are sprinting. Some example combinations might include standing still and firing at a stationary target multiple times, walking up to a target and striking it twice with your fists and/or feet, running up to a target and tackling it, or sprinting across a battlefield doing nothing else but dodging enemy fire.

Remember, however, that because circumstances can vary so widely in the far future milieu of The Galactos Barrier, these are only suggestions; your GM is responsible for deciding exactly what can and cannot be achieved in a turn. Those decisions will be based upon such details as combatants' relative positions, combatants' comparative purposes, current combat environment (including weather conditions, and sometimes even gravity level), even dramatic appropriateness of the scene (such as unusually heroic actions during the climactic battle of an adventure-when the characters' adrenaline is really pumping!).

Vehicle Movement: Personal combat movement rates for vehicles are listed with each vehicle. A vehicle can travel at less than or equal to that speed.

Characters driving a vehicle have their hands full, so to speak, and will seldom be able to take any other actions, though the GM may allow them to fire a one-handed weapon in some circumstances, provided that the vehicle is traveling fairly straight and level for the duration of the turn.

Characters riding a vehicle generally have little to occupy their minds, so they are relatively unrestricted as to actions during combat. The exception to this is if the vehicle is jostling them about much, as from sudden turns or travel over rough ground, in which case their possible actions may be reduced or even curtailed, as the GM sees fit.

Attack in Melee: Actions that fall under this heading involve sub-specialties of Barehanded Combat and Melee Weapon, which are themselves specialties of the Hand-to-Hand Combat skill. They include such actions as blows with fist, foot, or head (Brawling or Martial Arts-attacker's choice); strikes with knives, clubs, spears, power staves, and other such hand-held weapons (Primitive or Modern sub-specialties of Melee Weapons); bites and claw attacks (Brawling again); and tackles and grapples (Wrestling).

Typically, only one such attack will be allowed in a turn, but your GM may allow you to conduct more under special circumstances.

Fire Weapon: This heading includes ranged attacks with such things as blaster rifles and the like (Heavy Weapons), laser pistols (Sidearms), thrown objects (Throwing), or even primitive bows and arrows (Archery). The number of attacks that can be made in a turn are dictated by the weapon's rate of fire. Rates of fire higher than 1 allow attacks to be split among multiple targets in a reasonable arc of fire

Perform Musical Piece: Performing a Musical Piece may take one or more turns. The description of each piece reveals the time required. When performing a Musical Piece, a character may take no other actions: All the character's concentration is devoted to calling the piece's effect into being. Anything which might break that concentration-being on the receiving end of an attack, for instance-may require the character to pass a Willpower roll (GM's decision). If the roll is failed, the character's concentration is lost, and the attempt to perform the Piece immediately ends in failure.

Other: There are multitudinous other actions possible in the high adventure atmosphere of the game's combat. Some possible examples could be diving behind a desk for cover, jumping over a force fence, climbing a ladder into a hovering ship, wresting an item away from an opponent, or pulling a tapestry down on a band of foes. Use your imagination heroically. When you state an intention to take such an action, your GM will decide upon the skill or attribute test to be made (if any) and whether or not other actions may be combined with it.
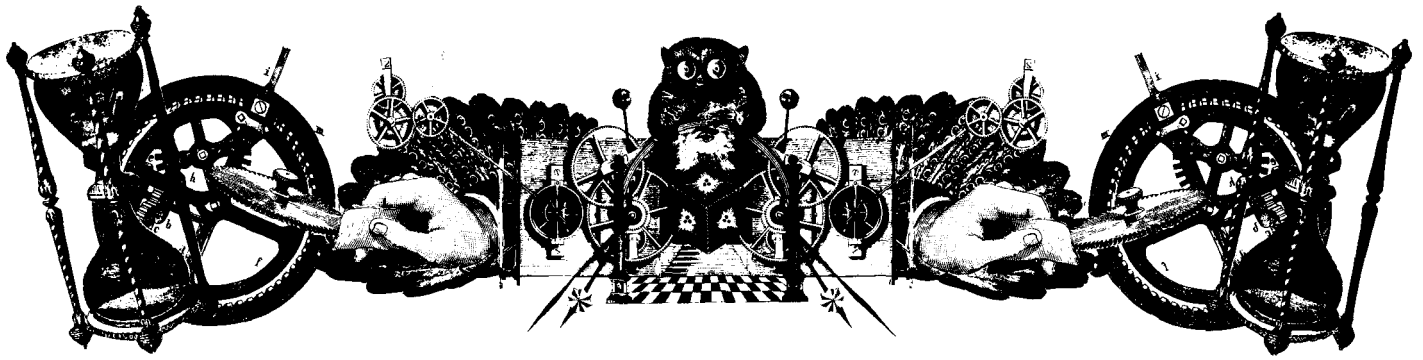
Determine Initiative

In personal combat situations, initiative is determined as explained in the "System Guide" section of this book.

Resolve Actions: Doing Damage

Damage caused in personal combat depends upon the type of weapon being used, and upon whether the target is a character or a vehicle.

Character to Character: Attacks upon characters by means of weapons carried by other characters causes damage as explained in the "System Guide" section. This is the same whether the attacker or target character is on foot or mounted on a vehicle.

Often, however, characters mounted on a vehicle will have a good portion of their bodies covered by that vehicle, which makes them more difficult to hit. A typical penalty to an attacker's chance to hit in such situations would be -30. If an attack misses its target because of this modifier, but would otherwise have been successful, the vehicle is hit instead. See the next heading for the effects on the vehicle.

Character to Vehicle: The fact that most vehicles are fairly large targets works to make them easier to hit than a character. On the other hand, the higher speed at which they can travel has an opposite effect, making them more difficult targets, and the psychological effect of a vehicle bearing down at high speed upon an character makes attacks by that character more difficult as well. But even if hit, most vehicles are difficult to damage with most hand-held weapons.

Hand-to-hand Combat: Melee attacks against a stationary (or nearly stationary) vehicle automatically hit, but normally do only superficial (scarring) damage, with no real game effect. The exception involves attacks against more vulnerable components, such as viewports, radio antennas, engine intakes, and the like. (Historically, for example, a number of battle tanks have been disabled by a well placed grenade in the treads, or even a can of gasoline poured into an engine compartment.) GMs may require a suc-

cessful Intuition check to identify such vulnerable components on a vehicle. Typically, some sort of melee weapon and a successful Fitness test will be required to damage them, and the GM may apply modifiers to the attempt, based upon the component's durability.

Melee attacks against a moving vehicle require an attack roll for even superficial damage. This is because attackers mounted on the vehicle have to devote some attention to avoid falling off, and attackers on the ground have to time their attack f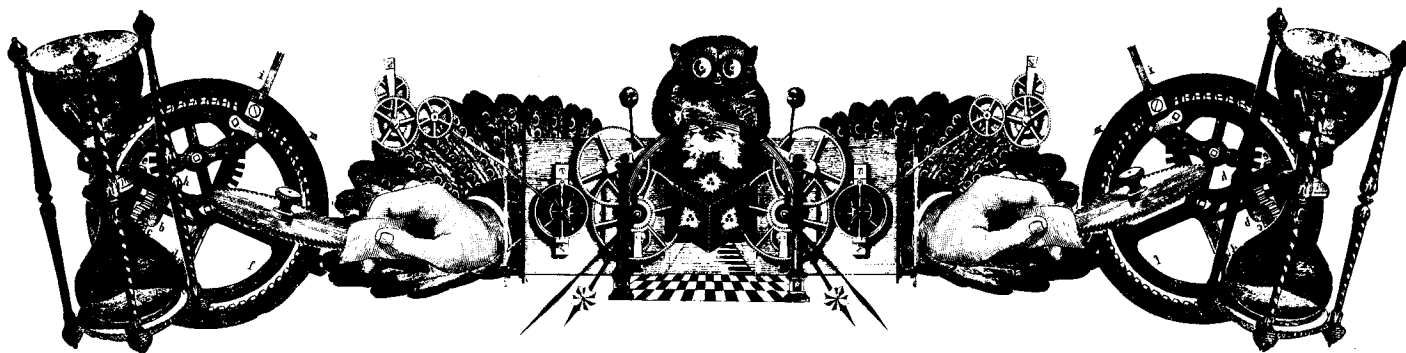or the moment when the vehicle comes adjacent to them. Depending upon the vehicle and its current speed, the GM may rule that in order to target a vulnerable component and do more serious damage, the attacker must pass an Intuition test as above, and/or apply modifiers to the chance to hit. What's more, immediately after attacking, a character on the ground must succeed at a Reflexes roll to avoid being accidentally struck by the vehicle. For possible penalties to this roll, for the damage effects to the character on foot, and for rules concerning intentional ramming by the vehicle's pilot, see the "Vehicle to Character" heading, below.)

Ranged Combat: The GM may assign bonuses for the target's size and/or penalties for the target's current speed for ranged attacks against vehicles. If the vehicle has a screen up at the time, further penalties should be made to the attack chance.

Successful sidearm attacks normally do only superficial damage to vehicles, though those which pass a success rating of the GM's devising (typically S1 or S2) may be considered to have damaged a more vulnerable component. Attacks by heavy weapons suffer roughly half the penalty for screens and have roughly twice the chance of damaging a vulnerable component, because they are able to penetrate slightly more durable materials to get to them.

Vehicle to Character: Weapons mounted on vehicles fall under two different categories in this game, based upon their intended category of target: vehicle or personnel. Antipersonnel weapons-such as heavy blasters-use the normal character to character attack rules, because they are, effectively, charac-

ter weapons that simply happen to be mounted on a platform, the vehicle.

When vehicles attack characters with weapons normally intended only for attacks against other vehicles, the chance to hit is much reduced, because the targeting equipment is not intended for such relatively small, organic targets. Use the Gunnery skill for such attacks, but make them at only half the normal chance to hit.

On the other hand, because these weapons are intended to breach vehicle shields and armor and do damage to rather durable components, if they actually hit a character, it is pretty much a sure thing that the target is dead-utterly disintegrated, blown to tiny fragments, etc. Your GM may allow characters a Luck test to avoid death, but as that skill explains, even if the test is successful, the character will still be in very bad shape.

There is a final attack type that must be discussed concerning vehicle attacks on characters. This is the ramming attack. A character driving a vehicle may attempt to run over a character on foot, or (as explained under the Character to Vehicle heading, above) a character making a melee attack at a moving vehicle may be struck. In the case of a character trying to run over another character, a Piloting skill roll must be passed and the target must fail a Reflexes roll in an attempt to get out of the way. Modifiers to these rolls, and damage done to the standing character, depend upon the GM's judgment of whether the vehicle is traveling slowly (up to roughly 15 meters per turn), quickly (roughly from 16 to 30 meters per turn), or extremely quickly (roughly from 31 to 60 meters per turn-at speeds above this, it becomes effectively impossible to ram a character). Slow-moving vehicles impose no penalties to either skill roll, and cause 2d6(1) damage if they hit; quickly moving vehicles impose a -20 penalty to each roll and do 2d8(3) damage; extremely quickly moving vehicles impose a penalty of -30 to each roll and do 2d12(5) damage.

Vehicle to Vehicle: When vehicles are attacking vehicles, use the dogfighting rules on page 112 in this chapter.

Shipboard Combat

Given the emphasis on space travel in this game, it shouldn't be surprising that much of the personal combat in its adventures occurs on board starships. Unfortunately, given the compact nature of these ships, such combat is as apt to damage the interior of a starship as it is to damage the combatants. It is even possible to breach a hull, exposing everyone present to the vacuum of space!

Hand-to-Hand Combat: With the exception of combat involving Fugues (which are covered under Sidearm Damage, below), there is no risk of breaching a hull from hand-to-hand combat, thrown weapons, and primitive ranged weapons such as arrows. But a critical failure at any of these attacks can damage control panels, tear wiring loose, or perhaps sever fluid lines, etc., at the GM's option. This is considered ancillary damage, as explained below.

Firearms Combat: Firearms and Fugues have a greater chance of causing ancillary damage. At the end of a turn in which firearms have been fired or Fugues have been used, roll 1 d10 and compare it to the number of attacks that missed their targets, counting heavy weapon fire as double. If the number rolled is greater than this total, the missed attacks cause no serious damage to the starship's interior (just scorch marks and the like). On the other hand, if the number rolled is less than or equal to the total missed attacks, the combat area suffers ancillary damage. If a 1 is rolled, a bulkhead has been breached as well (depending upon the circumstances, the GM may choose to have this be a hull breach instead, likely at a viewport or other such relatively weak spot).

Ancillary Damage Effects: For dramatic purposes, the effects of ancillary damage are immediately obvious: Sparks fly, power lines jump about, fluids might spray, acrid smoke arises, warning lights flash, buzzers go off, or suchlike, or the area might suddenly lose all light, heat, air circulation, artificial gravity, etc. The ship might even suffer an overall diminishment in function due to this localized damage, though large ships are less likely to do so than are small ones (because the circuitry, hydraulics, etc.
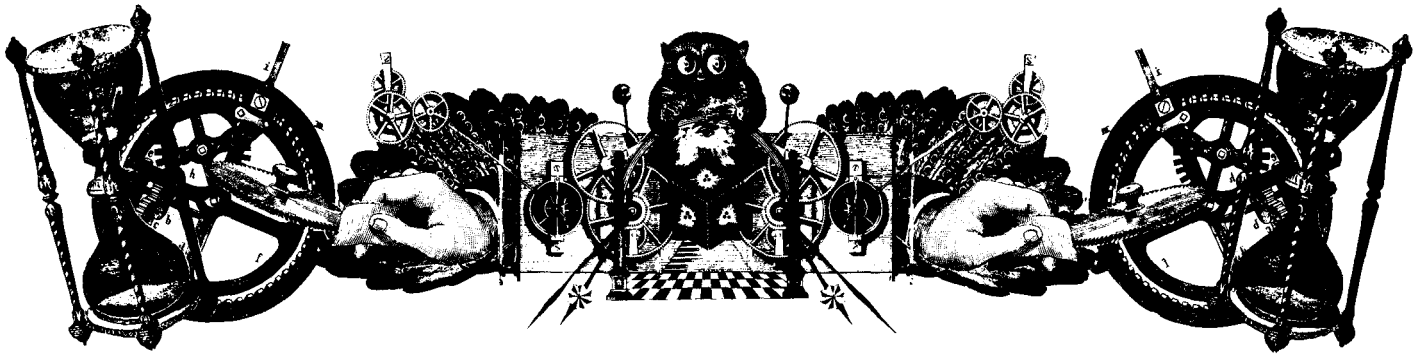
of large ships are more diffuse, while those of smaller ships are more compact). In any case, the exact effects are up to the GM, as seems dramatically appropriate at the time.

Breach Effects: The hull is the ship's outer shell. If the hull is breached, the ship's atmosphere is compromised. Usually, spaceship hulls are extremely difficult to breach, though the hulls of other vehicles are somewhat easier.

If a hull is breached in space, the air rushes through the hole into the vacuum outside. Every character in the ship begins taking decompression damage on the next turn, unless in an area sealed off from the breached area or wearing a spacesuit. (This damage continues until atmosphere is somehow restored to the character-a spacesuit is donned; a separate area is entered, sealed, and repressurized; or the breach is somehow plugged and atmosphere restored to the area.) In addition, if the hole is large enough (GM decision) characters may be sucked out of the ship: Each character must pass an immediate Fitness or Reflexes roll (player's choice) to avoid that fate.

In a planetary atmosphere, a breached hull allows the exterior air to mix with the ship's interior air. Depending upon the type of atmosphere outside (density, temperature, and gaseous components), this may or may not be harmful to the ship's occupants. See the section titled Other Damage, later in this chapter, for sample effects.

Bulkheads are the interior walls of a ship, dividing it into compartments that can be made individually airtight when interior hatches are closed. If a bulkhead is breached, the two compartments that it separated can no longer be sealed off from each other. This is primarily significant in case of a breached hull in one of the compartments.

Variant Gravities

Moving and fighting in nonstandard gravities imposes some distinct difficulties. For purposes of this game, G force (whether actual gravity, centrifugal force, or acceleration) is divided into six ranges: negligible, light, standard (Earth normal, the default gravity to

which the AMAZING ENGINE   rules apply), heavy, crushing, and deadly.

Negligible Gravity: Negligible gravity is anything below.1 G. Moving about in such gravity is extremely difficult unless some sort of hand or foot holds are available or a propulsion unit such as a jet pistol is used. Characters have a tendency to leave the ground with the least exertion, and gravity is insufficient to pull them back down. Limb movements necessary for combat have a tendency to cause characters to spin slowly about, out of control, and recovering from such a spin is quite difficult.

To move in negligible gravity without hand-holds, a jet pistol, or the like, a character must pass a test of the Low-Grav Maneuver skill each turn. If this test is failed, the character spends the turn moving in the same direction and at the same speed as the previous turn (which may be not at all).

Hand-to-hand and thrown weapon attacks do half damage in negligible gravity, unless the body of an attacker is sufficiently braced (i.e., an arm is hooked around a support, or at least two hand/foot-holds are used). To conduct any attack in negligible gravity, a character must pass a test of the applicable combat skill or the Low-Grav Maneuver skill, whichever is lower, with a failure margin of F6. A failed test by this margin means that the character loses hold of any support and spins about, out of control, until passing a Low-Grav Maneuver skill test in a subsequent turn (one such test can be made per turn).

Objects in negligible gravity weigh very little but mass the same. Consequently, while characters are able to lift quite a lot, they cannot maneuver with more equipment than in standard gravity.

Light Gravity: The light gravity category includes environments from .1 G to just below .5 G. Characters can move about freely at half normal speed in such gravity without a skill test, but must pass a Low-Grav Maneuver test to move more quickly-at up to normal speed-or to stop or change direction when moving this quickly.

When making an attack of any sort in light gravity, a character must roll versus the Low-Grav Maneuver skill or the applicable attack skill, whichever is lower.
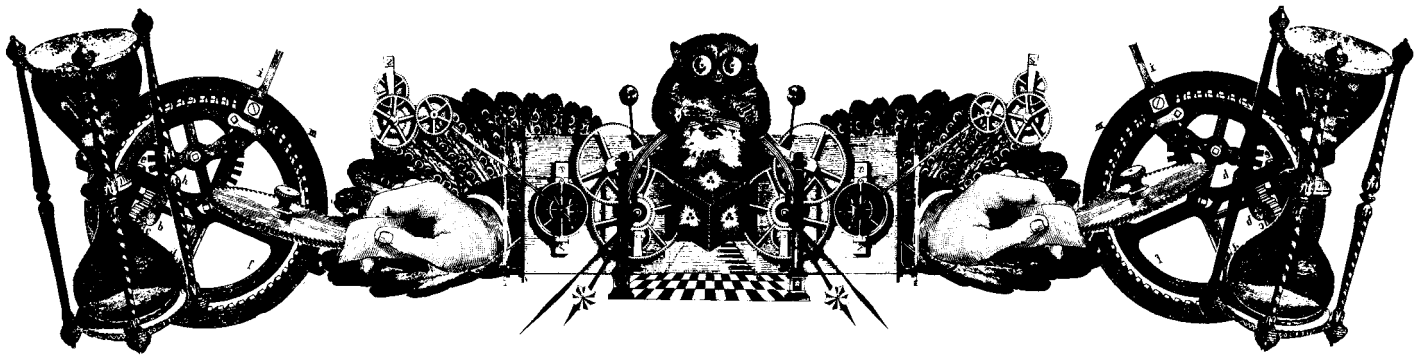
Failure simply means that the attack has missed. Melee and thrown weapon attacks in light gravity do normal damage to their target.

As in negligible gravity, characters can lift more than normal in light gravity, but cannot effectively maneuver with more equipment than their standard load.

Standard Gravity: The range from .5 G to just below 1.5 G is considered standard gravity. Most of the time during their adventures, characters will be in environments within this range. There are no special rules for conducting combat in standard gravity.

High Gravity: The range of gravities from 1.5 G to 2.5 G is considered high gravity in this game. Keep in mind that the weight of objects is roughly doubled in such gravities, so characters will be able to carry less equipment. As well, movement rates are halved, and even the walking movement rate suffers a duration limitation: Minutes = Fitness x 3.

The danger of high gravities is that characters will strain or otherwise injure themselves while performing strenuous activities, such as combat. To represent this, whenever characters fail a roll versus Fitness or Reflexes (i.e., any skill relating to either of these Physique attributes), they must immediately make a roll versus the High-Grav Maneuver skill. If this roll is passed, there is no problem. But characters who fail this roll suffer 2d6 damage with a Lethality rating of 2, and the GM may add an additional 1d6 damage if a character subsequently becomes unconscious and falls.

Crushing Gravity: Gravities ranging from above 2.5 G to just below 5 G are categorized as crushing gravity. Walking even a few steps is virtually impossible in crushing gravity, and toward the high end of the range, characters will have an difficult time even crawling a few feet of distance. For each turn spent in crushing gravity, characters must pass a Fitness test merely to remain conscious. Any sort of physical activity requires a roll versus the High-Grav Maneuver skill. In addition, combat actions are rolled at half the normal rating, and failure results in an automatic 3d6 of damage with a Lethality rating of 4; the GM may impose an additional penalty if a character becomes unconscious and falls.

Deadly Gravity: Any gravity of 5 G or above is considered deadly. Unless the GM rules differently for extenuating circumstances, characters automatically become unconscious in such gravity and will die within five to 10 minutes. Gravities above 10 G are automatically lethal.

Dogfighting

A major difference between dogfighting combat and personal combat is in the nature of movement involved.

Characters in personal combat are prone to change maneuvers rapidly, almost jerkily: a character might dash forward a few meters, come to a sudden stop to fire at a target, rush forward again, dive behind a bit of cover, get back up, take a step backward to avoid a hand-to-hand attack, turn suddenly to the side to throw a punch, and then turn again and climb a wall. When vehicles are involved in personal combat, they tend to slow or stop in order to keep in range their targets on foot. But the high speeds of dogfighting combat dictate that such acceleration, deceleration, and direction change take a bit more time, which makes vehicle movement more fluid, even in the most violent of dogfights.

What's more, characters won't move at all unless they have some sort of immediate goal in mind, even if it is as simple as fleeing the area. But vehicles in dogfighting combat continue to move even if their operators are stupefied with indecision.

As a consequence of all this, issues of advantage, declaring actions, and initiative become somewhat problematical when dealing with dogfighting combat. Therefore, we modify the normal turn sequence procedure when conducting dogfighting combat.

Note that the rules that follow are explained primarily with two combatants in mind. Where necessary, separate subheadings are included to explain the effects of multiple vehicles in a combat.

The vehicles in this book are all listed with a Speed Code and a Maneuver Code, each given as a Roman numeral from I (lowest) to X (highest). The first is an abstraction of the vehicle's acceleration and flat-out
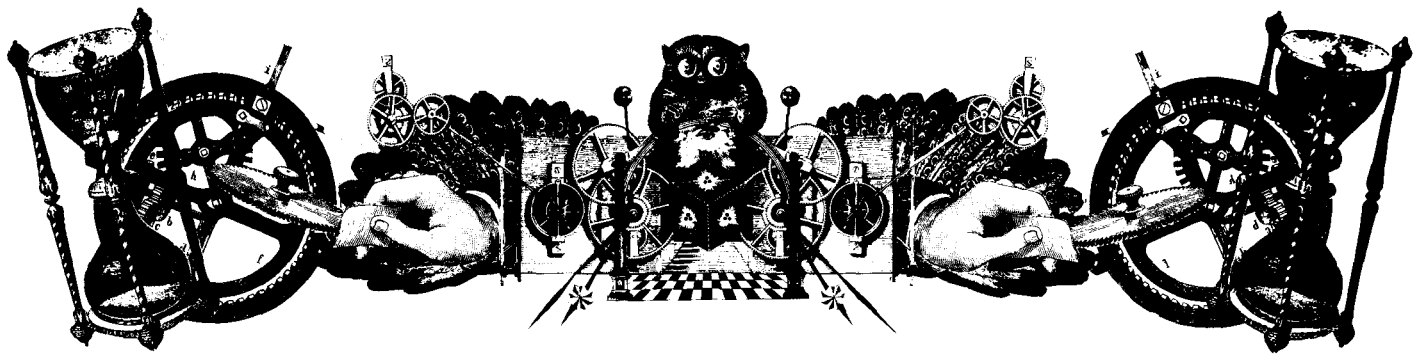
speed; the second represents its relative agility in a dogfight. Some vehicles, such as a one-person fighter, are extremely maneuverable, but limited in terms of top speed. Others, such as a deep-space courier, are less maneuverable, but extremely fast in straight flight. Also, the speed of any vehicle is going to be at least partially reduced in an atmosphere.

Of course, some pilots are able to get more out of a vehicle than others, so in this game, skillfulness has a distinct effect on a vehicle's speed and maneuverability, as will become evident in a moment.

Advantage

In the depths of space, in a clear atmosphere, or on an open plane or body of water, vehicles will generally register one another at such long ranges that there is no chance of advantage or surprise when an encounter begins. Rolls for advantage should only be made if local conditions are such that the GM rules that one vehicle could remain hidden from another until close range.

Note that the normal results of advantage and surprise do not apply to dogfighting combat. Instead, the pilot of a vehicle with advantage may choose which aspect of her or his vehicle is pointing toward an opponent, as explained under maneuver, below. In cases of surprise, the advantaged pilot may also choose which aspect of the opponent's vehicle he or she is facing, again as explained below.

Action Sequence: Speed and Maneuver

Instead of stating actions and rolling for initiative, participants of a dogfight instead roll to determine who currently has the edge in terms of speed and/or maneuver. Speed edge is rolled first, and depending upon its result, combatants may roll for maneuver edge. These then determine the dogfighting vehicles' position relative to each other. Only after that position is determined are attacks declared and rolled for.

Before detailing exactly how speed edge and maneuver edge are determined, we must take a moment to discuss vehicle aspects and dogfighting distance ranges.

Vehicle Combat Aspects: In *The* Galactos Barrier, all vehicles are considered to have six facing aspects:
    fore (front)
    aft (rear)
    port (left)
   *starboard* (right)
    top (up)
    and bottom (down).
Vehicle weapon listings identify which of these aspects they can fire out of. For example, a fighter plane might be able to fire only out of the fore aspect, while the top turret on a star battleship could turn to fire into any aspect except bottom. The aspects of weapons do include some vertical allowance: the farther away a ship is from the weapon, the more likely it is that it falls within the weapon's aspect. In choosing which aspect of their craft is facing toward an enemy, pilots determine which of their weapons can be brought to bear on that enemy. By skillful maneuvering, they may also be able to dictate which of their opponent's aspects they are facing toward, thereby controlling what weapons that opponent can fire at them, and possibly targeting specific systems on that opponent (such as coming in on the opponent's aft, so as to specifically target engines).

Vehicle Combat Ranges: Ranges for vehicle combat are abstracted to the following, from nearest to farthest:
    too near
    very near
    near
    moderate
    far
    very far
    too far.
These ranges are based upon a logarithmic scale, from a few meters distance at too near range (near enough that collision is a very real danger) to beyond 100,000 km at too far range (distant enough that even beam weapons suffer a perceptible time lag from firer to target).
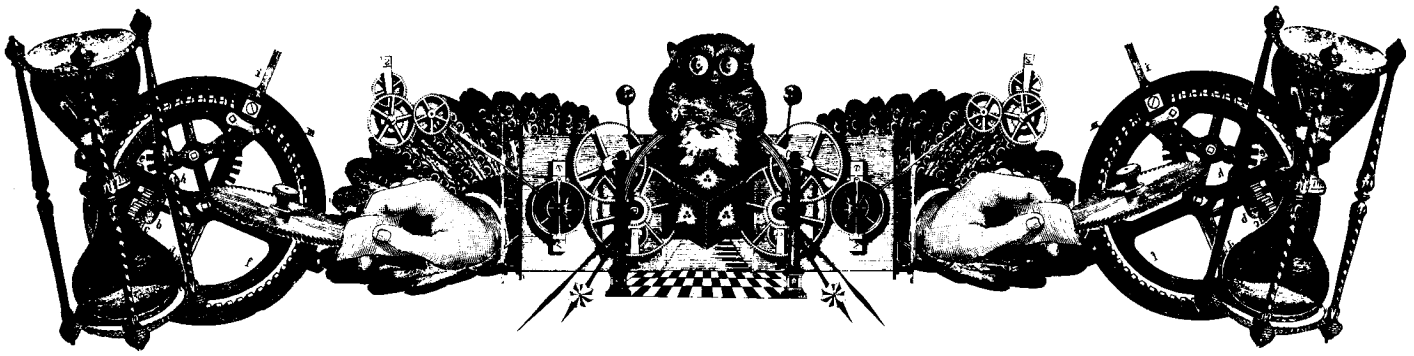
Fire combat is not possible at all of these ranges. For example, vehicles at too near range may not fire at one another, as they are busy trying to avoid (or cause) collision. Nor may vehicles fire at one another at too far range. At all other ranges, fire combat may occur if the weapon to be used may reach to that range (personnel weapons used in dogfighting combat may only fire within very near range).

For game purposes, it is assumed that while vehicles at close ranges are larger targets, the fact that they move across one another's visual arcs more rapidly balances this out, resulting in no bonuses to hit. Similarly, while vehicles at longer ranges make smaller targets, they may be tracked more easily, which serves to prevent penalties to chances to hit them. These assumptions serve to keep dogfighting combat fast and furious.

Too Near Range: At too near range, vehicles stand a chance of colliding accidentally, or one may attempt to ram another.

To avoid accidental collision, the pilot of each vehicle must pass a Piloting skill roll for each other vehicle at this range. In other words, if there are five vehicles all at too near range, each must roll four ti mes to avoid the others.

I f a vehicle is attempting to ram another vehicle, and the other vehicle is attempting to avoid being rammed, each pilot must make a Piloting skill roll. If the rammer passes the roll by a greater margin than the target does, the ram is successful; if the target succeeds by a greater margin, the ram is unsuccessful; if both pilots fail, the vehicles collide accidentally; likewise, if both are attempting to ram, the ram is successful.

Vehicles at too near range are too close to roll for maneuver edge and may not fire upon one another.

Very Near *and* Near Ranges: At these ranges, pilots roll for maneuver edge, as explained below. Depending upon the resulting aspects facing one another, fire attacks may be possible.

Moderate to Very Far *Ranges:* Vehicles do not roll for maneuver edge at these ranges, because they are too distant for it to have any effect. They may be able to fire at one another, however. The GM will decide upon which aspects are facing one another, as explained under the speed edge heading, below.

Too Far *Range:* Vehicles at too far range from one another are too distant for maneuvers to have any effect, nor can they conduct fire attacks upon one another. Additionally, if they remain at too far range for more than one turn, either may declare that they are breaking off combat and flying outside of sensor range, in which case neither may pursue the other any further.

Speed Edge: Speed edge allows a pilot to affect the range at which conflicting vehicles will spend the turn. To determine speed edge, pilots each roll 1d6 and add to it the tens digit of their Piloting skill and their own vehicle's speed rating. The high roller has the edge in terms of speed (has effectively outrun her or his opponent this turn) and may (but is not obligated to) increase or decrease the current range by one rank.

Multi-Vehicle Combat: If more than two vehicles are involved in a combat, each pilot declares a target vehicle before rolling for speed edge. The various results are then compared in pairs to determine who has the edge in terms of speed. Note that it is possible for a vehicle to gain the speed edge over a target, but lose it to another vehicle which has chosen it as target, or vice versa. Usually, multi-vehicle combats will i nvolve one player character vehicle and multiple opponents, which keeps things fairly simple. In cases i nvolving more than one vehicle on each side of a conflict, or (heavens forbid) more than two sides, the GM is advised to break things down into multiple separate dogfights.

Maneuver Edge: Once speed edge has been determined and a distance range has been set, vehicles that are at very near or near ranges may attempt to outmaneuver each other for advantageous position. I n this way, they seek to bring their weapons to bear on their opponents, possibly upon a specific part of those opponents' ships, while attempting to avoid being targeted by their opponents' weapons.

To determine maneuver edge, pilots each roll 1d6 and add to the result their personal Piloting skill bonus and their ship's Maneuver rating. The ship with
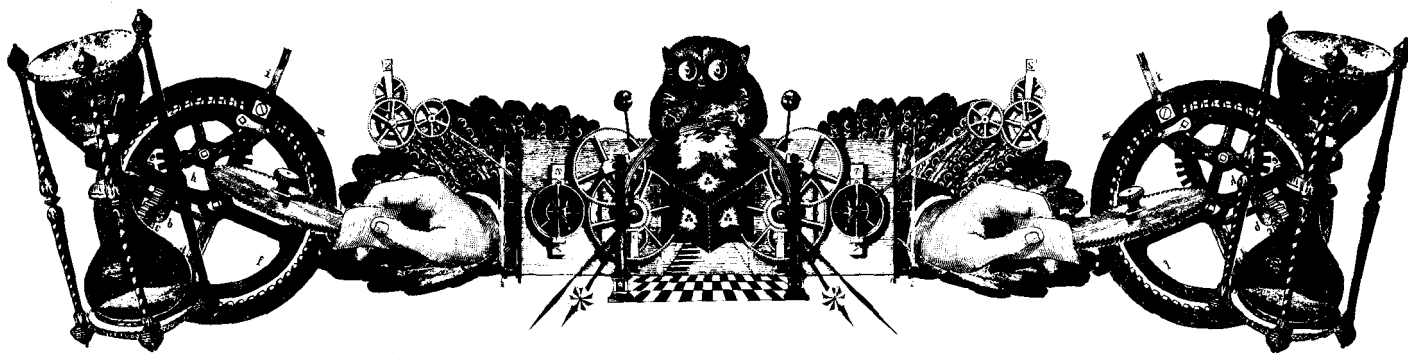
the higher total has the maneuver edge and may face any of its six aspects toward its opponent. The opponent may choose to turn any aspect except fore (front) toward the ship with the maneuver edge. Exception: If the ship with maneuver edge generated a total at least twice that of its opponent's, its pilot may choose the opponent's facing as well.

Multi-Vehicle Combats: As with speed edge, if multiple vehicles are within range to check for maneuver edge, pilots each first declare a target, and then compare their score with that of the target to determine who has the edge. It is thus possible for a vehicle to have maneuver edge over one vehicle but to lose it over another.

If a vehicle gains the advantage over both its target and another vehicle that it was targeted by, it may choose which of the vehicles it wishes to apply its advantage to; the other vehicle is ignored-effectively out of play-for the current turn.

Vehicle-to-Vehicle Attacks

Attacks between vehicles fall under four basic headings: beam attacks, missile attacks, personnel weapon attacks, and ram attacks.

Beam Attacks: Beam attacks can reach to longer ranges than other vehicle attacks, as revealed in the vehicle descriptions on pages 94-100. However, they are subject to deflection by electromagnetic shields, again as listed in those descriptions.

Missile Attacks: While missiles cannot effectively reach targets at the ranges that beam weapons can, they are less affected by a target's electromagnetic shields, and they tend to do more damage when they hit.

Antipersonnel Weapon Attacks: Weapons such as these are intended for firing at characters rather than vehicles, and consequently have a much shorter range than other vehicle weapons, as well as having much less chance of doing damage when targeted at a vehicle. In terms of dogfighting ranges, antipersonnel weapons cannot fire beyond very near. See the Vehicle-to-Character heading under Personal Combat, above, for a description of their damage effects.
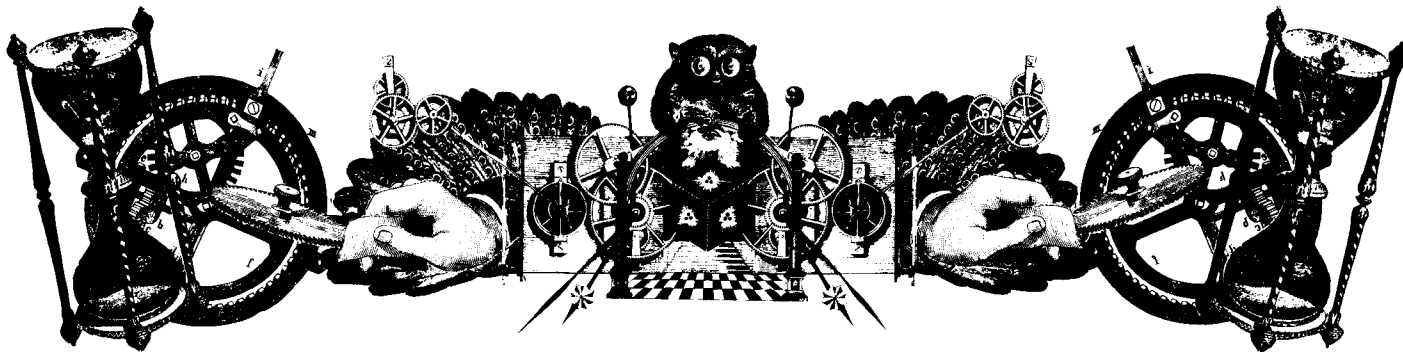
Ram Attacks: Ramming is a relatively difficult thing to accomplish in dogfighting situations: First you have to get within too near range of an opponent; then you have to attempt the collision. See the Too Near Range heading, above, for a definition of rolls to be made in ram attempts.

Damage from Attacks: For GMs and players who want a quick resolution combat system rather than intensive bookkeeping to keep track of hit points for individual vehicles, we have designed an abstract system for damage from dogfighting attacks. Whenever a successful attack is made (by anything other than antipersonnel weapons), simply roll on the following table, applying the modifiers listed. The various damage effects are explained below.

1d6 Roll*	Damage Result
1	Superficial hit: no game effect
2	Hull damage: possible personnel loss
3	Engine hit: -1 speed rating
4	Thruster hit: -1 maneuver rating
5	Sensor hit: -5 to Gunnery tests
6	Weapon hit: 1 weapon system lost
7	Structural hit: vehicle destroyed

*+1 for missile hits; -1 for collisions.

Superficial Hit: As indicated, there is no game mechanic effect for this result. The GM is encouraged to dramatize the occurrence, however.

Hull Damage: This represents a breach in the hull. Allocate it randomly to one area of the vehicle. All personnel there take decompression damage (or other, if the GM deems it appropriate) until the hole is plugged. Roll 1 d6 for the number of turns required for the ship's autosealant systems to repair the breach.

Engine Hit: Multiple hits make the penalty to speed rating cumulative. That is, two hits cause a total -2 to speed rating, etc.

Thruster Hit. As with the heading above, multiple hits make the penalty to maneuver rating cumulative.

Sensor Hit: This usually means that the vehicle's electronic sensors are damaged, but could just as well mean cracked or scorched viewports on smaller vehicles. The penalty to Gunnery tests is cumulative with multiple such hits.

Weapon Hit: One weapon system is destroyed on the target vehicle. The GM should randomly allocate one that can turn into the aspect facing the attacker. If there are none, treat this as a sensor hit instead.

Structural Hit: The vehicle's structure takes such heavy damage that the vehicle begins coming to pieces. Personnel inside must pass a roll versus Luck to avoid death. Those who succeed manage to get into a spacesuit before dying, seal themselves into an airtight compartment, or suchlike.

Healing

Unaided healing occurs just as described in the AMAZING ENGINE rules. First aid, hospitalization, or application of the appropriate Musical Powers (see the Musical Powers chapter) can speed this process, and may save endangered lives.

First Aid: A successful First Aid roll restores 1 d6 stamina points or 1 body point, 2d4 stamina points or 2 body points if the treater has a medkit, 2d6 stamina points or 3 body points if performed in a fully equipped sick bay or hospital emergency room. The GM may allow aid to be performed more than once on a single character for a given set of wounds, in order to restore both stamina and body points or to attempt a more favorable roll, but the benefits are never cumulative.

Hospitalization: Hospitalization can affect both stamina and body points. Given the high-tech nature of hospitals in this era, every hour in such hospitalization heals 1 stamina point. Each four hours heals 1 body point as well.

Regrowth: Even if a character is terribly maimed, new limbs and body parts can be cloned and surgically attached in a matter of a few weeks at a hospital. What's more, even a technically dead character (0 body points) can be brought back to life, provided the brain was not severely damaged and the character's remains are taken to a hospital within a few hours of "death."
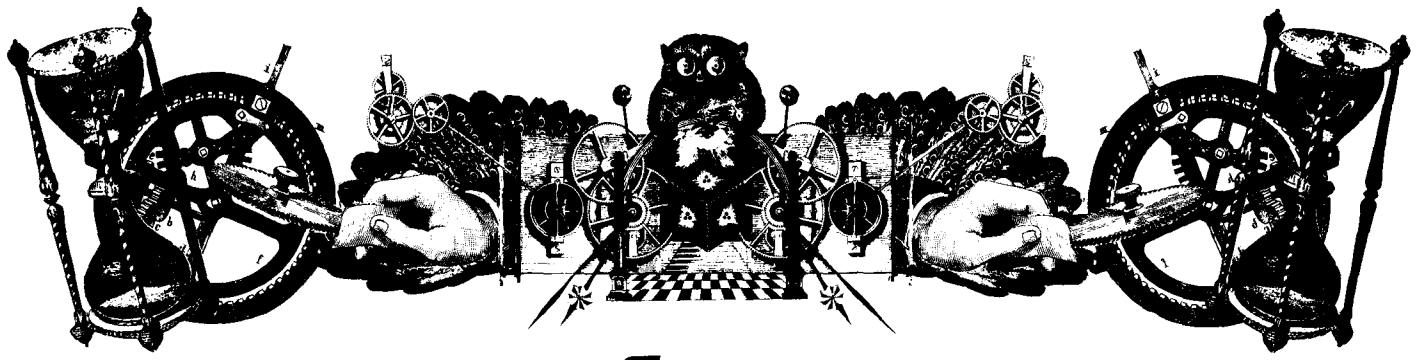
Bluntly put, space is a big place. The number of planets and stars occupies only an infinitesimal fraction of the volume of space. In between them lie the emptiness of cold vacuum, space debris, and spatial phenomena. For the purposes of The Galactos Barrier, most of these will be ignored. However, there are a few that play an important role in The Galactos Barrier, and therefore warrant an explanation. It should be noted that this is not the final word on these phenomena; what follows here is a description of these things as they fit into this particular universe. This is not hard science. (It's actually pretty bent ... Ed.)

Asteroids

Asteroid fields form when planets are destroyed, or when nearly irresistible forces meet with nearly immovable objects. They form a ring on their old gravitational track; that is, the asteroid field spreads out along the same path the planet followed while it was still viable.

Asteroid fields present a clear danger to those piloting through them. Not only are there the small asteroids that can severely damage a ship's shields and armor, there are larger asteroids that can dwarf even a heavy cruiser. These asteroids have been known to crush smaller ships without even slowing down.

Anyone attempting to pilot a ship through an asteroid field must fly the ship as though dogfighting. (See "Combat," Dogfighting.) However, it is even more difficult in that there will constantly be 1 d1 0 asteroids within too near range. Even when a pilot has evaded these she must contend with the next batch. Only when the pilot has left the asteroid field is she completely safe.

Damage to ships from asteroids varies. Some asteroids are small and slow, others small and fast. Woe betide the pilot who crashes into an large asteroid traveling quickly! The GM will have to determine the exact amount of damage; a large, fast asteroid could conceivably do as much damage as a missile rail unloading on a target.

Black Holes

Black holes are huge, sucking gaps in the universe, the remnants of collapsed stars. Miniature black holes were speculated to have existed; none are in evidence in the galaxy today. Supermassive black holes are found in the cores of galaxies and quasars. Stellar black holes form when the core of an old star collapses after depleting all available nuclear fuel, being unable to resist the pull of its own gravity. The evidence of these types of black holes is easily seen in many binary systems.

Black holes are so-called because they generate such an enormous gravitational force that they actually swallow light. Nothing escapes a black hole once it has entered the hole's sphere of influence, or "event horizon." A black hole will destroy any ship that enters its event horizon. No Domain ship has been able to resist the pull of any black hole once it has entered the event horizon. It is difficult to escape the clutches of a black hole even if one is at the very
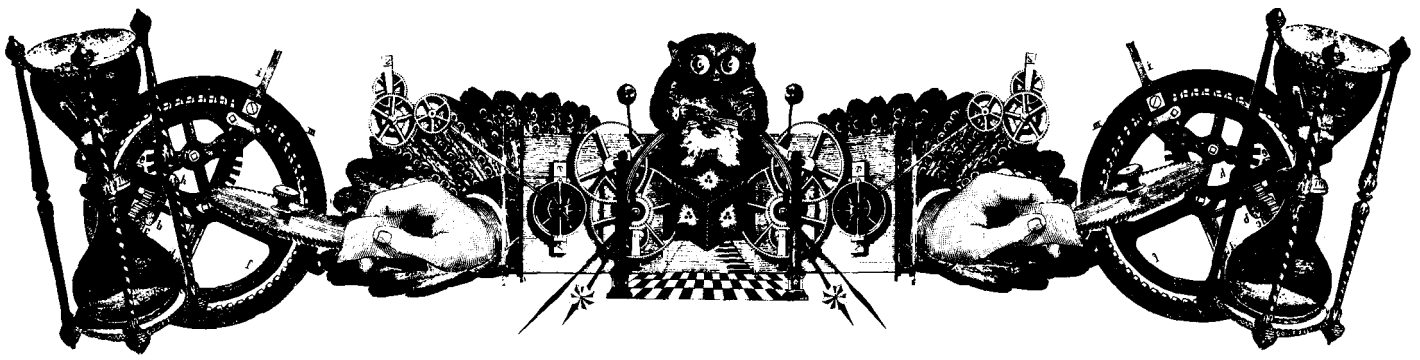
fringe. Any PCs so caught can escape only through skillful maneuvering and a healthy dose of luck. If they fail, they are lost forever. Again, the exact method of the PCs' escape is best left to the GM.

Nebulae

Nebulae are diffuse clouds of interstellar dust or gases. They are visible as either luminous patches or dark areas. They can reflect or absorb radiation, and are thus occasionally used to rid a ship of excess radiation. This works only if the ship has taken a severe load of radiation within the past hour; past this point, the radiation has penetrated the ship's armor too far for it to be removed so easily.

The properties of nebulae are such that they can foul ship's sensors. Though a ship searching for another can tell that its prey is within the cloud, sensors cannot make an exact pinpoint. This confuses any missile guidance, subtracting at least 15 from the gunner's skill.

However, because of the jamming qualities of the nebula, it also becomes nearly impossible to steer the ship by sensors. Any ship's pilot entering a nebula at any speed subtracts 30 from Piloting skill, unless the ship is traveling very slowly. The pilot must rely solely on visuals for navigation. This, of course, makes nebulae a favorite hiding place for pirates, criminals, and other fugitives from justice.

Finally, nebulae can be used as fuel dumps. Quite a few ships are powered by ramjets, which use elemental fuel. They can scoop the elements directly from the nebulae, feed these into the drives, and continue with their travel. Any navigator worth her salt knows of nebulae which are useful in any of these ways.

Quasars

Quasars are the nuclei of relatively normal galaxies that have been compressed by supermassive black holes at their cores. Quasars are generally no larger than a standard stellar system, yet emit from 100 to 10,000 times as much energy as an ordinary galaxy. It is recommended that pilots stay away from these, unless they are willing to take the all-too-real risk of serious radiation poisoning. Quasars, like black holes, remain mysteries. So far, only the Domain has learned to harness some of the power leaking from quasars.
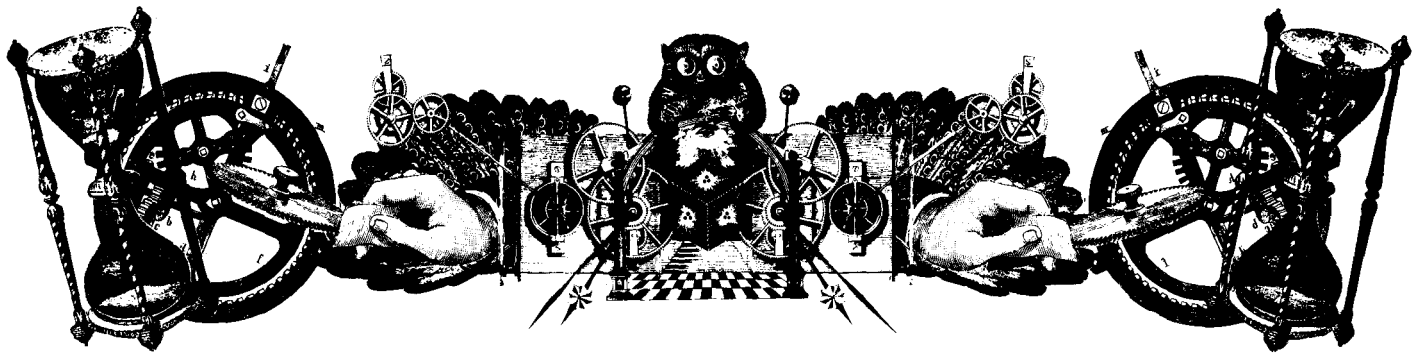
Planets

Despite the fact that there are so many extraordinary features in the galaxy, the most important feature for *The Galactos Barrier is* also the most mundane. The homes and origins of most of the sentient species in the galaxy are planetary. Though they may have evolved past the need for these planets, the planets themselves are still important.

Indeed, much of the action in *The Galactos Barrier* will take place on the ground. Though there will be a significant amount of time spent in space in most campaigns, it is on the various planets of the Domain that the PCs will learn the things of importance to them.

There are two ways to go about creating a planet in *The Galactos Barrier*. The first, quicker version is to use the Planet Random Generator chart. This method should be used only when in a hurry to create a random planet for the characters. For planets that will play a more major role in their career, it is recommended that the GM take the time to build a planet from the ground up, so to speak.

When creating a planet on which characters an land and explore, the GM must first determine its size, and its gravity with it. Though the size of the planet does not always determine its gravity, chances are that the larger planets will have a heavy gravity. Also, please note that larger planets tend to be gas giants, rather than solid worlds, so it is generally a good idea to place a personal limit on the size of the inhabitable planets.

Next, determine the climate. Is the planet an ideal world, one which is very Earth-like, or does it suffer from one extreme of climate? For example, is it a jungle world, a world composed only of rolling foothills, or a winter world?

Planet Random Generator

I. Size (d10)
1-3: Small
4-6: Medium
7-10: Large

II. Gravity (d10)

	Small	Medium	Large
1-5:	Light (0-.75 G)	1-4: Light	1: Light
6-9:	Med (.75-1.5 G)	5-9: Med	2-3: Med
10:	Hvy (1.5+ G)	10: Hvy	4-10: Hvy

Note: Few, if any, people, will reside on a Large planet with Heavy gravity, for the gravity can crush most people. Likewise, few will live on a Small planet with Light gravity, because the planet will not be able to hold an atmosphere.

III. Climate (d10)
1-2: Tropical
3-4: Sub-tropical
5-6: Temperate
7-8: Sub-arctic
9-10: Arctic

IV. Population (d10)
1-2: Very Light
3-4: Light
5-6: Medium
7-8: Heavy
9-10: Very Heavy

V. Tech Level (d10)-to be used only if population is indicated.
1: Primitive: The natives still live in caves and use tools fashioned from stones.
2-3: Archaic: Warfare is still conducted with mainly hand-held weapons, though there might be some primitive projectile weapons. Homes are constructed, but are fairly vulnerable to the elements.
3-4: Near Modern: Warfare has progressed to mostly projectile weapons. The race has flying technology, and the beginnings of space-flight. The residences resist the elements very well.
5-8: Modern: All the trappings of the modern era.
9: Advanced: The society has a few technological achievements that surpass those of the day, such as teleportation, personal flight technology, and so forth.
10: Far Advanced (Magic): This technology is so advanced that it seems like magic to those of this era. Those civilizations of this tech level seem to be primitives with great power and intelligence, for they do not rely on bulky machines to accomplish their goals.
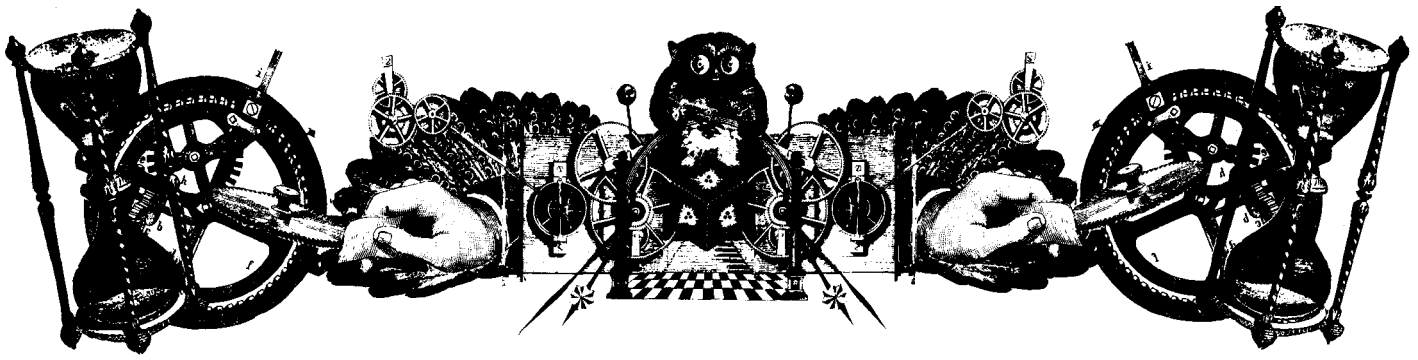
VI. Number of Moons (d6)
1-3: One moon
4: Two moons
5: Three moons
6: Four or more moons

VII. Kind of moons (d10)
1: Small, habitable (move through planetary generator).
2: Medium, habitable (move through planetary generator).
3: Large, habitable (move through planetary generator).
4-6: Small, uninhabitable.
7-9: Medium, uninhabitable.
10: Large, uninhabitable.

Survival in Space

Space survival is dependent on a protective shell. Anyone hurled into the vacuum and near-absolute zero temperature of space without some sort of precaution (such as a spacesuit, a Musical Piece, or spaceship) has no hope of survival. Death occurs within 10 seconds unless the unfortunate can be aided or brought aboard (a slim chance indeed!). Certain NPC species might be able to manage vacuum without protection; no PC can.

Travel

Due to the size of space and the variety of civilizations that have traveled through it, there are hundreds of different methods of getting from one place to another, dozens of them faster than light. However, only one of them offers any assurance of safety.

The eDrive, developed before the birth of the ancient Empire, is that method. Where some drives

leap through the vacuum of space blindly, where others ignore the conventional laws of physics, the eDrive folds the fabric of space and time to take its passengers to their destination.

EDrive works only in a ship with a functional navigational computer. Without one, activating the eDrive is a wildly stupid thing to do. Although space is mostly empty, random jumps have a 90% chance fatal results; passing through a sun, planet, or other spatial body tends to be fatal for even the toughest space-rat.

The mechanics of the eDrive are simple. When the coordinates are programmed into the navigational computer, the eDrive reaches through space until it achieves a lock on its destination. It pulls that area of space back to the ship, and then lets go. This effectively slingshots the ship to its destination, as space attempts to return to its original position as quickly as possible. The ship, riding in that pocket of space, is taken along as well.

The effect of this is quite startling. Imagine everything outside the ship taking on exactly the opposite color (for example, white becomes black, red becomes green, and so on). Space becomes white, with black pinholes indicating the stars. The view does not change until the ship arrives at its destination.

Those viewing the phenomena outside the ship see a vast white portal yawn in front of the vessel, and then an explosion of inky blackness from that portal as the ship vanishes into it. The portal closes immediately after the ship; some have tried to tag along, only to be violently destroyed. The one who could invent a device that would allow tracking of eTravel farther than 5 light-years would be famous indeed ... or dead, depending on who got to that being first.

A Few Notes About eDrive

To clear a few common misconceptions about eDrive:

1. Ships do not have to be stationary to use their eDrive. However, navigators of vessels traveling faster than 1/3 light speed suffer a penalty of -15 to their Navigation roll.
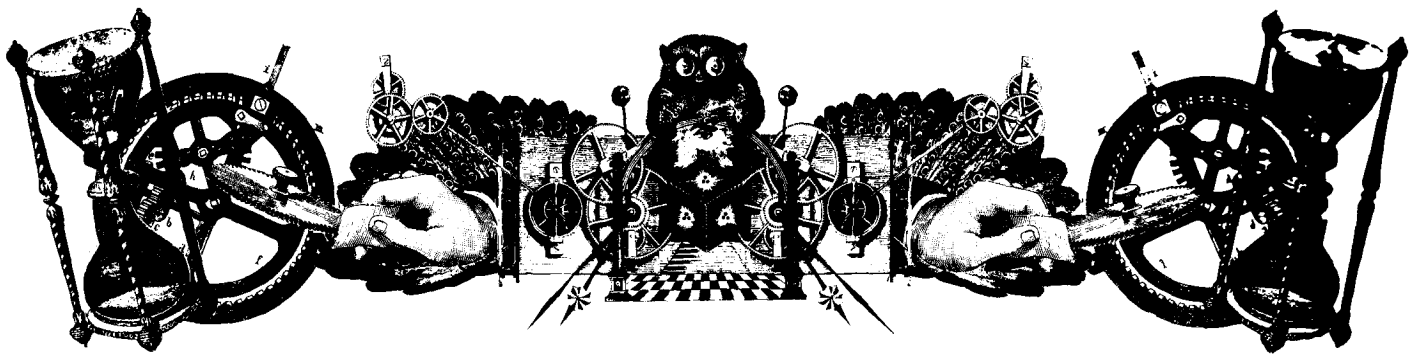
2. If two ships' computers have both locked on to the same section of space, one of them shunts aside to the section of space immediately adjacent. They do not materialize into one another; the ship with the shorter distance to travel "retrieves" the original sector.

3. The section of space retrieved is no larger than is necessary to hold the ship's current mass. This usually eliminates any exterior passengers who try to get into the portal after the ship has begun its computations. Those attached to the ship beforehand can travel through without difficulty.

4. Computation time is one second/light-year to be traveled. Travel time is 10 minutes/light-year. Though this presents some difficulty for smugglers, good ones can usually escape to a distance of 10 light-years or so, from which point they can jump farther.

5. Tracking of eTravel is good only to a range of five light-years. ETravel leaves a faint trace, similar to a wrinkle or pulled thread in the fabric of space-time, which can be detected and followed for that distance. Since most smaller ships have drives that are not capable of jumping long range (unless they are included in the computation for a larger ship), this is effective for the Moriones in catching small-time criminals. The more dangerous ones require careful investigation and termination. Because the drives of larger ships are capable of longer jumps, only careful investigation and espionage can reveal a ship's location.

Planets of the Kellinon Scion

The Kellinon Scion, also known as the Kellinon Duchy, is one of the more brutally repressed areas in the Domain. Characters who travel outside its boundaries will be amazed at the freedoms allowed other people under the rule of different Scions. However, even in these sectors, the all-pervading influence of the Morione Domain can be felt.

Ruled under the steel gauntlet of Duke Murdant Kellinon, the 11 planets of the Kellinon Scion are ripe for revolt. Though the people are downtrodden and tyrannized, the flame of hope still burns within their hearts. What follows are brief descriptions of the planets of the Kellinon Duchy; the people, the cities, the climate, and the political situation.

Conor

Conor is a jungle world, with an atmosphere that would best be described as slightly caustic. Its humid, fetid swamps cover about 90% of the planet. The other 10% is that cleared for use by the colonists. The native life has developed a thicker outer skin than is usual; the sentients colonizing the world have discovered that only the toughest materials can withstand the elements Conor produces.

The capital (and only large settlement) of Conor is Waliam, with a population of about 55,000 sentients, though there are many smaller towns and villages scattered across the planet. The people are extremely rustic compared to the more cosmopolitan people of other planets, relying less on technology (which tends to break down in Conor's atmosphere) than on themselves.

The planetary government is a simple democracy, though the approval of all laws must pass through Kellinon. The Duchy is extremely strict about the laws which come out of this assembly; more than 80% of them are stricken from the records before they are ever made official and public.

The people, knowing that their "autonomy" is a joke, are extremely bitter and cynical about their government; most of them do not even bother to vote any longer. The Resistance, it is rumored, has a secret home in the swamps covering the rest of the planet; no probes or troops sent in to investigate have ever returned, though many hunters and farmers travel in and out of the swamps every day.

No one has ever fully mapped the landmass of Conor; there are regions as yet unexplored. Swamp gas, predators, and the local superstitions have kept anyone from investigating too closely. Legends say that strange technology lies hidden in the heart of the thickest swamps, remnants of the ancient Empire that have survived the biting atmosphere of Conor.
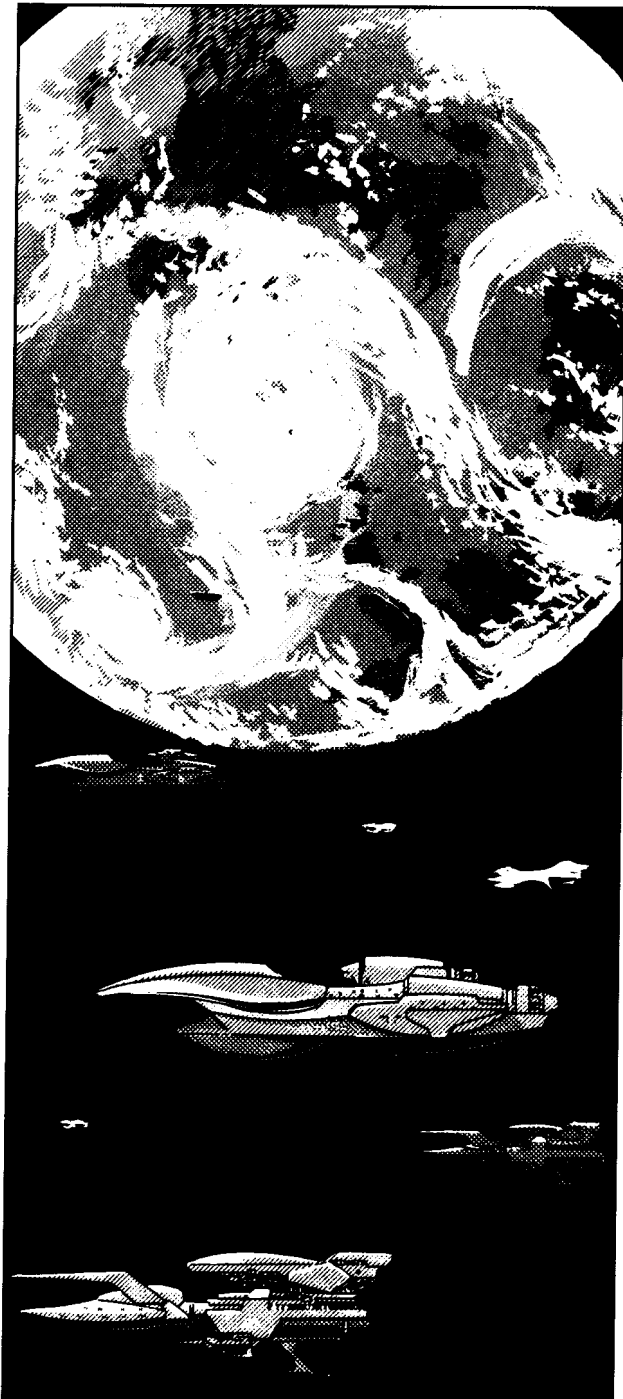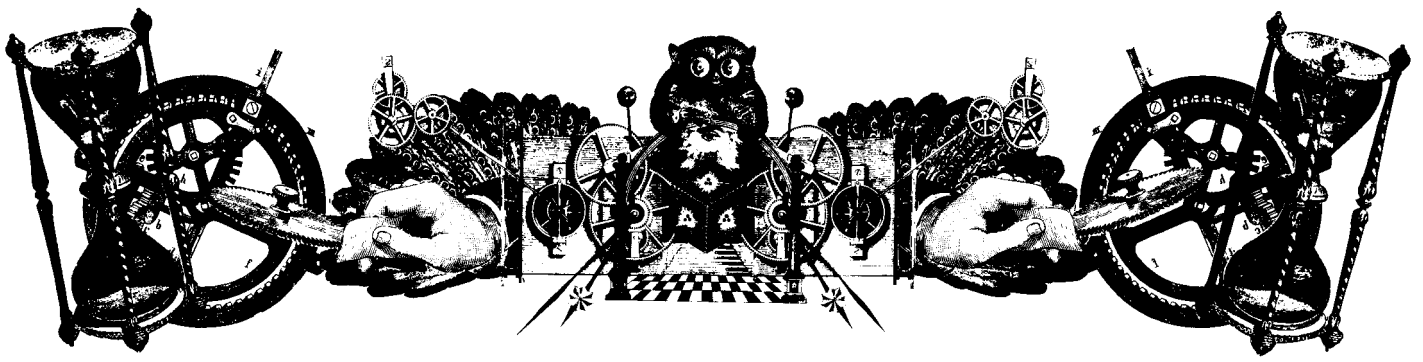
Delas

Delas is an anomaly among all the worlds of the Domain, for it is a large planet with a gravity approximating the norm for sentient life. Its short rotation period keeps the gravity from growing too heavy; old rumors say that the planet's rotation was increased in the heyday of the Music, before most of the secrets were lost.

Another anomaly is the unusual number of moons Delas has acquired. Lexa, Sohenn, and Cona orbit the planet with interesting vagaries themselves, the three moons far more than most habitable planets attract. Lexa, the largest, rolls around the planet with the galactic standard 30-day orbit, its atmosphere providing an ideal base for Imperial troops. The second moon, Sohenn, is what is known as a "speeder moon," an orb that completes a single rotation around Delas in only one day. The third moon, Cona, is a crescent moon in the truest sense of the word; during the Musical Wars, large portions of the moon were destroyed, leaving the rest a broken crescent hurtling around Delas.

The capital of Delas is a city of 1,000,000, called Shayba. The capital also serves as the main port of the planet, being ideally situated at the midpoint of the one large continent of the planet. Though it is fairly rural, as spaceport cities go, it is also the prime market of the planet, for it is here that nearly all goods eventually come.

The city-dwellers and the ruralists of Delas are fiercely independent. For this reason, Kellinon has stationed a particularly large number of troopers here, as well as on the moon Sohenn.
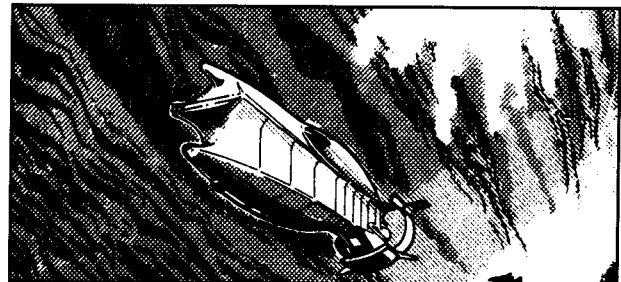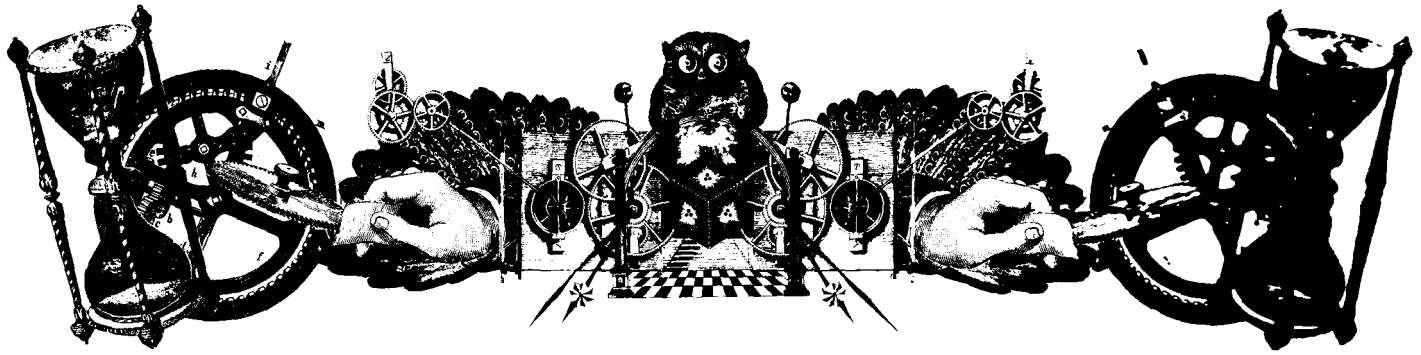
Garden

Garden is an ideal world, wooded, verdant, and bountiful. Its forests are nearly as uncorrupted as they were when the planet was first colonized. This is because Garden is the capital of the Kellinon Duchy, and the Kellinon rulers would have it no other way. The Duke maintains his residence at the capital, Baam. The other major city on Garden is called Kyrun, which serves as the main spaceport. Since the Duke dislikes the noise of the spaceport, Kyrun is located on the other side of Garden.

The people on Garden, though living under Kellinon's yoke, are generally happy folk. Through the centuries of Kellinon rule, they have been gradually brought to believe that their condition is one of happiness, rather than slavery. They serve their Duke willingly; those that do not are rarely heard from again. Though the Resistance has been trying for years to gain a foothold on Garden, it has met with little success so far.

Hadia

Hadia is a small world, with 95% of its surface covered by water. Its landmasses are relatively tiny, breaking the surface of the water only occasionally. The only sizable landmass is completely covered by the city Ardrin, which overflows onto large rafts that are attached to the city by means of flimsy bridges. The raft suburbs have a disconcerting habit of detaching and remooring at a different point with disturbing frequency. The spaceport is located in the middle of the city.

The people of Hadia work in the undersea farms and mines, extracting their livings from beneath the storm-tossed ocean. The people are either extremely hard-working and hard of mind, or are the type of riff-raff one would normally associate with a spaceport. All, however, are well-versed in the art of sheltering themselves from the frequent hurricanes of Hadia and from the ire of Kellinon troopers. Though they have little love for their Kellinon overlords, neither do they have much room in their hearts for the Resistance, whom they see as meddlesome fools.

Kael

Kael, too, is an ocean world, though it has far more dry land than Hadia. Despite the fact that the land is less productive than that of many worlds because of the high salt content in the water, Kael supports a thriving populace. This is for one simple reason: Kael is the smugglers' haven in the Kellinon Duchy. The Kellinon authorities here long ago learned to flow with the rampant corruption of Kael's two main cities, Teim (the capital) and Baeha (the spaceport). Instead of attempting to restrain it, they have learned to profit from it. However, "law enforcement" takes a dim view of anyone who tries to break the law in other ways, such as murder or outright robbery in the streets. Also, the corrupt authorities do not suffer the smuggling with the consent of the Duke; they work purely on their own.

The people here are the scum of Kellinon. They are also the most free. The Resistance has a good hold here, for anyone who flees to Kael is someone who has no love for the Domain. The Imperial agents who come here to investigate are inevitably spotted before too long. Their remains sometimes wash up on the shores, though usually the carnivorous fish get to them first.

The weather here is noticeably calmer than on Hadia, as the water is generally too heavy to evaporate at normal temperatures. It is extremely high in iron, and is poisonous to anyone who has not adapted to the world. The ichthati are the dominant race, but they remain mostly under the waves, coming up to trade only sporadically.

Lynsta

Lynsta is the heart of the Domain's presence in the Kellinon Duchy. It is a forest world, upon which the trees grow tall and straight. The seasons are gentle, with few intense swings one way or another. The winters and summers are both mild, and spring and autumn slip in and out nearly unnoticed.

The Imperial Fleet has established a permanent base in the spaceport of Bakreton. It is the largest
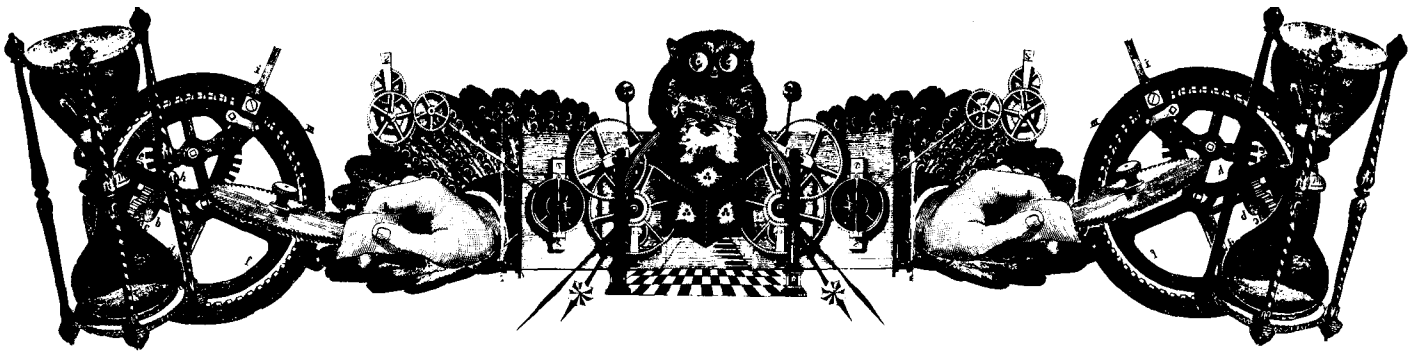
port in the Kellinon Scion, and houses over a thousand Morione cruisers. The merchants who land in Bakreton must undergo rigorous searches to see if they harbor saboteurs or others who would strike against the Domain. Only the military is allowed to carry firearms through Bakreton. Despite all these restrictions, merchants flood Bakreton for two reasons. The first is that it is the only port on the planet, and anyone who tries to land anywhere else will be burned out of the air. The second is because the military there has an immense need for nearly everything.

Richmon is the capital of the planet, and holds all that anyone could want from a city. The classes range from disgustingly wealthy to bankrupt and homeless. There is a thriving black market, and nearly anything can be bought here.

The people of Bakreton are very repressed, so much so that most of the nonmilitary there are the servants or functionaries of the military; everyone else has fled to greener pastures. Richmon and the smaller towns are allowed a greater degree of freedom, but the people are very reserved, knowing of the nearby presence of so much firepower.

Mk'om

Mk'om, home of the lupiral race, is a mountainous world of harsh beauty. The predominant color is grey, the grey of granite mountains and thunderclouds. Yet there are flashes of greens and browns, bright dots of color in the stern peaks of Mk'om, making this a world many are proud to call home.

The weather is sudden and fierce; one moment can see snows and howling winds, the next sunshine and a gentle breeze. The winters are extreme, but the summer is mild, bringing tourists from across the Domain to experience its purity.

The mountains seem to breed independence of thought and action, yet also foster a curious kinship, for without help, few can survive the forbidding environment. Thus it was that the lupiral were born to this planet, and thus it is that the Resistance makes its major base here.

The people are careful not to make too much of a show of independence, knowing that that would bring the wrath of the Domain down upon their heads. Thus, though they are surly and standoffish, they do their best to be, outwardly at least, model citizens of the Domain.

The capital of Mk'om is Kylan, a provincial little city that prides itself on its importance. The rulership of Mk'om is something that is usually handed to minor functionaries of the Domain or to those who have irritated the Bureaucracy somehow. Anything bought in Kylan is sure to be at least 25% more expensive than it would be in the port city of Daglash.

Daglash is a major city, for the mines of the mountains produce much of the ore for the rest of the Domain. Cargo ships are constantly in and out of the bays in Daglash. It is here that the heaviest concentration of planet-bound Morione troops is located, for they wish to prevent any hijacking of the valuable freight leaving the planet.
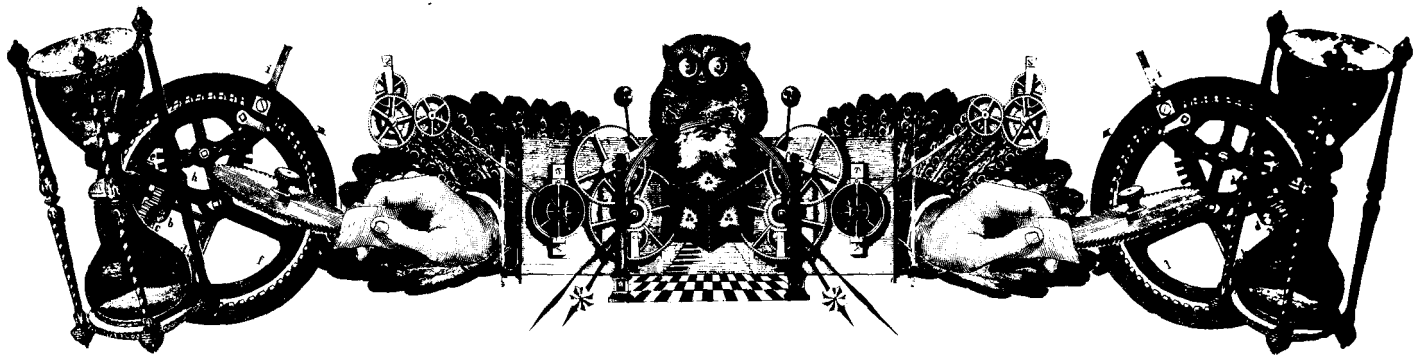
Ried

Ried is a desert world, filled with shifting sands and howling winds. Yet there are also oases of fine, sweet water and stark, beautiful outcroppings of sandstone in the midst of the desert. The world is not all moving dunes and flat plain; there are many high mountains which are cooler than the fierce heat upon the sands. There are even trees and lakes in the mountains, which makes the mountains the obvious choice for the port.

Tarezza is the name of this port, and it draws a fair number of merchants, mercenaries, and miners, all of whom hope to profit from this world. Unfortunately, outside of the port, these people do not often find acceptance. The people are fiercely ethnocentric (some would say xenophobic), and do not take to outsiders easily. They only barely tolerate the presence of outsiders because without them, the planet would not be able to support life. If the outsiders make disparaging comments about the planet, they are sure to meet with at least some small pain, dealt by one of the hardy natives.

The capital of Ried is called Tormas. It is a dry, dusty town, set in the heart of the desert. The ever-constant winds blow sands through its streets, clogging the works of anything uncovered. The citizens here are more relaxed than those who fill the spaceport, for they do not have to deal with the constant outsiders. The government here is very corrupt, allowing the citizens to do what they wish. The governor is far more busy worrying about regulating the trade from the spaceport and ensuring his own comfort to deal much the mundane affairs of the populace, and this is just as the people want it.

Watrae

Watrae has the dubious distinction of being the highest-gravity planet in the Kellinon Scion. Though there are others with heavier gravities, Watrae is inhabited. The gravity on the planet is approximately 1.5 times that of most other inhabited planets. The natives are shorter and stockier than those of other planets, and most off-worlders quickly leave for planets where their weight is far less troublesome to them. The natives tend to be friendly, but somewhat overbearing, for they have not had the chance to learn the social graces of the Domain, simply because so few want to stay on-planet and teach these graces.
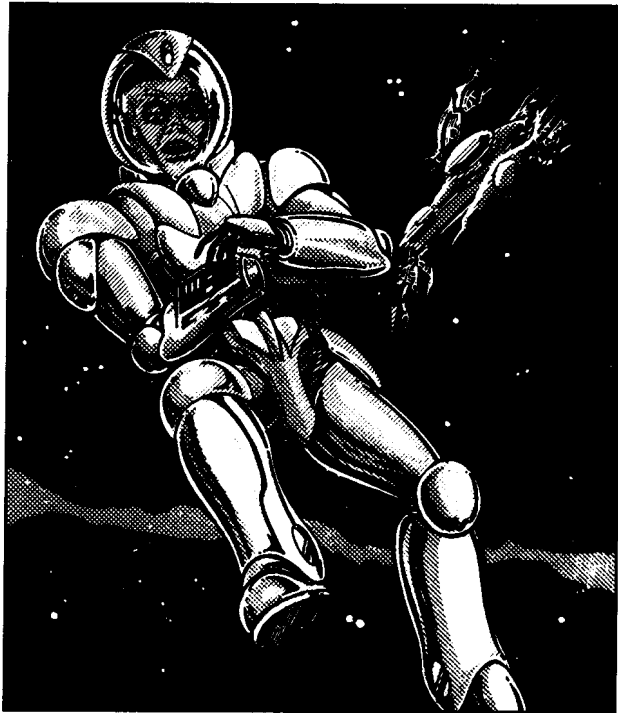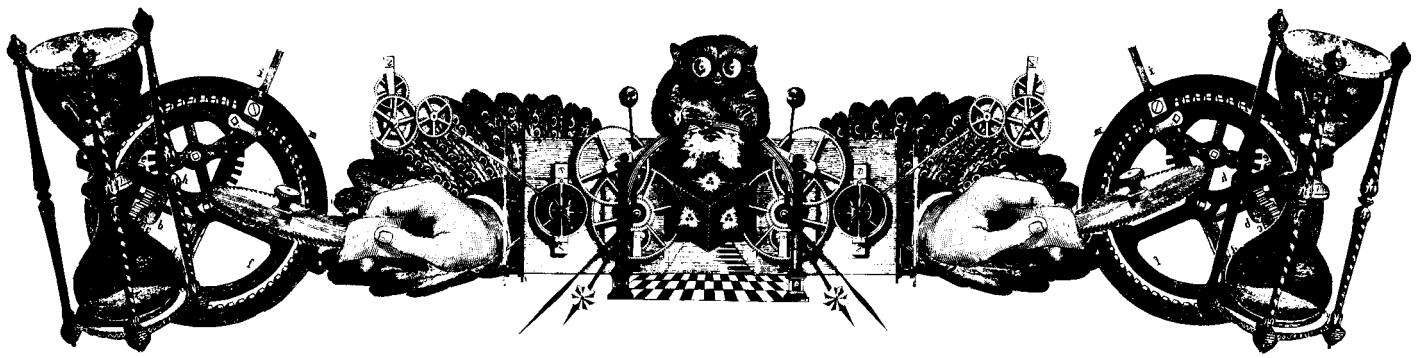
Watrae is a world that is now embroiled in strife and intrigue. Once one of the most peaceful of planets, it has become a hotbed of anger, both political and physical. There are at least four separate factions in this world, each of them pitted against the others. The first faction makes its home in Dyra, the capital. The second is holed up, under siege, in the port city Marqus. The third and fourth factions are the Kellinon and Morione troops. Though these last two occasionally work together to ferret out the rebel factions in the cities, more often than not the Kellinon troops have a hidden agenda which pits them against the Morione troops.

Winter

Winter is, as the name suggests, a planet of constant ice. The biting wind is always blowing in one form or another. The landscape is far from flat; there are as many ridges and peaks as on any planet, but they are covered by a thick layer of snow. Located a good distance from its star, Winter is by far the coldest planet in the Kellinon Scion. Almost all of the northern hemisphere is used as a penal camp; toward the equator, the weather becomes slightly more temperate, and it is here that the major habitation occurs.

The two cities are Styve, the capital, and Olman, the port. Neither of these cities really qualifies as a city by any other planet's standards, for there are few people who want to brave the chilling temperatures of Winter. The planet is not well-patrolled in space or on land, for the blinding snowstorms confuse all but the most delicate of sensors. Few would-be rescuers get away with the people they came for. It is rumored that pirates have hidden a great cache of stolen weapons and space vessels here, but none have found these so far.

The two main cities of Wyze are called Dyvath and Suryze. Dyvath is the capital, where the governor and his troops are quartered. It is also the place where the local government has its seat and hears the grievances of the people. Dyvath is, by far, the most frenetic place on the calm planet. Yet even in the bustle of the city, the inhabitants all retain a certain calm.

Suryze is the port, the place through which all must pass. There is no access to the planet except through Suryze. The port is far cleaner than any other port in Kellinon space, and is eminently civilized. Perhaps the presence of Morione troops stationed conspicuously around the city contributes to this calm.
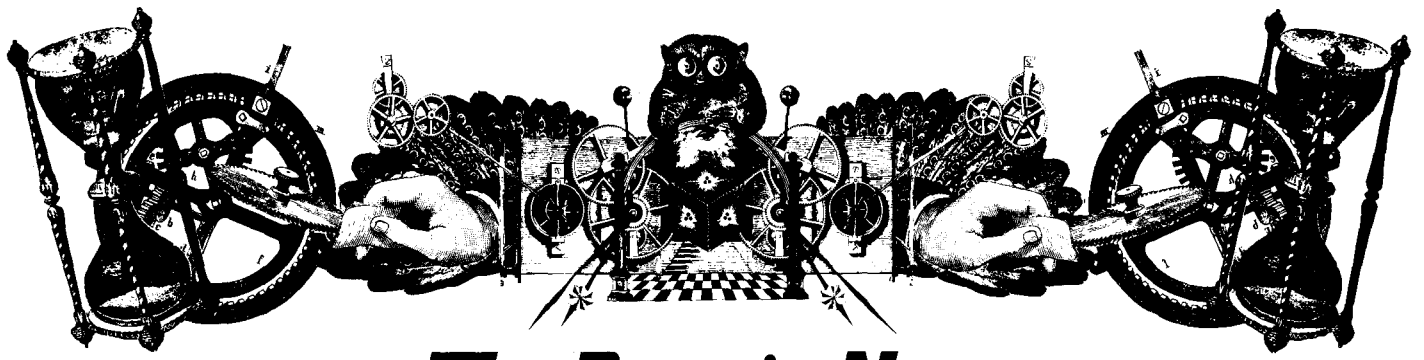
Wyze

Wyze is another ideal planet. The cities meld with the forests, and the forests blend cleanly into the other features. Wyze is a world in which the populace has learned to live in harmony with the environment, and because of this, have few problems with the planet. When disaster strikes, the people can react to it quickly and professionally, with a minimum of fuss. They are easy-going and diplomatic, keeping the eye of the Domain far from them in their serenity. As a result, the Domain and the Duchy both keep only a minuscule force on the planet.

It is small wonder, then, that the Melodians have chosen Wyze as their home planet. Here they are free to do as they will, spending their lives in contemplation of the cosmos and the place of the Music within it. Of course, they do not advertise their presence, but any Melodian who lands here can feel the delicate balance of law and chaos, harmony and discord, and know that this place can be called home.

The Domain Now

The Domain technically consists of the Empire, the Bureaucracy, and the Scions. These three elements have controlled the fate of sentients for thousands of years, and will likely continue to do so. They have established themselves in an interdependent network, each of them clinging to the others for support, yet they can exist separately should one or two fall. Each is independent on its own, yet functions far better when the other two are in place.

The fourth, unrecognized element of the Domain is the Resistance. Though it has no official capacity, and indeed works against the best interests of the Domain, it is as integral in its way as the other three. It provides a focus for the Domain, a guiding voice of conscience. It also keeps the Domain constantly searching for the source of the ideas that infect it. By furnishing the Domain with an enemy, it gives the people of the Domain a purpose, whether they are for or against the Resistance.

The Domain extends across hundreds of light-years, although it does not control every aspect of life within those years. Instead, it delegates control of planetary systems to the various Scions that make up the Domain's ruling class. Most of the decisions are handled through the Bureaucracy, which routes each matter to the relevant personnel. Finally, the Empire is a domain within the Domain, where the Emperor and his advisors reside. Here it is that the policy that the Bureaucracy enacts is made, and the most important decisions debated.

The Empire

The Empire consists of the Emperor's home world and the two planetary systems nearby. The worlds hold everything necessary to sustain the Empire if the Bureaucracy and Scions should fail. They are also the worlds upon which the Empire's "hostages of fortune" reside until their tour of duty ends. Though they are not mistreated, and in fact live lives of luxury while they are the Emperor's "guests," the fact remains that they are prisoners. This is reinforced by the guards stationed discreetly near their quarters.

The Emperor directly controls the military units found within these systems; they are select veterans chosen for their trustworthiness and their fighting ability. They are the elite soldiers of the Domain, rivalled by few and bested by none. The cruiser pilots and dogfighters are uncannily good, the cream of the crop. Anyone making an assault on the Empire will to pay dearly.

The location of the Empire is kept top secret. Only the cruiser pilots who must travel between the Empire and the rest of the Domain know the location, and they have been altered by Musical forces never to reveal the location, even if their lives depended on it. Only a Musician of incredible power might be able to unlock their minds enough to pry out this information.

The Emperor trusts neither his Scions nor the Bureaucracy, and keeps a stable of spies to keep tabs on all of them. Though many of these spies are detected and fed false information, enough of them escape notice that the Emperor can keep a clear picture of what is happening in his Domain, as well as a list of the petty treacheries his nobles and servants in the Bureaucracy perpetrate. Since the spies do not know one another, they cannot communicate with each other; only the Emperor knows the true identities of them all.

Depending on how the GM wants the campaign to progress, here are two alternative versions of the Emperor. One of them is an active, forceful Emperor who brings the ill-will of the Domain on himself gladly. The other is a weak lad, one who lets his advisors make his decisions for him while he remains oblivious to the universe outside. One of these templates will prove a threat to the PCs; the other will do so only by his lack of care for the outer world. One of them is direct, the other is evil only by choosing ignorance, or allowing it to be chosen for him.

Neither of these Emperor types are ever without two g'rax bodyguards, or a Harmonian aide. This aide is trained in the Outer Fifth, and is fully capable of using the Galactos Barrier against those who offend the Emperor. Of course, the aide's power is as nothing compared to that of the Emperor.
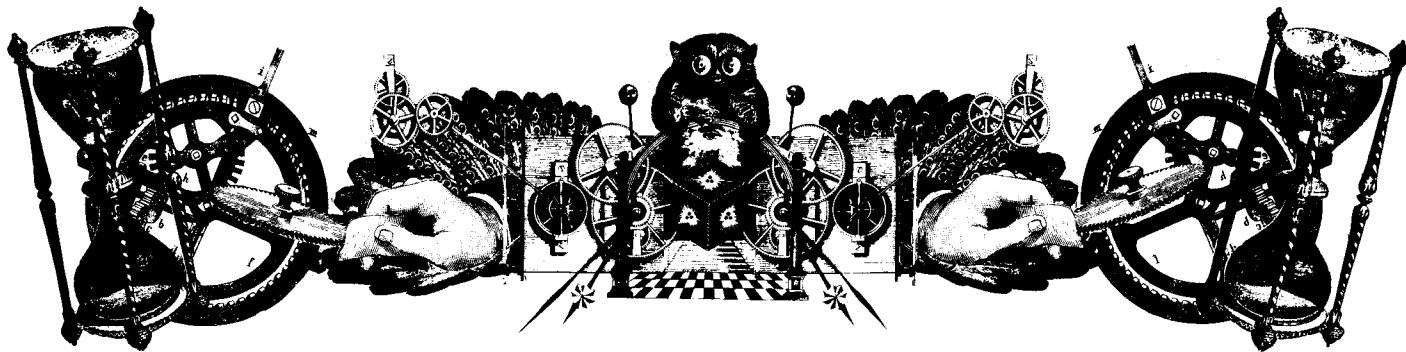
The Emperor Darenon Morione (version 1)

Fit: 55   Lea: 85   Psy:75   Cha:60
Ref: 80   Int:70   Wil:50   Pos:100

Profile: From his birth, Darenon Morione was bred to embody the traditions of his Morione heritage. Trained by the finest fighters of his mother's retinue and tutored by the most learned scholars of the galaxy, he quickly grew into a formidable physical presence. His natural grasp of the strategies of leadership served him well when his mother died. To make himself even more formidable, he secretly studied under the Musicians whose craft had been so long in disrepute. When he had surpassed their abilities, he had them slaughtered so that they could not reveal his training to others. He chose, naturally, the path of the Harmonian, seeking to impose his version of law on the Domain.

As the years passed, he grew only stronger. Tightening his iron grasp on the Bureaucracy, Morione began solidifying his power base to finally unite the entire Domain as a single homogenous entity. The campaign may begin just when he is beginning this operation, or well into the operation. Regardless, this Morione takes an active interest in the running of his kingdom; he knows what is going on and where it is. He is likely to prove a dangerous opponent, both through his machinations and in person. Anyone crossing him should be extremely careful, for not only has he had extensive training in the past, he also has the effectively unlimited resources of the Domain to back his schemes.

The Emperor Darenon Morione (version 2)

Fit: 35   Lea: 80   Psy:30   Cha:65
Ref: 50   Int:50   Wil:30   Pos:100

Profile: This Emperor is little more than a figurehead for his advisors. When his mother died bearing him, the Imperial Regents took the opportunity to seize power for themselves. Rearing him in a life of seclusion, they taught him to that a passive life was better than an active life. He never had a chance to learn to be king. By the time he had come of age, he had almost totally abdicated his responsibility to his advisors, and remained Emperor in name only.

Currently, he will sign anything put in front of him (unless it is his own death warrant). He is craven and a coward. Though he has tremendous potential, he has never had the chance to exercise it. He cares nothing of the atrocities committed in his name; he cares only for his own pleasure. If presented with evidence that his ignorance is costing the Domain dearly, he ignores the information, hoping that the situation will change for the better without any action on his part. Only when threatened directly will he take action, and then only to remove the threat.
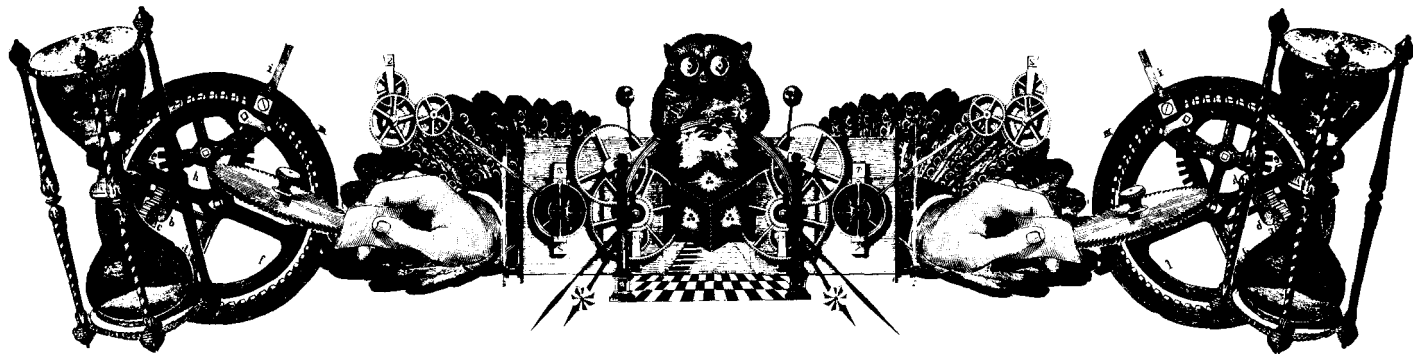
The Bureaucracy

The Bureaucracy established by Daisonne Morione to keep the Domain held together has grown ever more powerful over the millennia in which it has served. Nearly every function of the Empire and Scions passes through the Bureaucracy. The functions of the Domain as a larger whole are regulated here as well.

The heart of the Bureaucracy is located on the planet Haerlan in the Faras system. Due to the fact that the Bureaucracy is in charge of the military, there is always a small fleet in orbit around Haerlan, one containing at least two heavy cruisers, four medium cruisers, and 2-12 light cruisers. The light cruisers vary because the Bureaucracy sends them out on various secret missions; since the commanders report to the Bureaucracy, which then reports to the Emperor, the Bureaucracy needs not worry about "unnecessary" information troubling the Emperor.

The Bureaucracy is just intrusive enough to be irritating. Its members have grown to be a great power on their own; by creating laws that apply throughout the Domain they have assured their continuance, for they are the only ones who can understand the laws. Most of them are not truly malicious, just rather self-centered, self-important, and intent on their own careers and comfort.

The Bureaucracy is the most pervasive part of the Domain. It can be found wherever the PCs go, for it maintains postings throughout the Scions, acting as Galactic enforcers, both for the Scions against the people, and for the Empire against the Scions. The Bureaucracy can provide nearly any service the characters might need, as long as they do not need it quickly.

Criminals are often apprehended through the Bureaucracy, for the Office of Law Enforcement cooperates closely with the Planetary Offices of Communication; courier drones and Tacsats are mobilized to send pictures of criminals across the Galaxy. Though this is not instantaneous, criminals may find it hard to go anywhere without knowing that law enforcement officials have seen their faces.

Because of the huge volume of criminals, there is a slight possibility that the criminal can get by ... but it is doubtful.

The Bureaucracy requires permits for many things: landing a ship at a spaceport, repairing the ship, leaving the spaceport to travel around the city, leaving the spaceport in the ship, carrying a firearm, and so forth. The planetside troopers ensure that the laws are strictly enforced; unless the troopers can be successfully bribed, the characters might find themselves in trouble for something as minor as leaving the scene of a barroom brawl.
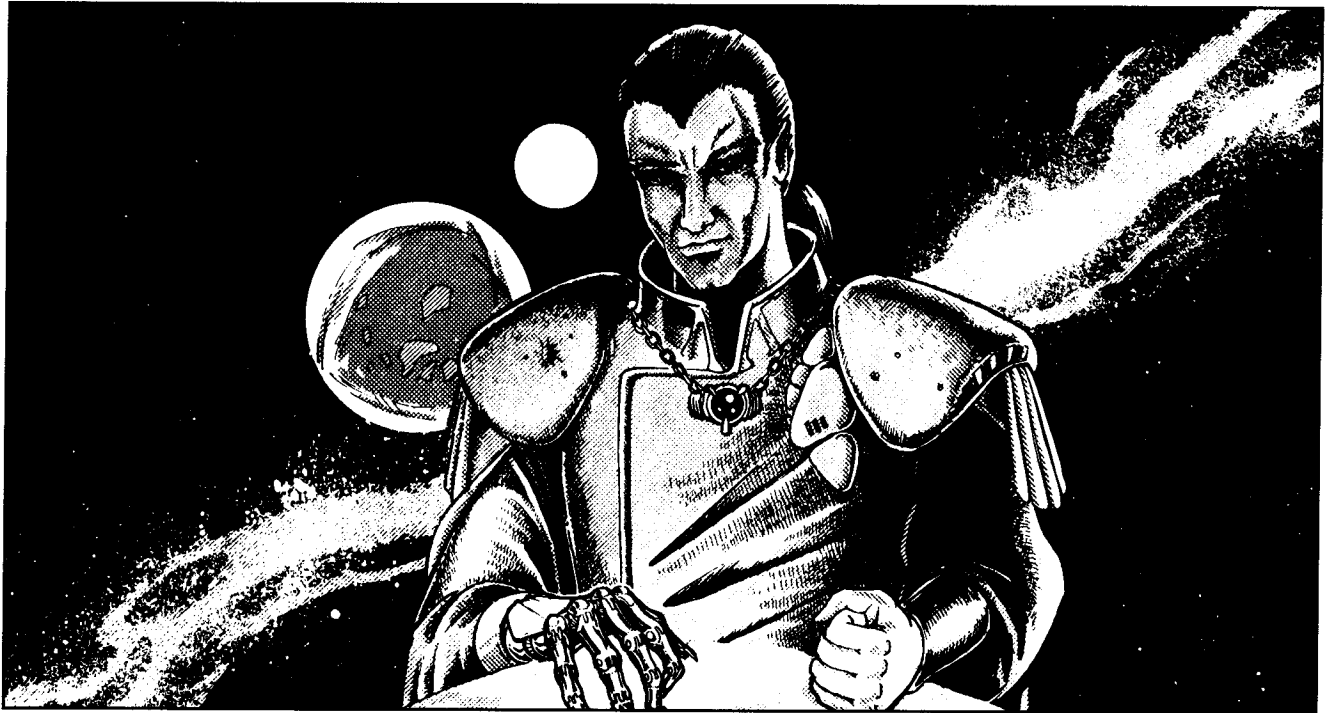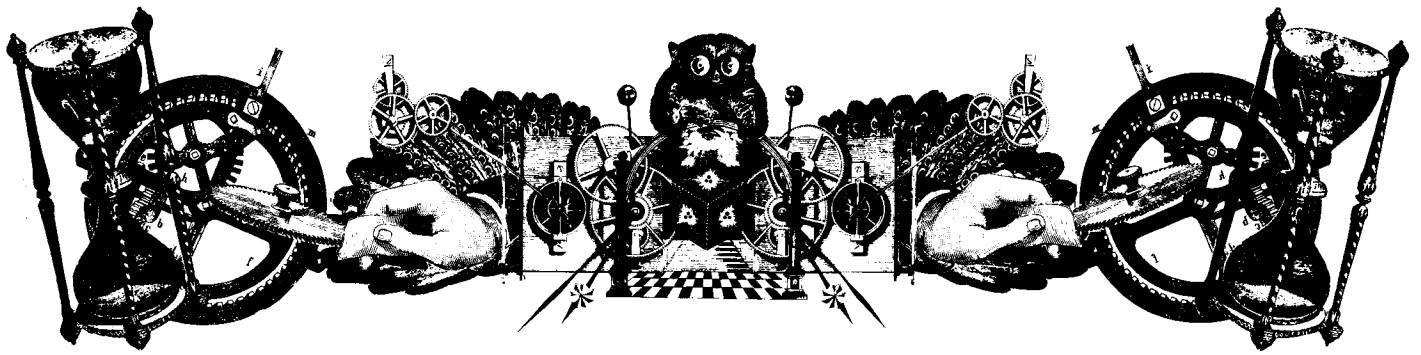
The Scions

The Scions are the direct descendants of Daisonne Morione's aides and accomplices in breaking the yoke of the S'farna pirates. When the pirates were finally driven into exile, Morione divided their remaining wealth among her compatriots. She also divided the remains of the S'farna Confederacy among them. Each of her comrades earned control of a single planetary system, with rights to those surrounding them.

In time, the alliance and camaraderie of the Scions, as they came to be called, wore away. As the memory of the alliance against the S'farna pirates wore away, so too did the friendship these Scions shared with one another. Their different and evolving philosophies conflicted too much. Their alliance eventually dissolved into the petty squabbling of politicians; some even went so far as to turn their sights on the Empire to vent their frustrations.

just when matters had reached the boiling point, the Emperor demanded hostages for the Scions' good behavior. The hostages were to be close relatives of each ruling Scion, and would be held for a year, at which point they would be replaced by another member of the Scion's household. Since the Emperor had most of the military might on his side, the Scions had little choice but to capitulate, no matter how grudgingly.

Now, they had no target for their frustrations but each other and their people. Their struggles for

power now raged through more subtle diplomatic channels, only rarely breaking into outright warfare. Some Scions were better equipped to wage this warfare, while others specialized in other areas. The physically weaker Scions thus sought the protection of stronger ones, creating alliances among the Scions.

The powerful Scions with intelligent leaders parlayed these alliances into significant advantages for their houses, demanding tribute from the weaker Scions for their troubles. Eventually, some of the smaller Scions were subsumed into these larger Scions, becoming under-lords under the jurisdiction of those more powerful. Other strong Scions, led by those who were less resourceful, became little more than sources for muscle, mercenaries to be bought for the right price. Several small, resourceful Scions capitalized on the weakness of the less-intelligent, and seized control of those.

Eventually, few of the original Scions remained.

Less than 25 of the original 200 had survived the shifting alliances of this era. The ones that emerged were all roughly equal in power and size. They now ally with each other momentarily, each seeking more power at the expense of the others.

Five Sample Scions

The five Scions which follow are not the final list of the Scions in the Domain. There are 20 more, each with its own specialized agenda. The Scions presented here are fairly representative of the others; some are darkly evil, while others plot on the side of the Resistance, while still more stand neutral, willing to aid whoever has the advantage or whoever pays the most. They range in power from truly mighty to merely powerful, but even the weakest commands billions of debit markers, and can crush most threats to its power.
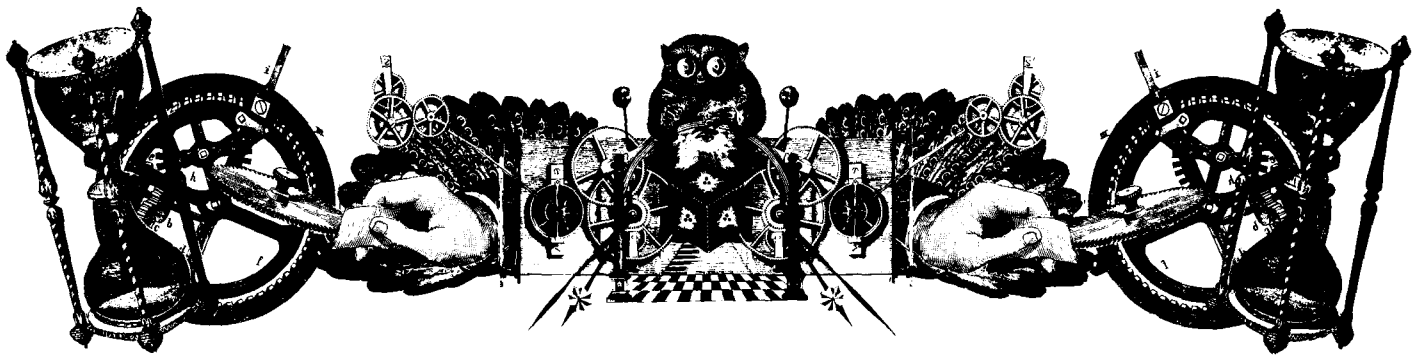
Kellinon

Size: Eleven planetary systems, each of which is governed by a minor baron who reports directly to Murdant Kellinon.

Ruler: Duke Murdant Kellinon rules the Duchy today. He is one of the most brutal lords in the Domain. He rules with an iron fist, allowing nothing to stand in his way. He sends maximum force to deal with the frequent uprisings and revolts that occur. In personal dealings, he is blunt and straightforward, wishing to spend as little time as possible on anything that does not affect him personally. He is impatient and avaricious, and the state of his Duchy reflects his personal tastes.

Dealings/Contacts: Kellinon keeps mostly to itself, preferring to forge its own way through the stars.

History: Kellinon's ancestors fought alongside the first Moriones, even before the planet Morna was destroyed. They served as stewards and advisors to the Moriones long before Daisonne Morione met any of her other friends. Thus, it was only meet that when the Moriones came to power over the rest of the Galaxy, they should reward their ancient retainers.

Kellinon abused its power horribly at first, for although the Kellinons knew how to advise a ruler, they knew nothing of ruling themselves. Eventually, after severe reprimands from the Emperor, they learned the trick of brutal suppression under the guise of quelling the Resistance. When they found they could escape with this, they never ceased their oppression. After a century or two, they wearied of this, and turned their sights to other targets, other planetary systems. Kellinon was the Scion responsible for the uprising of the other Scions; in its greedy grab for power, it inflamed the passions of the other Scions.

It has settled down now, having learned the value of subtlety, but it still oppresses its citizens and seeks to dominate nearby Scion Clans. The Kellinons have gained a reputation as back-stabbing reptiles, cold-blooded to the extreme. Though they lack the subtlety of Laestre, the overwhelming force of the Barsilate, or the immense size of Kr'ilys, Kellinon remains one of the most feared Scions among the general populace of the Domain simply because of its tenacity and stubborn refusal to give in.

Goals: Kellinon seeks nothing less than total power. Though they had been loyal servants to the Moriones in the past, the Kellinons would like to install some ruler more amenable to their guidance on the throne, and, incidentally, eliminate anyone who opposes them.

Their more immediate goal is the gradual usurpation of the nearby Scions. Kellinon has agents stationed within each of the nearby systems, working to undermine the rightful rule of those Scions. They pay anyone who aids in their task handsomely; this hand of friendship is extended only for so long as the person or group is useful to them. When they can find no further use for these helpers, they discard the unfortunate ones like trash.

Description: Scion Clan Kellinon is one that is known across the Domain as the one to go to when you need a dirty deed done. The populace of the Scion's worlds is one of the more disreputable of the Morione Domain, for Kellinon, despite its harsh laws, established a reputation as a refuge for the scum of the stars. The criminals and no-goods of the Domain enjoy proving their superiority over Kellinon's agents.

The smuggling business runs a brisk trade in and out of Kellinon space, for few merchants can afford to pay the monstrous taxes levied on incoming and outgoing shipments by the greedy Scion. Though this results in prison time and even execution for certain unlucky individuals, the smuggling business is brisker in Kellinon Duchy than anywhere else in the Domain.

The Barsilate

Size: The Barsilate controls only five worlds. However, each of these worlds contains an enormous military base, each of which is responsible for the training and deployment of the troops of the Barsilate. One planet contains well over 5 billion people, from which the Barsilate draws the bulk of its military. Every citizen of the Barsilate is required to serve 4
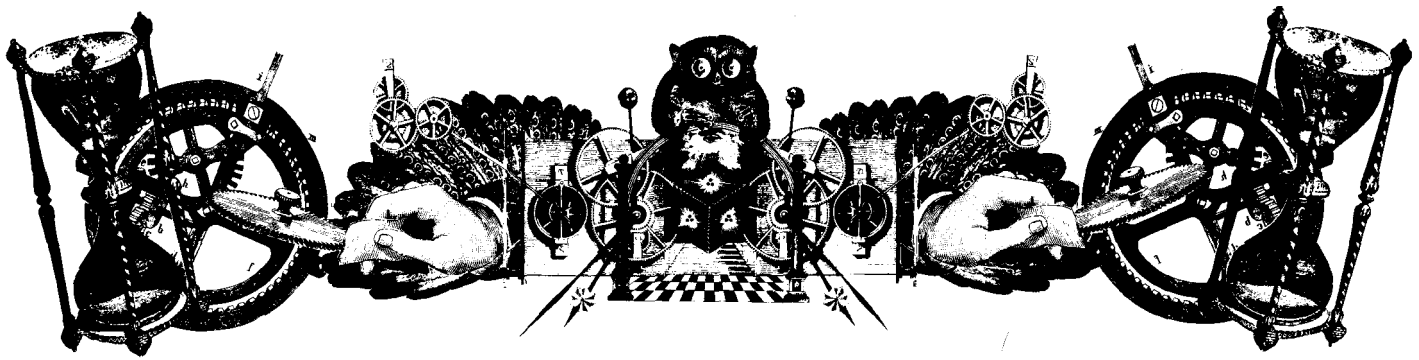
standard years in the service. The government of each of these planets is run by military governors, each of whom is subordinate to the Earl.

Ruler: Earl Barth Barsilate, like Duke Kellinon, has little time for trivial matters. This is only because he has more important things on his mind, such as the disposition of his troops, the maintenance of his Earldom, and defending his borders from the likes of Kellinon. He is not a bad ruler, merely a strict one. When he lays down the law, he expects it to be obeyed. When it is, life can continue smoothly. When it is not, he grows wrathful, and uses his considerable force to make matters right again.

Dealings/Contacts: The Barsilate does not maintain extensive dealings with the other Scions of the Domain, preferring to serve the Domain without playing in the power struggles. It does provide protection for Scion Clan Kr'ilys (see later), for Kr'ilys provides the Barsilate with the resources it needs to continue training its forces. Other than that, the Barsilate generally keeps its contact with other Scions to a minimum, except when accepting candidates for training in the military system.

History: The Barsilate family provided many of the warriors Morione used when she first set out against the pirates. Through thick and thin, the Barsilate stood by her, constantly providing support and morale. When the family was awarded its worlds, its members chose the most barren and dangerous worlds they could, so that their warriors could grow ever more mighty. Daisonne Morione, seeing the need for hardy soldiers, granted this request.

The Barsilate has butted heads with Kellinon in the past; though it defeated Kellinon, it looks carefully for Kellinon influences everywhere, seeking to discredit this most rapacious of Scions. So far, Kellinon has done an excellent job of covering its tracks.

Goals: The Barsilate exists only to serve. That is both its official line and its private line. Its members have no aspiration to rulership, though they could surely seize control of the Domain, if they so desired. Though they might wish for more power to prosecute the Domain's wars, and perhaps a position more to the forefront of the rest of the Scions, members of this

Scion refuse to violate their trust and neutrality by jockeying for position with the rest of the Scions. Should any of the Barsilate ever change their minds, those more loyal to the Domain would report it to the Emperor, who would take steps to ensure that such a move would never be completed.

Description: The Barsilate is the main warrior Scion Clan of the Domain. As such, it provides nearly all the elite soldiers of the Domain and Empire. It trains many from other Scions and other systems, but none ever rise as high in rank as those from the Barsilate. The Elite Imperial Troops are drawn from the cream of the Barsilate training.

The training of the troops takes place in arctic wastes, high- and low-grav areas, jungles, oceans, the air, and nearly any other place a battle is likely to be fought. The troops trained here command instant respect everywhere in the Domain, but most especially in the military. A Barsilate-trained soldier receives a tattoo depicting two ancient blades crossed over each other on a field of gold.

The Barsilate will never knowingly betray the Empire, no matter how corrupt it becomes. Members of this Scion perceive themselves as the last bastions of honor in the galaxy, and will not abandon their ancient oaths, even though it might spell disaster. However, the Barsilate will not hesitate at the chance to bloody the nose of its main rival, Kellinon, unless it would also hurt the Domain.

Kr'ilys

Size: Kr'ilys encompasses but a single star. However, it is one of the mightiest Scions in the Domain, for it is entirely contained within a Dyson sphere, a metal sheath surrounding its sun at a distance of 93,000,000 miles. Its exterior bristles with weaponry ready to destroy any unauthorized craft that approach too closely. Ships going within must pass through several airlocks and security checkpoints before they can access the interior of the sphere.

Inside, there is a planetary atmosphere, though this atmosphere is nearly too huge to imagine. The horizon is so distant that one is hard-pressed to see it
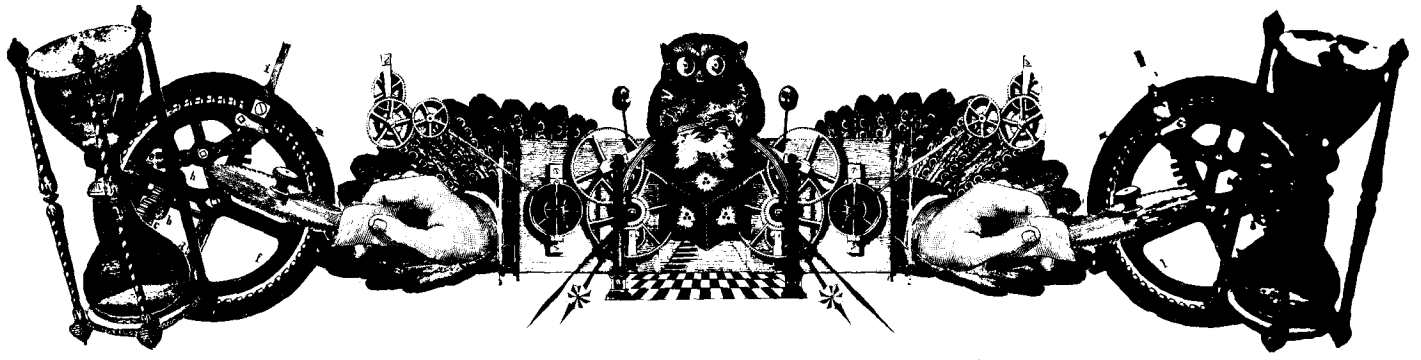
even with high-powered glasses, for the curvature of the sphere is so slight that it appears as a level plane extending off into infinity. The interior of Babanne (the name of the sphere) is fairly uniform; though there are terraformed mountains and huge forests, the climate is very stable, for there are no parts of the sphere that ever orbit any farther away from or closer to the star floating in the center. Kr'ilys is the bread-basket of the galaxy, and the Emperor has forbidden anyone to even consider launching attacks against it to seize it as their own. Still, nearly every house has its agents planted in this Scion, seeking to frame the Kr'ilys with some wrongdoing so that the Emperor will be forced to give Babanne to another, more deserving Scion.

Sadly, the technology necessary to duplicate the sphere was ostensibly lost with the crumbling of the old Empire; the Kr'ilys discovered the Sphere and made it their own, with the blessing of Daisonne Morione, without having to do any of the work necessary to construct it.

Though it is but one metal sheath, Kr'ilys has found it necessary to give some measure of governance to various outposts along the interior of the sphere. Each of these posts is allowed to do what it must to maintain the basic necessities for survival, but in all other matters, they must report to Lord H'ral.

Ruler: Lord H'ral Kr'ilys rules Babanne. He sets a stiff price for the export of the goods his world produces, which the other planets must pay if they are to receive a reliable source of food. Though he is not as greedy as he could be, Lord Kr'ilys does make sure that money continues to roll into his coffers. He treats his people well as long as they work as hard and as long as he wants. Should they fail in their duties, he demonstrates his patrician cruelty at random, punishing the people until they bring their work back to quota.

Dealings/Contacts: Kr'ilys has established a firm alliance with the Barsilate. Knowing that the trustworthy Barsilate provides a strong backing, as well as defense against more rabid Scions, Kr'ilys keeps the Barsilate well stocked with any supplies it might need.

History: Lord Kr'ilys was an unwilling scion of the S'farna Pirates who betrayed his old masters when he saw the first opportunity. For this service, and for unwavering dedication later, Morione rewarded him with the first system he could find that had not been chartered. It was just the ill luck of the other nobles that Kr'ilys discovered the sphere, which he named after his younger sister.

Upon discovering the readied croplands of the sphere, Kr'ilys claimed it as his own. The people of the overcrowded planets of the old Empire came to Babanne in droves to settle the new, heretofore undiscovered lands. Kr'ilys never discovered who had left the sphere, nor did he particularly care. He saw only profit in Babanne, ignoring the mysteries of its existence.

Even when some of the settlers disappeared, Kr'ilys did not investigate, for it did not impact on his profits to do so. His descendants have inherited this greed and this uncaring attitude toward the rest of the sphere. As long as their profits do not suffer, they do
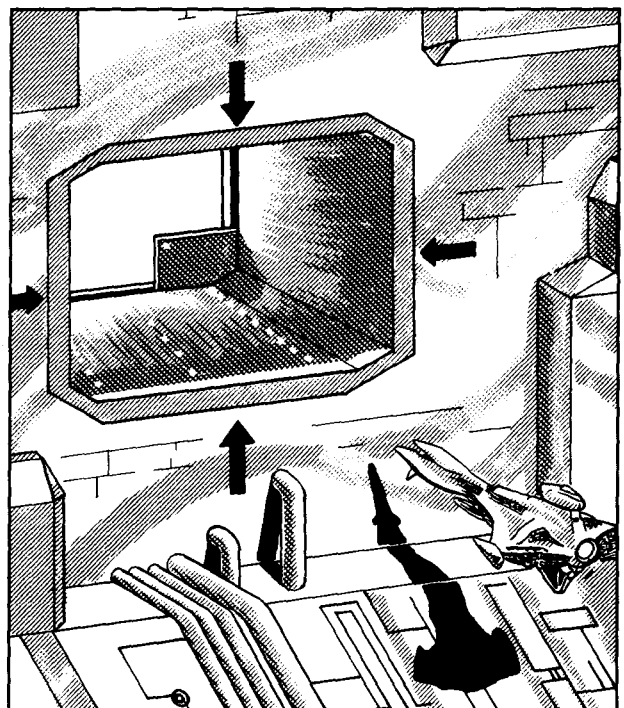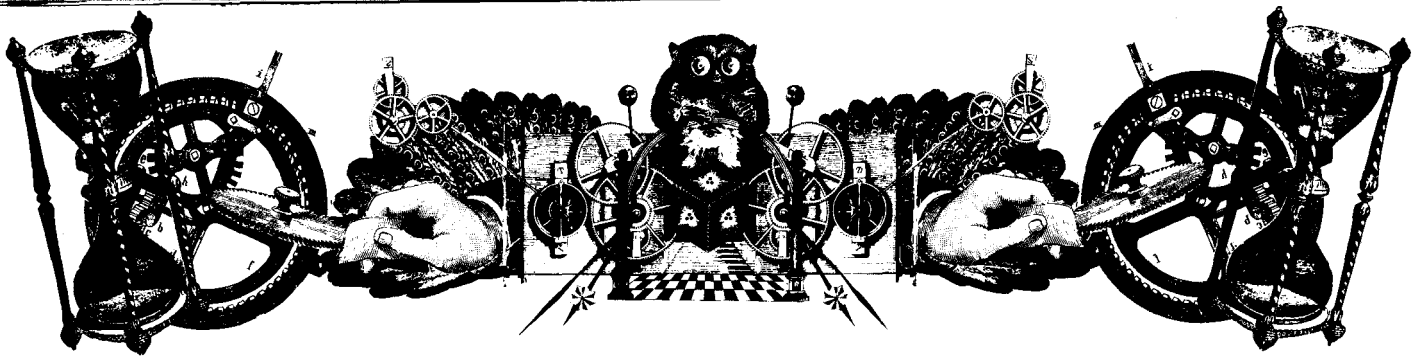
not care about the mysteries it might hold. To date, though much of Babanne is being farmed, not all of its mysteries have been explored . . . not even halfway.

Goals: The goal of Scion Clan Kr'ilys is to achieve total domination over the galaxy, but not through force of arms or guile. Its plan is economic domination, to force all the money of the galaxy through Babanne. Its members don't mind leaving the everyday governance of the people to the current regime, but they want to make sure they have a hand in any important decisions. They want to know that they control what they regard as the true sources of power -money, and the Emperor's ear.

Description: Kr'ilys is dominated by Lord H'ral, who makes all the important decisions. He shares none of his executive power with his relatives, preferring to let them think that he is totally in control. His Clan is composed mostly of functionaries and bureaucrats, for he forbids any who carry the blood of Kr'ilys to become soldiers or enter any other occupation that he considers menial. There are, of course, the rebels of the family, who join the Morione forces or leave Babanne in direct defiance of their patron. Though they are not disinherited (Kr'ilys knows the use of having "black sheep," though he disdains them), they are not made fully welcome when they return to Babanne.

Farador

Size: Seven planetary systems.

Ruler: Baron Velini Farador is a cruel man, looking out only for his own best interests. However, he does not have the strength of character of most of his peers; if he is in an untenable position, he will weep, whine, and attempt to cajole his way to freedom. It is only when he is assured of his own power that he feels truly secure. This is, perhaps, why he is the leading slaver of the Galaxy.

Dealings/Contacts: Farador maintains embassies with all the Scions who use slaves. The Scion is in good repute with these others, for they never know when they might need more slaves, and Farador constantly chooses the best. Since Farador is the only Scion licensed to capture slaves, they need to maintain cordial relations so that they can replenish their slave stock. Farador and other slave-using Scions' implacable enemy is the Scion Laestre, which believes strongly in individual freedoms and abhors the slave trade in any form.

History: Junili Farador was the recruiter for Morione's army when she began making war on the pirates of S'farna. She found those who were unwilling to serve, and pressed them into service, despite their objections, and many of these went on to achieve greatness despite themselves. It was in large part due to these slave warriors that Morione was able to triumph. In recognition of this service, she granted Junili's descendants the right to "recruit" for the Domain, as long as such recruitment served the greater good of the Domain.

These descendants later perverted the meaning of this to mean that any benefits that accrued to the Domain came from the Scions, and began selling their pressed recruits into service to the Scions. Though many of the Scions regarded this as an abomination, enough of them were interested in the flesh trade to make Farador a wealthy Scion Clan. Though the slavers could not, at first, technically operate within the jurisdiction of other Scions, Farador continued to send agents among the Scion Clans. As long as none of the citizens thus seized were among the ruling elite or those who supported them well, few Scions took the time to complain.

Goals: The Faradors do not seek dominion over the Galaxy; they merely want to continue their trade in human flesh and gain money, power, and comfort by doing so. They desire to impress everyone with their worldly ways, generosity, and impeccable taste. In so doing, they remind everyone that their only substance is money.

Description: Scion Clan Farador is greedy with its power, sending its bounty hunters and slavers into the areas traditionally controlled by other Scions. These hunters usually prowl the seedier saloons and spaceports, picking up those they feel are riffraff. They carry heavy weaponry, ready to dispense a few blasts into any crowd that tries to defy them.
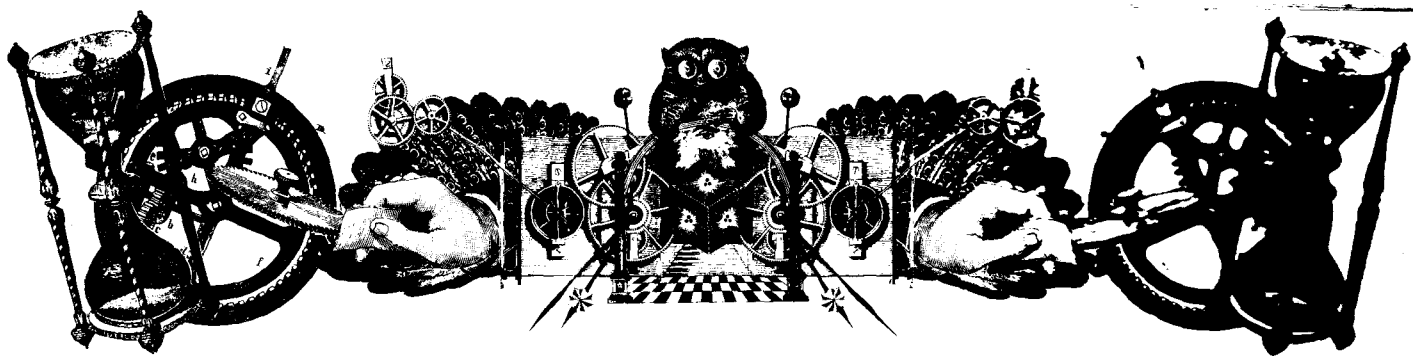
The nobles of the Scion Clan are frightfully insecure, doing their best to assert their power over all who fall within their sphere of influence. Since they cannot gain respect in any other way, they often spend time in the slave pens, giving justice as they see fit. They are brutal when they are in control, simpering when they are not.

Farador, like Kellinon, is one of the most brutal of Scions. As long as the slaves it sends off are fit in body, it cares nothing for the mind. Only when its members are under strict orders to keep a slave well-preserved will they allow one to escape the lash. All the subordinate nobles of the Scion Clan are desperate to prove their worth to their Baron, and they feel that emulating him is the fastest possible route to advancement.

Laestre

Size: Laestre controls eight planets, all of which are eminently civilized. The capital of Scion Clan Laestre is called Gelba, from which Lady Faari oversees the maintenance of her Clan and on which she receives her visitors. All planets are ideal worlds, with a fine variety of climate and terrain. The populace is generally happy; the Resistance has found it difficult to find a foothold here in which to overthrow her. Her people simply do not wish to see her gone.

Ruler: Lady Faari Laestre, the descendant of Daisonne Morione's strategist, has all of her forebear's cunning, and uses it to advance her Clan. She rules her people with a subtle rein, using her knowledge of sentient nature to twist their minds so that they end up agreeing with her, though they might have started out with a position entirely to the contrary. She is secretly a Discordian, using her powers to advance the cause of Discord in the galaxy. Only her closest relatives and friends know this fact. They keep it secret, for most of them are, too. Among her relatives, she encourages psychological games, so that they might sharpen their wits on each other before losing a battle of wits in the larger galaxy.

Dealings/Contacts: Laestre has contacts with most of the Scions of the Domain, and good relations with the majority of them. Though she constantly schemes to advance her Clan, she does so in a fashion that causes most others to align themselves with her. Even Kellinon has some neutrality towards Scion Clan Laestre, for it is unsure exactly what Laestre intends to accomplish. The most dangerous Clan that Laestre faces is that of the Barsilate, for it has little patience for the implied word and the subtle use of diplomatic language. Though the Barsilate has remained mollified so far, it could easily crush Laestre if pushed too far. Laestre also keeps agents planted within Clan Farador, trying to undermine the stability of the slaver Scion.

History: Master Laestre served as Daisonne Morione's strategist, his shrewd mind and cunning plans sowing the seeds of their enemies' destruction. His motive in this was only to ensure the downfall of the pirates, not to establish a new Empire amidst the ashes of the old. However, when he saw that the building of the Domain was an inevitability, he allowed Morione to grant him a title for his aid. He resolved to work from within the Domain to assure the dominance of his Clan, from whence he could dissolve the Domain and return everyone to freedom.

Though Scion Clan Laestre has since angered a few, and made enemies of several other Scions, it has had a largely peaceful history. Since Laestre produces some of the finest diplomats in the Domain, war has generally been averted long before it ever became a threat.

Goals: Though Laestre does not wish to be at the forefront, it definitely wants to be the guiding force behind the throne. In fact, it has held the dominant position as the Emperor's main advisor for hundreds of years. Still, the Morione has been difficult to control; Faari Laestre cannot use her Music to influence him, for he is a Harmonian of power. Thus, she must work from the shadows, influencing him without showing her power.

Description: Laestre is a Clan full of intrigue and deceit. The petty nobles and sons and daughters of Laestre scheme constantly against one another, each seeking the upper hand in a bid for power. Anyone having dealings with this Scion should realize that
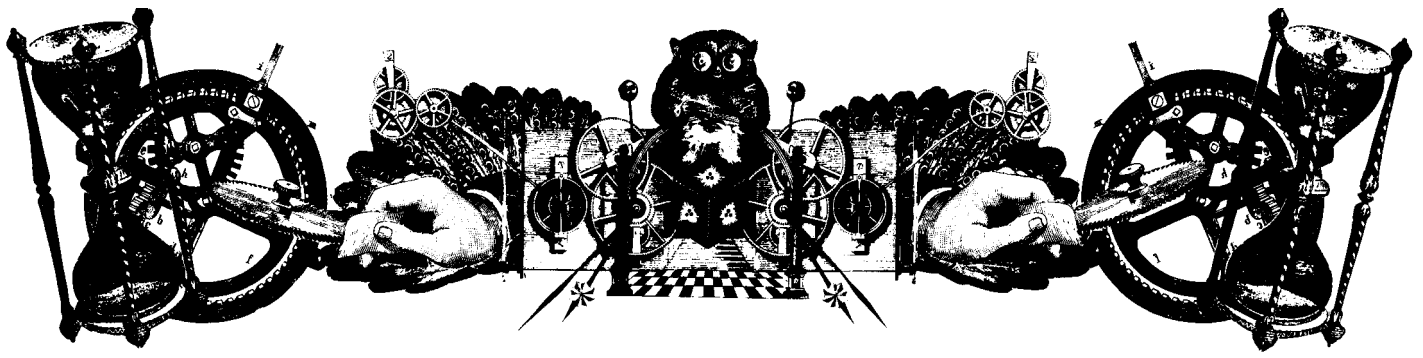
there is a web of subtlety and betrayal here that is unrivalled by any Scions anywhere else in the Domain.

Still, compared with the brutal maneuverings of some of the other Scions, Laestre is fairly gentle. Though its members play games of diplomacy and subtlety even among themselves, they do not do so to injure or otherwise harm their relatives; they do so to demonstrate how clever they are to their matron, so that she might entrust them with valuable missions. It is only when dealing with outsiders that they have little compunction about more injurious games; most of those from Laestre have few scruples about using others in elaborate games with their kin.

The Resistance

The Resistance was founded in the early days of the Domain, when it became clear to some that the Morione Domain was only going to continue the piratical existence of the Pirates of S'farna. It keeps itself hidden from the Domain by never openly declaring itself, by never revealing itself as a cohesive group. Thus it has maintained its integrity throughout the years. Now, though, things have changed. The Resistance has coalesced in several worlds, and is preparing to offer a fight to the Domain.

The Resistance has only recently gained credibility among the people of the Domain. Though it has been in place ever since the Domain was founded, never before has it had a leader like it does now. The leader of the Resistance is Darenon Morione's youngest son, Drewan, an extremely capable youth. Angry at being denied a chance at anything in life, constantly being passed over in favor of his two elder brothers, he joined the Resistance in order to regain his birthright.

Drewan Morione

Fit: 65	Lea: 75	Psy:40	Cha:95
Ref: 65	Int:50	Wil:45	Pos:90

Profile: There are several possibilities for Drewan Morione's profile, based on the type of campaign that suits the GM's needs. The first is that he honestly cares for the people of the Resistance, and will do his best to help them as they helped him once he gains his throne. Unlike his brothers, he has a deep sense of personal honor, and will do his best to ensure that those who have treated him well are treated well in return.

The second, and far more likely possibility, is that he is using the Resistance to seize something that was never rightfully his. He probably plans to betray the Resistance once he has gained power, knowing its intricacies and power structure intimately, having established them himself. Unless watched very carefully, Drewan Morione could prove to be an even worse enemy than the old Domain ever was.
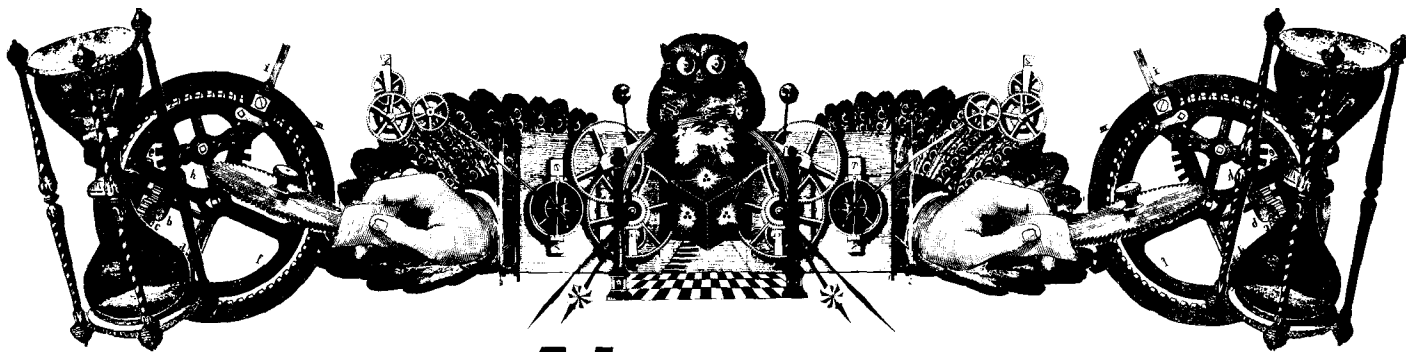
Adventures

The creative GM can devise a virtually limitless number of scenarios for *The Galactos Barrier.* Using the timeline provided in the "Timeline of the Morione Domain," characters can take part in any event in galactic history.

Basic Premises

While gaming in *The Galactos Barrier,* there is one qualification the GM should keep paramount: play it fast, loose, and exciting. If the rules get in the way of a good, fast-paced story, fiddle with them or ignore them outright. This is supposed to be a role-playing game, and if the players get caught up in the storyline, the rules can occasionally prove restrictive. It is not recommended that the GM discard all the rules at once; picking the ones that seem to slow play, one at a time, is probably the best route to an enjoyable session.

Campaigns

It is much harder to run a campaign from *The Galactos Barrier* than from most other AMAZING ENGINE Universe Books. This is, in large part, because the players have so many options available for their characters. They are not forced into a role where they need to accept commands from anyone; indeed, the nature of this universe is to encourage them to make their own decisions and commit themselves to their adventures. This, in turn, puts a rather large burden on the shoulders of the GM.

There is no "one right way" to running a campaign in the universe of *The* Galactos Barrier. Each campaign depends on the GM, the players, and the style of campaign a GM wants to run. It can be dark, gloomy, and depressing, or it can be fiercely optimistic. It can be high-tech and clean, or low-tech and down-and-dirty. It can be all of these, or none of them.

Indeed, the whole focus of the campaign is entirely fluid. Instead of taking the standard route of working for the Resistance against the Domain, they can be agents of the Domain, ferreting out pockets of the Resistance. The characters can be constantly on the run from the law, stopping only to strike blows for

their side, or they could be the law, in charge of catching the runners. Or they need not choose sides at all, working as mercenaries for first one side and then another. Of course, if they take this route, both sides will become extremely irritated with the characters, and their lives will grow steadily more interesting as they shift alliance from one to the other....

Regardless, the GM must pick an initial tone for the campaign, decide on the importance of technology, and determine which side the PCs work for (with, of course, the players' assistance). This tone can change gradually throughout the campaign if the GM so desires. It is extremely important to remember not to make any sudden changes in tone or mood, as this can often destroy the entire campaign. Players need to adjust to the changes slowly; rapid changes tend to leave them off-balance and unsure of their characters' place in the universe.

Scion Clan Laestre can provide an easy "in" to the Resistance, if the GM desires to make use of it. Since this is an upstanding Scion Clan, the PCs can work for it without fear of spreading the Domain's agenda too far. Laestre can be the basis of any Scion-based adventures the GM wishes to run, and the PCs can be the specialty team the Scion calls in to deal with its problems. This introduction to the Scion should come later in a campaign, after the PC have proven themselves to be trustworthy and dependable to various Scion associates.

Typical Adventures

The "typical" adventure in The Galactos Barrier is a fast-paced action/adventure sequence. It can proceed something like this: The PCs, having just completed their last mission, have finally recuperated. They are approached by a member of the Domain, the Resistance, or an independent concern, depending on whom they have done work for (maybe they are approached by representatives from all three, if they have made a name for themselves).

The representative asks the PCs to take a mission of some urgency, whether it be to smuggle goods, escort a minor noble, or destroy an enemy installation. The PCs do not have to accept, but their decisions might

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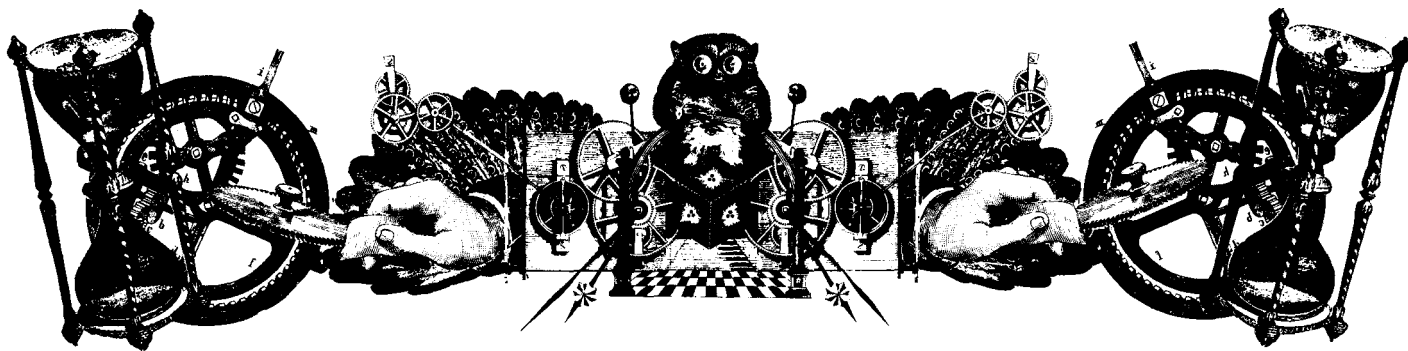
be forced by coincidental occurrences nearby.

Along the way, they find evidence that their mission is not everything it seems, that there is some intrigue involved in this mission. Perhaps the goods they smuggle are in fact a bomb, or the noble is a spy escaping with essential Domain documents, or the installation is a setup, designed to lure foolish members of the Domain to their doom.

Finally, the PCs (in a best case scenario) outwit the intrigue, complete their mission in a stunning way, and collect their rewards. From there, it is back to square one as they mend their bruises and broken bones-it's not easy being a hero!

Naturally, not all adventures need run this way. However, running an adventure series with this formula will get the players well into the flavor of the universe and able to make their own decisions. From this point, the GM can design adventures based on the previous escapades of the PCs, shaping the universe to accommodate the actions of the characters. This will add depth and character to the universe, making the players feel they and their characters are, if not an integral part of the universe, at least a contributing factor to its history.

Sample Adventures

Several sample adventures are included for your benefit; you can run them or not, as you prefer. They are not as carefully detailed as most adventures should be. Instead, they provide the skeletons of adventure for the GM, who should flesh them out if they fit the campaign.

Each adventure provides a quick summary of background, a way to drag the PCs into the action, what they may find in their investigations, and the climax to the adventure, followed by suggestions for expanding the adventure to make a mini-campaign.

The Slave Ring
The PCs, by the time this adventure takes place, should have earned the trust of a Scion Clan. Their work for the Scion has shown the Scion that the PCs can be relied on to remain discreet while providing excellent work.
Background: Scion Clan Farador, the slaver, has its

agents all over the galaxy, abducting lower-class people from seedy saloons to sell them into slavery. In this case, its members havetakenly kidnapped the heir to another Scion from the planet Hadia, thinking him just an average citizen. Since they cannot technically operate within the boundaries of other Scions, the bounty hunters of Farador deny that it ever happened. The Scion Clan which trusts the PCs is in a bind, for they cannot simply raid Farador's holdings in search of their heir. In desperation, they turn to the PCs.
Beginning: The PCs are doing whatever it is that they do when they receive a distressed call from their Scion's representative. The representative is frantic with worry, though she tries not to let the PCs see this, knowing that they can use this as a bargaining chip for more money. She gives the PCs the background as presented above, and appeals to their sense of duty to return the young heir. If their sense of duty is not strong enough, she offers them 10,000 DM each to restore the heir to his house. Expenses, of course, are included. This does not extend to purchasing spaceships or other such material, though it will cover housing, legal equipment, bribes, and other sundry expenses. Once this is settled, the PCs can begin the next part of the adventure.
Middle: The PCs should begin in the logical place, the planet Hadia, where the heir was last seen. Once there, they will have to find the trail of the slavers. Clues can include: people seeing someone resembling the heir being hustled off to a spaceship with Farador registration (the number of which will require a significant amount of DMs to reveal), positive facial identification of the alleged slavers, and the required logged-in destination for vessels leaving the port. The clues point to the planet Vilini, capital of the Farador Scion.

Once the PCs make it to Vilini, they can grease a few palms to discover where the cargo loads of slaves go once they reach the capital. For a little more, they can peruse the manifests of each ship, and discover where the particular ship they seek eventually unloaded its bay. If the PCs go through official channels, they discover that the ship's crew were officially not conducting slaving operations in other Scions, that the crew was merely there for some rest and relaxation. In other words, official channels will provide the PCs absolutely
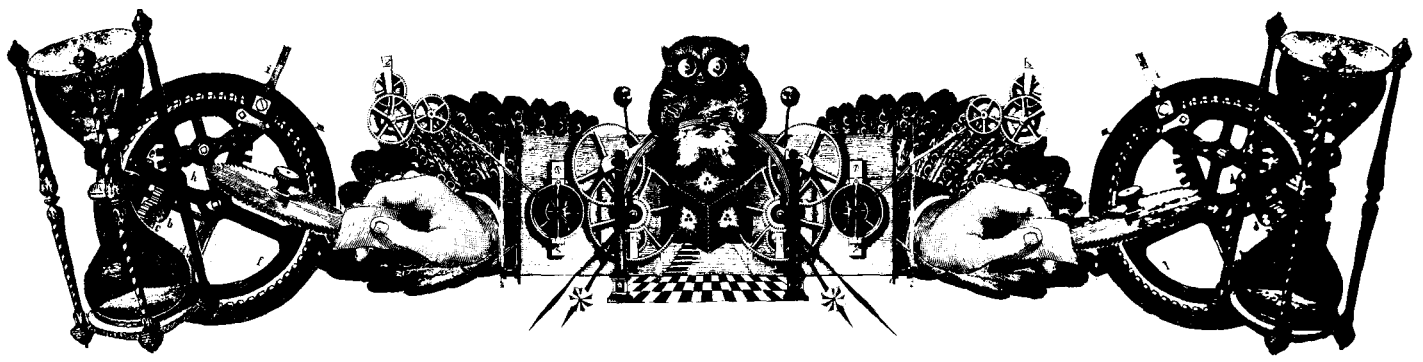
no useful information.

By whatever means, the PCs should find that the cargo of the slave ship is bound for the planet Ogastia, a notorious slave world. The PCs will need some sort of alibi to enter, for Ogastian space is patrolled by Farador ships to prevent any ill-thought rescue missions.

Climax: Somehow or other, the PCs arrive at the slave world of Ogastia, and locate the stronghold in which the heir is being held. They have to figure out some way to smuggle the heir from the well-guarded stronghold. This could prove to be a tense moment for the PCs, as they will have to outwit the guards, both humanoid and robots, beat the security systems, and reach the ship without alerting the Farador authorities of their intentions. Finally, they will have to elude pursuit long enough to reach eSpace and the jurisdiction of their Scion.

Epilogue: Though the PCs will have the gratitude of the Scion whose heir they have saved, they will have earned the enmity of Scion Farador. The Scion will devote considerable resources to discovering who freed the heir, and send agents after the PCs to enslave them. If this is not possible, Baron Farador will order them killed. The Baron will not rest until the PCs have killed a sufficient number of prospective slavers/assassins, or until they have been captured. The GM can make this another adventure, or a recurring theme, until the PCs have discovered a way out of it.

I, Robot

This adventure can take place at any time in the PCs' careers.

Background: A representative of the Domain's Bureaucracy has commisioned a series of robots that can kill sentients. Though to all outward appearances these robots have functioning Passive Restraint Modifiers, the programming of these PRMs teaches the robots that there is but one sentient race (for example, only lupiral), the rest being mindless beasts. Because the PRMs allow robots to kill non-sentient beings, these robots are the ideal assassination squad, perfect for the removal of anyone's enemies. Since everyone knows that robots are programmed not to harm any sentient race, they are, of course, assumed to be safe.

Beginning: The next time the PCs go to frequent their favorite establishment, or the next time they enter a public building, they witness one of these robots at work. It strides in through the front doors, its PRM in plain view on its chest. It homes in on its target (a middle-aged human), and blasts the victim into his component atoms. Unless the PCs do something, it turns and walks out of the bar while everyone stares in stunned silence. If the PCs attack the robot, it will do its best to kill them. They should have little trouble subduing it or destroying it. If they investigate the wreckage, they discover the stamp of a manufacturer located on the planet Garden (or on the planet the PCs are on, if they have no access to a ship).

If the PCs follow the robot out to its nearby shuttle instead of attacking it, they catch the ship's registration number. The number can lead them to the manufacturer, one way or another. The GM is encouraged to make the PCs trace the number through a number of false owners to distract the heroes. If the PCs are not willing to take the adventure out of altruism, someone will offer them money to get revenge on the person who sent the robot after his brother.

Middle: The PCs somehow trace the robot to the robot's manufacturer. If they investigate the factory, they find that it is totally automated, except for the foreman, and heavily guarded by robots. If the PCs try to get in, a firefight will ensue, for there is very little chance that the PCs will be able to avoid all the security systems of the plant. The robots are not exceptionally tough, being built primarily for assassination instead of out-and-out combat. However, they do have the advantage of numbers.

Sometime during the fight, the foreman will try to slip away. If the PCs catch him (for they should see him attempting to flee), he will tell them of secret files in the factory and the password to break the computer's code. He does not lie, valuing his life far more than his job.

Climax: As the PCs finish up in the factory and begin investigating the files, Domain troops begin pouring in, alerted by the security systems. The files in the computer tell the PCs that all these robots are being fitted with empty PRMs. The empty shells are placed in obvious places on the robots, so that the robots can gain the trust of their victims, in order to penetrate the victims' society-and then kill them.
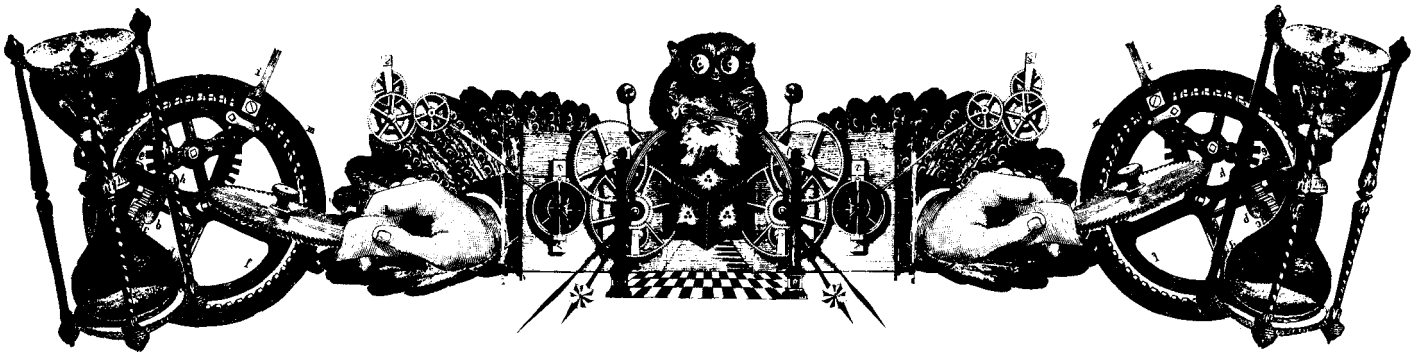
The worst part about it is that these files verify that the Domain commissioned the work. The PCs can copy the files and attempt to flee, but they will have to escape the protective cordon of guards placed around the building to prevent such an escape, and then escape to the stars before they are positively identified.

Epilogue: The PCs can use the files to try to blackmail the Domain, or they can sell them to the Resistance. Either way, there will be Morione agents looking for the missing files, seeking to clear this path. The PCs may find that they are in serious trouble if they are not careful about what they do with the files.

Off to the Front

When duty calls, only a coward ignores it. In this case, the PCs are called upon to serve their Domain in the Border Wars raging past Galactic Core. Assuming they have done nothing blatantly illegal against the Domain (at least, nothing for which the blame can be assigned to them), this adventure is suitable for them. If they have created some consternation among the higher levels of the Domain, it might be a good idea to change the adventure slightly, so that it is the Resistance asking for the PCs' intervention or so that the Border Wars are affecting the PCs personally.

Background: The Border Wars have been leaving their mark on Galactic Core for the better part of a year. None are sure of who exactly is behind the wars. Is it the descendants of the Pirates of S'farna, or is it the robots, trying to liberate their "oppressed brethren?" Whatever the case, the Wars are beginning to disrupt commerce, kill innocent civilians, and generally make life difficult for anyone near the Core.

Beginning: The PCs are contacted by their friends in the Scions or in the Resistance, and asked to undertake a mission of utmost secrecy. The NPCs want the PCs to infiltrate the enemy lines and come back with the enemy's plans to develop a new super-weapon. Though the PCs are not necessarily in the employ of the Domain, there is a 50,000 DM bonus involved in this mission, as well as the loan of a Tau Plagiarizer. Whoever employs the PCs steers them to the necessary planet and leaves them to their devices. Since the PCs are not officially part of the war effort, they must avoid Moriones as well as the enemy.

Middle: This brand of enemy is apparently the human kind. The planet to which the PCs have been directed is an ice world, dominated by a huge metal fortress at the south pole. The fortress is clearly visible from space. There is a large landing pad nearby. If the PCs land there, or someplace nearby, the PCs witness the fortress doors open to spew forth a large party intent on resisting the invaders. When (or if) the PCs make it into the fortress, they find that the fortress is designed purely for research. Obviously, based on the size of the fortress and the types of experiments being conducted, the enemy is devoting significant resources toward the destruction of the Domain. There are many special weapons projects being worked on in the fortress, including: cannibalizing body weapons (ones where biological entities cause the target's cells to cannibalize themselves), teleporters, planetary destroyers, and phasing weapons (which destabilize the target's molecules long enough for the victim to slide through the floor and then resolidify). None of these are yet complete, nor even near completion.

The PCs have enough time to grab one set of plans before the guards of the installation come after them.

Climax: The PCs must now attempt to escape off-planet without being killed. There are literally hundreds of people after their blood, and the PCs will have to be very careful in their escape. After fleeing from the enemy troops, the PCs must now avoid the Morione patrols, for the Moriones will attempt to destroy any unauthorized people traveling at high speed from enemy territory.

Epilogue: This adventure can be stretched out to make an entire campaign if the GM and players are interested. The PCs have only scratched the surface of the true extent of the Wars; they have only participated in a single battle. While the victory was an important one, it was certainly not a decisive one in the course of the War. Whether the PCs won or lost the battle, they should have gained some insight into the enemy mind while completing the adventure. Armed with their new knowledge, they can pursue the War into enemy territory, or they can continue to fight in the border skirmishes. Or, of course, they can choose to retire from this field, seeking easier glory elsewhere in a nonheroic fashion.
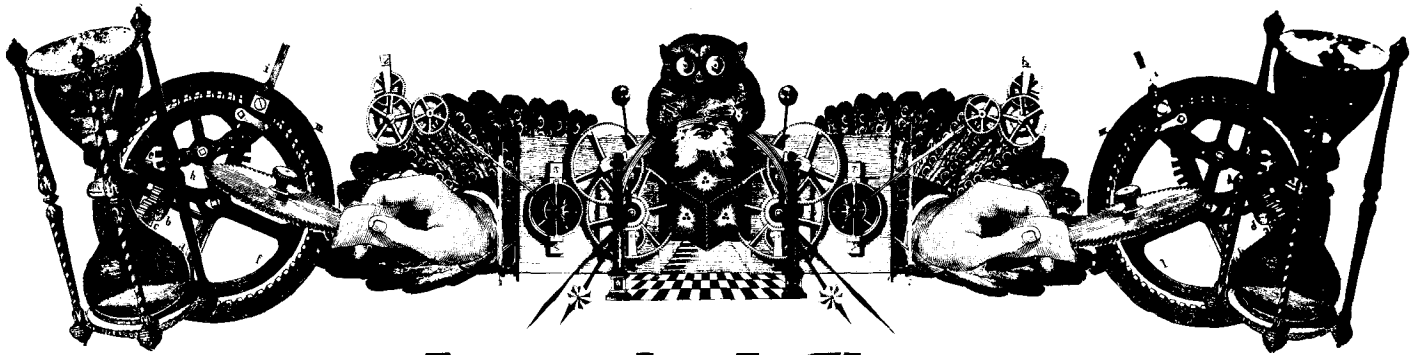
Appendix I: Charts

PC Species

Race	Height	Weight	Modifiers	Special Abilities
G'rax	2 m + .1-.8 m	200 + 1 d6x10 kg	+10 Fit and Ref -5 Cha and Pos -15 Lea and Int	Four arms
Ichthatus	1.25	1.5 m	75-150 kg	Amphibious and echolocation
Lupiral	1.5-1.5 m	150-200 kg	-15 Psy and -10 Wil	Speed and excellent hearing
Orn	2.25-2.5 m	52-70 kg (50 + 2d1 0 kg)	-15 Cha and Pos	+10 w/ rifles +5 w/ other ranged weapons
Raptikoi (adult)	1.75 + .1-.6 m	75 + 2d12 kg	-15 Cha and Pos	Venom and Patron change
(patron)	Adult ht + .1-1 m	Adult wt + 5d12		Reassign 40 points to one pool
Slathorp	Varies	(2 x ((Fit + Ref)/2))	Only Stamina	Shapechange

Robots	Height	Weight	Modifiers	
Cyberoid X-J5	1.75 m	85 kg	+10 to all abilities	x2 damage from electricity
GV/s 153-1	2 m	200 kg	+20 Fit and Ref -10 Lea and Int	xl'h Stamina and Body
MRP 946-x	1.5 m	75 kg	-10 Fit +20 Lea +10 Int	

Vehicles	Cost	Speed Code	Maneuver Code	Stamina	Body
Atmospheric					
Skimmer	6,000-40,000 DM	III	V	—	—
Aircar	55,000 DM	V	V	—	—
Interstellar					
Alharutian Transport T12	1,300,000 DM	VII	III	150	50
G12 Marauder XX	500,000 DM	IV	X	50	20
Tau Plagiarizer	5,000,000 DM	VI	V	100	35
Lucretia TCS	Priceless	V	VI	120	40
LaG4/5 Waystation	Incalculable	I	I	400	150
Morione Cruisers					
Light	Not for sale	VI	III	175	75
Medium	Not for sale	VII	II	250	100
Heavy	Not for sale	VIII	I	350	150

Weapons

Name	Cost	Weight	R.O.F.	Damage	Range	Initiative Modifier
Amarak II Blaster	200	1 kg	3	2d10 (6)	100 m	—
Kelimar V Blaster Rifle	500	5 kg	1	3d10 (5)	200 m	—
High Energy Jet Pistol	1,000	2 kg	2	3d10 (6)	200 m	—
Monofilament Blade	100	0.25 kg	—	1 d1 0 (2)	—	+2
Fugue Handle	200	0.5	—	As Musician	—	Nil
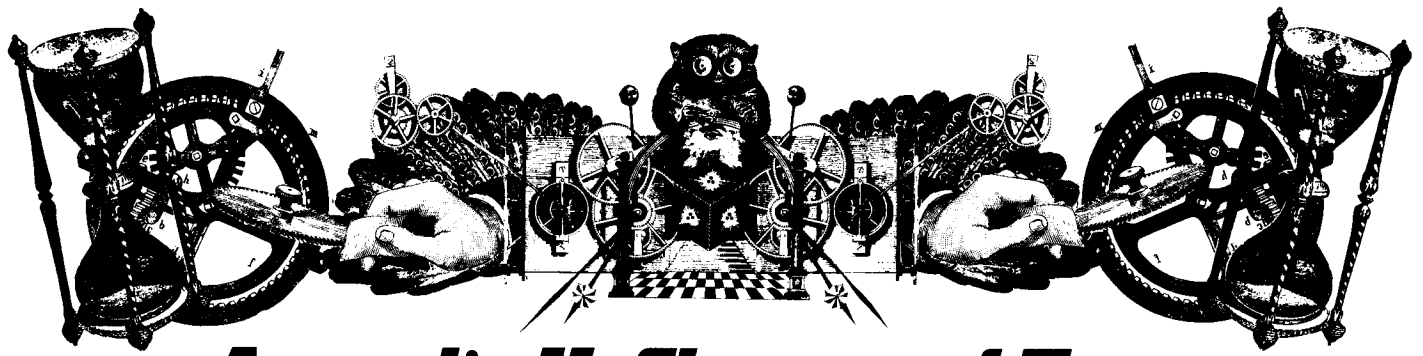
Appendix II: Glossary of Terms

Beat: Analogous to casting time; the time required to perform a given Musical Piece (q.v.).

Clef: Treble or Bass; Musicians (q.v.) can choose to specialize in Pieces from one Clef or the other, if they wish.

Decibel: Measure of energy required to perform a given Musical Piece.

Discord: Musical College espousing chaos and entropy; its followers are called Discordians, their Coda is the Power of Entropy.

Dissonance: The act of attempting to perform a Piece from another Scale (q.v.); this brings penalties to Harmonians (q.v.) and Discordians (q.v.), but not to Melodians (q.v.).

Harmony: Musical College espousing order and integration; its followers are called Harmonians, and their Coda is the Galactos Barrier.

Inner Fifth: The first five lines and spaces on either Staff (q.v.); Pieces that fall here are easier to perform than those in the Outer Fifth (q.v.), and more difficult than those that are Sotto Voce (q.v.); Musicians need no specific training in their use.

Melody: Musical College espousing balance between Discord and Harmony; its followers are called Melodians, and they have no Coda.

Music: Music of the Spheres; the power running through the universe of the Morione Domain, it is controlled by Musicians trained in its use.

Musician: An individual trained in one of the Scales (q.v.) of Music and therefore allied to that Scale, a graduate of one of the Colleges of Music.

Outer Fifth: The outer five lines and spaces on either Staff (q.v.); Pieces that fall here are the most difficult of any to perform (excepting the two Codas) and Musicians must be trained in their use.

**Piece:** Analogous to a magic spell; a specific use of the Music for a certain effect.

Renegade: An individual who is self-educated in use of the Music; such individuals owe no allegiance to any Scale, and any of their number who have gained use of the Outer Fifth are simultaneously shunned and regarded with awe by Musicians from all Scales.

Scale: A given range of Pieces; the three known Scales are Harmonic, Discordian, and Melodic.

Score: All-encompassing term for the Music; includes Scales, Staffs, Pieces, Sotto Voce, and Clefs.

Sotto Voce: Those Pieces that fall between the two Staffs on the Score; these are usable by any Musician of any College, are not part of any known Scale, and are the easiest Pieces to perform.

Staff: Abstract concept to aid Musicians in learning and performing a Piece; the lines and spaces on which Pieces are arranged.
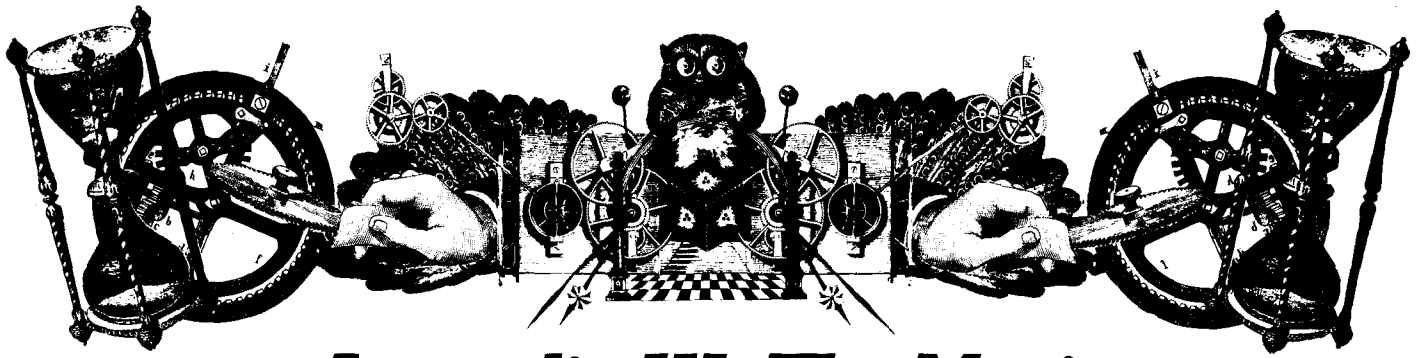
Sotto Voce	Fugue	Jump	Summon
SCALE	HARMONY	MELODY	DISCORD

THE INNER FIFTH

S0100)	Stun$_T$	Create Illusion$_T$	Charm'
	Joining'	Ventriloquism'	Energy Bo ltB
Duet (2)	Danger Sense'	Levitation'	Weaken'
		Misdirect'	
Trio (3)	Readiness'	Melodic ControlT	Suggestion'
	Minor Healing'	Heightened Senses'	Physical Missile'
Quartet (4)	Vision'	Melodic Sight'	Atomic Exploitation'
	Body Cushion'		
Quintet (5)	Shield'	(none)	Atomic Provocation'
	Body ControlT		

THE OUTER FIFTH

Sextet (6)	(none)	Melodic Creation'	Control BodyB
		Adrenalin Rush$_T$	
Septet (7)	(none)	Control Light'	(none)
		MetahearingB	
Octet (8)	Mind-Probe'	Energy Cage$_T$	Wipe$_T$
	Invisibility'	SoundburstB	Complete Control'
Chorale (9)	Elemental Arrangement'	(none)	Explode'
Symphony (10)	Precognition'	Teleport (Other)'	LifedrainB
	Heal'	Teleport (Self)'	
CODA	Galactos Barrier	(none)	Power of Entropy

$_T$ = Treble
B = Bass

Notes: All sotto voce Pieces are equally accessible to Harmonians, Melodians, and Discordians. Each Piece costs 10x its Step in dBs; that is, a Solo Piece costs 10 dBs, while a Chorale (Step 9) costs 90. There may be additional costs per Piece, which are noted in their descriptions.

Appendix IV: Character Sheet

The Galactos Barrier

Player: _____   Date PC Created: _____
Character Name: _____   Profession: _____
Species: _____   Racial Abilities/Quirks: _____

Character Statistics

Ability Pools

Physique: _____   Intellect: _____   Spirit: _____   Influence: _____

Attributes

Fitness: _____   Learning: _____   Psyche: _____   Charm: _____
Reflexes: _____   Intuition: _____   Willpower: _____   Position: _____

Stamina: _____   Body Points: _____   XPs: _____

Musical Ability

Group: _____

Skills

Communications
Personal (L)
Planetary (L)
Interplanetary (L)

Engineering
Electronics (L)
Computers (L)
  Specific Type
Robots (L)
  Specific Type
Mechanical (L)
  Personal
    Firearms
    Miscellaneous
Vehicular
  Planetary
    Specific
  Spacecraft
    Drive
    Power
    Systems
    Weapons

Firearms
Sidearms (R)
Heavy Weaponry (F)

Humanities
Art (I)
History (L)
Languages (L)
Law (L)
Music (I)
  Specific Instrument
Philosophy (L)
  Alien Philosophy

Medicine
Field Medicine (I)
Sick Bay (L)
Xeno-Medicine

Military
Heraldry (L)
Military Protocol (L)
Military Science (L)
Security Systems (I)

Personality
Bluffing (C)
  Gambling (C)
Bribery (C)
Criminal (I)
Deals (C)
Disguise (Po)
Etiquette (C)
Leadership (Po)
Luck (Ps)
Protocol (L)
Psychology (I)

Physical Disciplines
Acrobatics (R)
Archery (R)
Climbing (F)
Gravity Maneuvers
  High Grav (F)
  Low Grav (R)
Hand-to-Hand Combat
  Barehanded (F)
    Brawling (F)
    Martial Arts (R)
  Melee Weapon
    Primitive (f)
    Modern Weapon Type (R)

Stealth (R)
Survival (W)
Swimming (F)
Throwing (R)

Science
Biology (L)
  Xeno-biology
Chemistry (L)
  Biochemistry
Physics (L)
  EPhysics (I)

Vehicles
Gunnery (R)
Navigation (L)
  Planetary
  Interstellar
Piloting (R)
  Specific Vehicle
    Planetary
      Combat (R)
    Space (L)
      Combat (R)
  ESpace (I)
Smuggling (I)

AMAZING

ENGINE
System

THE GALACTOS BARRIER

Daisonne Morione stood on the bridge of her cruiser, surveying the enemy fleet just now becoming visible across the vacuum that separated them. Daringly, the flagship was displaying the colors of the outlawed S'farna pirates. To her left, her first officer bared his fangs in a rare show of emotion.

"We can't allow this affrontery, Emperor! Shall I call for emergency procedures?" The lupiral shook with rage, barely contained despite his years of Domain service.

"That won't be necessary, Sho. Please, continue watching the screen." Daisonne's voice held steady, its timbre betraying nothing. She gestured calmly. "There, at ninety. Watch that glow."

The bright spot in question grew larger, encompassing most of the fleet in its brilliance. As the glow faded, the fleet reappeared—no longer metallic and shining, as it had been only moments earlier, but stony gray and dull. All motion had ceased; no lights blinked, no tracking devices swiveled.

"Our Harmonian has performed his Coda well," intoned Daisonne Morione. The Galactos Barrier had been played upon the enemy fleet, and the music of the spheres had been their swan song.

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