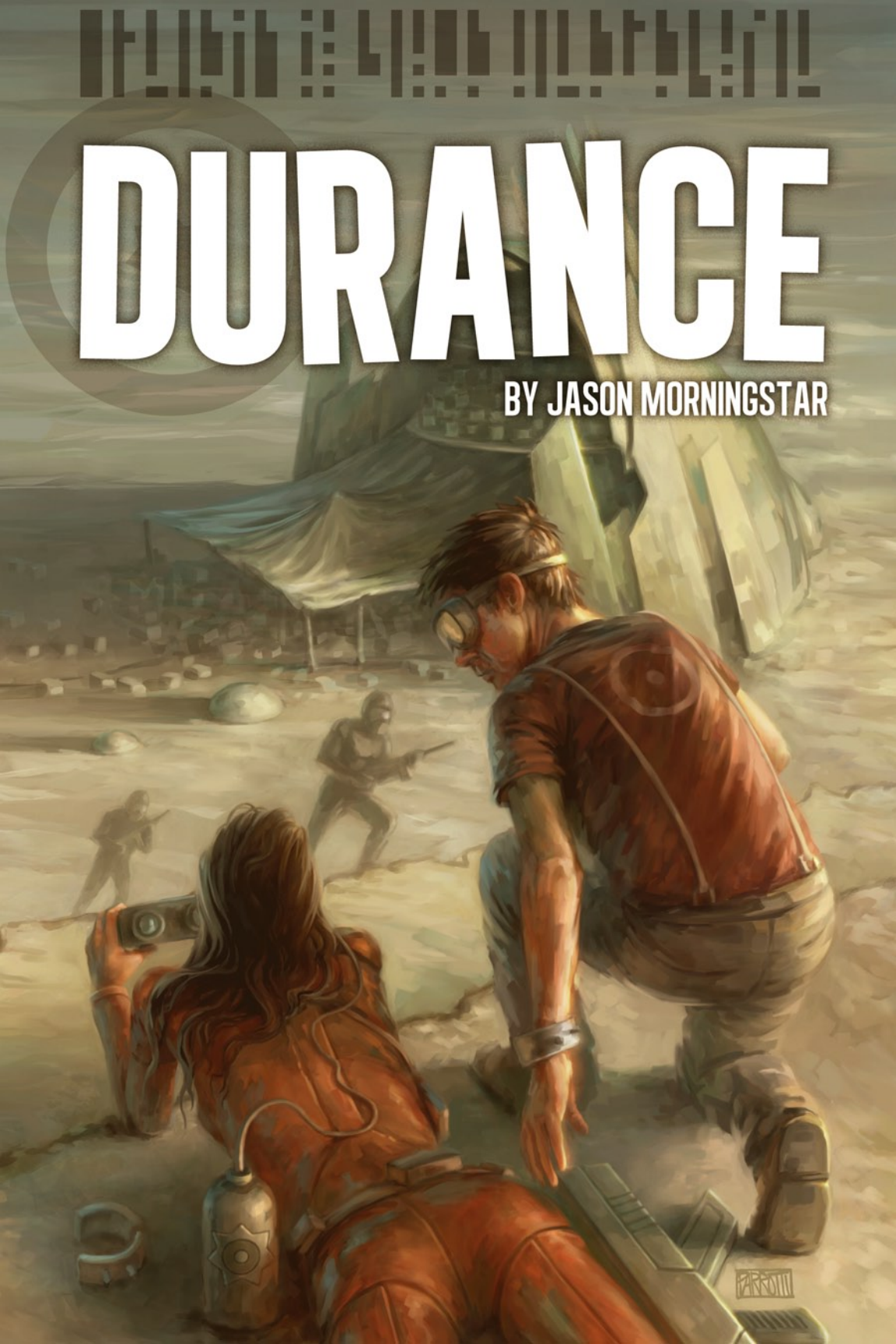


DURANCE

BY JASON MORNINGSTAR





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BY JASON MORNINGSTAR

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CLEMENCY IS RECOMMENDED.

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Her Excellency the Governor.

Sketched while she was having tea with the garrison, a goodwill gesture after the Judge Advocate ruled against our Captain Usham in favor of some lags. She wears the uniform, but she never earned it. Prisoners don't need a friend - they need a fucking boot.

Let us do our
job
you fool!



ABOUT DURANCE

A QUICK AND DIRTY OVERVIEW OF THE GAME

WHAT IS THE GAME ABOUT?

On a remote planet far from civilization, the worst criminal scum from a dozen star systems have been dumped, charged with building new lives under the watchful eye of Authority. Within a brutal hierarchy of savagery and servility, convicts and guards alike must make hard choices. Every colonist has their own code of conduct and their own aspirations—aspirations that invariably come at the expense of others. This dangerous new world is too small for everyone to succeed. In fact, it may well be too small for anyone to succeed. Only the shrewdest, the toughest and the luckiest will get a chance to find out. Will you be among them?

HOW MANY PEOPLE CAN PLAY?

Between three and five is a good number; four is perfect. There is no Game Master as you might find in other games; instead, those roles and responsibilities are shared among the players, with everyone taking a turn as the Guide of a scene.

One player—the person who proposed playing or knows the game best—will be the Host. This person will be responsible for explaining rules and making sure everything runs smoothly. Since you are reading this, you will probably be the Host.

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?

At a minimum, one evening, somewhere between two and four hours. If the story needs more room to breath, you can spread it over a few sessions. Tips for speeding things up can be found on page 29.

HOW DO WE LEARN THE RULES?

As long as one person has a general understanding of how Durance works, your group can learn as you go. It's a pretty simple game. Ideally, the Host should read the background, the rules, and the Replay [page 41] thoroughly. When in doubt, look to the Step by Step [page 129] and handouts provided for the game.

The mark of all convicts.
Looks like a target,
don't it?
Wonder why.



The Dimber Damber humors my drawing habit.
Not a care in the world, the smile of a murderer
Untouchable.

ABOUT THE COLONY

AN OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORY AND REALITIES OF
COLONIAL LIFE IN THE GALACTIC ANTIPODES

BEYOND THE GREAT STELLAR RIFT

By Joses Bonney, Faculty of History, Arpanyari-Friendship University, Saqqara

In the early 300s, Authority had a criminal problem.

Across dozens of systems, prisons were overflowing with habitual criminals too hardened to re-integrate into lawful society but not heinous enough to simply execute. They were a teeming mob of recidivist thieves, thugs, fanatics, swindlers and whores. Many were crammed aboard decommissioned orbital hulks, effectively unsupervised. It was a disgraceful political scandal that reached its peak simultaneously with the historic voyages of discovery. Authority-funded vessels had crossed the Great Stellar Rift and hurriedly catalogued thousands of new worlds, many of them ripe for colonization but unimaginably distant.

Why not, certain small but insistent voices within government reasoned, solve two problems at once? Why not dispatch Authority's unwanted refuse to a distant star and put them to work for the betterment of Authority? Why not establish a penal colony somewhere—anywhere—across the Great Stellar Rift? Let the prisoners work and build themselves a better life, and in the process build Authority a new outpost at the leading edge of empire.

There was something in the proposal for everybody. Reformers, who hated the orbital hulks, were mollified by the stirring image of convicts striving to remake themselves on an untamed planet. The political class breathed a sigh of relief as the criminal problem literally vanished. Authority could look forward to a base of operations on the far side of the Rift, extending influence in a largely unexplored region brimming with opportunity. Best of all, in time a colony would support itself and perhaps even return a tidy profit to the governmental coffers that founded it. The idea enjoyed popular support, the way that a mop in somebody else's hands enjoys popular support.

To say that planetary surveyors were enthusiastic is perhaps too kind. Their optimism resulted in many deaths across the Great Rift, as favorable conditions were overplayed and hazards missed, misunderstood, or willfully omitted from reports.



Nobody took a second look at the initial surveys. The planet would be good enough, Authority reasoned. Nobody did the math regarding sustainability and worst-case scenarios.

No one consulted the civil servants tasked with managing a penal colony, nor the marines sent to maintain order. Certainly nobody consulted the convicts themselves, who as a rule lacked any useful skills.

The First Fleet departed in 320, and the result was a horrific lesson in political expediency, good intentions and very bad planning.

HOW THE WORLD WAS SUPPOSED TO WORK

The transport ships of the First Fleet carried with them the rudiments for a colony—at least what Authority imagined a penal colony would look like. The goal from the very beginning was self-sufficiency. An initial foothold would turn into a viable colony and, eventually, a successful member of Authority's interstellar commonwealth. The convicts were given three broad mandates:

EAT WHAT YOU GROW

The colony had only enough stored food to sustain itself until agriculture could be brought online. The form local food production took would vary, based on the chosen planet. It might be fields of grain or an algae farm. Regardless, those who did not work would not eat.

DO YOUR OWN TIME

Convicts had sentences ranging from seven years to life, but the brutal reality was that no one would ever be going home. Authority could emancipate those who served their sentences, those who worked hard, and those who honestly sought to better themselves and their new home. For those who chose to continue their criminal ways there would be only punishment and misery.

LOOK TO THE FUTURE

In the moment there was hard, honest work to be done, but it would not be in vain. Some day the planet would be a rich agricultural world, an outpost of empire. The children of convicts would be free citizens and proud to call it home.

HOW THE WORLD ACTUALLY WORKS

The three convict mandates have rapidly deteriorated into something more pragmatic.

EAT WHAT YOU CAN

Food supplies are running short. Local flora and fauna are inedible. The imported plants that do grow are sickly and stunted. Agricultural goals have, to put it mildly, not been met. The colony is slowly starving to death, and everyone knows it.

DO WHAT YOU'RE TOLD

Measures to curb food theft have done little but enrich the criminal elite. The underworld hierarchy has been imported intact and the power of the colony's shadow ruler, the "Dimber Damber"—the deceptively playful title of the colony's criminal shadow governor—is at least as dreadful as that of Authority and the actual Governor. Put bluntly, it's knuckle under or be killed.

LOOK TO YOUR NEXT MEAL

"Fatal optimism" best describes the initial planetary survey. Fully half the rated habitability values were just plain wrong. The planet is ludicrously difficult where it isn't implacably hostile, and the only "future" to aspire to is surviving the night.



There are few things more pleasing than the contemplation of order and useful arrangement.

-Governor Arthur Phillip

HOW SOCIETY WAS SUPPOSED TO WORK

The colony was envisioned as an armed camp under civilian administration. It was to remain such until free colonists substantially outnumbered convicts through growth and emancipation. A governor was installed as Authority's benevolent voice.

Beneath the Governor, a rudimentary judicial system was established, echoing Authority practices everywhere. Criminal offenses would be brought before the Judge Advocate, whose sentences would in turn be meted out by the Governor's dutiful servant, the Captain of Marines, in accordance with the law.

Free men and women, initially scarce, were expected to immigrate in floods once the colony got off the ground. Settlers and scientists, it was reasoned, would directly benefit the fledgling colony. They would form the nucleus of civilization in a wild and unsettled land, and the Governor was specifically charged with providing convict labor to further their sanctioned goals. It was hoped that marines, necessary to maintain order and security for everyone, would see the benefit of remaining in the colony as gentleman planters when their enlistments ended. To this end, many were encouraged to bring their spouses and families.

Convicts were to be worked hard for the betterment of all. Treatment would be necessarily severe but fair. Those who were willing to do their share would stand to gain from the colony's success. Hard workers could expect emancipation and forgiveness and a rise into the Swell class. The labor of those who have served their sentences would be their own, with the full support of Authority.

Standing between the twin pillars of honest toil and the rule of law, convicts would be given the unprecedented opportunity to shape their own destiny on a virgin planet.



Should I chance to meet the surveyor who pronounced this planet inhabitable I shall commit murder without a second thought and gladly return a lag.

—Lieutenant Fortson Wilkes

HOW SOCIETY ACTUALLY WORKS: THE LADDER

Colonial society is like a ladder. Two ladders, actually, lashed together by miserable circumstance. On one side is Authority—the power of the distant government and her not-so-distant marines. The other represents the vast constellation of criminal enterprise, in opposition and concordance. They are lashed together so tightly that, at times, one cannot be distinguished from the other. One is right and one is, well, wrong, but if you are at the top that hardly matters. And the boldest men do hop to and fro, don't they? Climbing the Ladder means safety, comfort and a full belly. Getting kicked down a rung means the opposite, to put it mildly.

In describing colonial society, let's start at the very top of the Ladder and work our way down the rungs. Note that with the exception of lags and sables, gender is utterly irrelevant to these positions and titles.



AUTHORITY CONVICTS



THE GOVERNOR

Leader of the colony

THE DIMBER DAMBER

Criminal Overlord

FUNCTIONARIES

Judge & Captain of Marines

MINIONS

The Abbot and Captain Sharp

SWELLS

Free spouses & merchants

BOLTERS

Runaways—convict heroes

COLONIAL MARINES

The brutal hands of Authority

LAGS AND SABLES

Thieves, whores, and murderers

EMANCIPISTS

Former convicts, conditionally free

WRECKERS AND CRAWLERS

Political prisoners and outcasts

TOP RUNG

⚙️ THE GOVERNOR

The Governor is perched at the apex of colonial society, a solitary and singular figure of enormous power and influence, at least in theory. As military commander as well as civilian overseer, the Governor's word—quite literally—is law. Whether a soft-hearted tool or a megalomaniacal villain, the Governor is always well fed and can kill with a word. The Governor's full title is "Governor and Commander in Chief of the Territory and of Authority's Ships and Vessels Employed Beyond the Great Rift."

🕒 THE DIMBER DAMBER

As criminal-in-chief as well as overseer of the illicit economy in goods and services, the Dimber Damber's word—metaphorically, at least—is law. Whether a calculating business executive or a murderous dictator, the Dimber Damber is always well fed and can kill with a word. The Dimber Damber's full title among convicts, in willful mockery of the Governor's, is "Golden Sovereign of the Canting Mob, Monarch of All Wrong, Supreme and Utter Potentate of Lagdom and Exalted Master of Sables."

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Perhaps the only difference between these two is that the Governor is addressed as His or Her Excellency. That one defers to the other in a delicate dance of power is a given. Neither can control their half of the Ladder without the tacit cooperation of the other. They are never friends but they often get along famously. When one is weak the other is invariably a monster.

SECOND RUNG

⚙️ CAPTAIN OF MARINES

The Captain of Marines is the colony's Lieutenant Governor and, at least in theory, the Governor's strong right arm and trusted confidante. Although subordinate to the Governor, the Captain has ample muscle to be flexed at will in the form of the entire marine garrison. The Captain is charged with maintaining order, if not law, and has

arrest powers that extend to everyone save the Governor. A decent, honest Captain of Marines can save a colony from itself. A venal, brutal, corrupt one is a nightmare from the deepest pits of Hell.

JUDGE ADVOCATE

The Judge Advocate is the colony's magistrate, the literal voice of civilization and jurisprudence. The Judge Advocate is authorized to impanel marine officers to form courts martial (a hugely unpopular task) and pass judgment on capital cases among the convicts. The Judge Advocate is charged with maintaining law, if not order, and is duty-bound to prosecute Authority and convict law-breakers with equal vigor. A sentence of death is within the range of acceptable punishments, and only the Judge Advocate can legally remove the Governor from office. An active Judge Advocate who takes the job seriously can be a hero (or a corpse) in short order.

CAPTAIN SHARP

The Dimber Damber's chief lieutenant, Captain Sharp bears a title that is a deliberate mockery of rank and power. Captain Sharp is, more often than not, a homicidal thug and paragon of corruption and violence used to extort and enforce the Dimber Damber's will. There is no such thing as a "good" Captain Sharp. Any convict (and in many colonies, emancipist, swell or even marine) who fails to respect the Dimber Damber will have a short, unpleasant visit from Captain Sharp.

THE ABBOT

The Abbot (the title is fixed regardless of gender) is the Dimber Damber's licentious left hand, procurer and purveyor of all vice within the colony. Drugs, gambling, prostitution, luxury items, food theft—the Abbot has a hand in all these, and more, dutifully kicking back the profits to the Dimber Damber. For those who need an audience with (or mercy from) the Dimber Damber, appeals to and through the Abbot are the usual route.

WHO IS REALLY IN CHARGE?

Convicts view the minions of both the Governor and the Dimber Damber as demented gods to whom obeisance is due. Everyone in the colony knows that between the four of them any wish may be granted and any dream may be permanently and lethally crushed.

THIRD RUNG

SWELLS

Swells are free men and women who settled in the colony for perverse reasons of their own. They paid their own way, seeking an opportunity or running away from one.

Some swells are professionals. They might be employees of Authority, but with interests well outside their assigned duties. A competent doctor typically isn't drawn to low-paying work half a universe away from civilization. An upright clergyman typically wants a little church somewhere, not a congregation of foul-mouthed whores and murderers. Others are speculators and entrepreneurs—hard-eyed men who run a “mercantile” or businesswomen who dream of harnessing the planet's uranium reserves.

Some swells are planters. Whether actually planting crops, running vast hydroponic farms, or managing underground mushroom pits, planters are tied to the land—whatever that means—and their prosperity is commingled with that of the colony. For this reason, Planters are assigned convict laborers to work in their various schemes. Those best loved by the Governor tend to have the largest and most motivated workforces.

Some swells are spouses, married to members of Authority. A few marines and functionaries have brought spouses—free citizens—to the colony. For the morally flexible among this rarefied class, astonishing power is a tempting reward for services rendered. Some find colonial life stifling, retreating into domesticity and terror, and others strike out on their own in surprising ways.

Swells are always a nut to be cracked, and the one doing the cracking stands to gain a useful ally, a bitter enemy, or a frightful mess.

BOLTERS

The colony's celebrated outlaws are known as bolters—because they have well and truly bolted. Sometimes convicts (and occasionally marines) chuck it all, running away from the settlement toward a short but eventful life in the wilderness. The minute they run they become high-priority criminal targets, and those that haunt the colony's fringes form menacing gangs that the marines hunt for sport. To the convicts, bolters are outlaw heroes. To swells, and particularly emancipists, they are a plague. Bolters range from Robin Hood-like crusaders to cannibal lunatics.

WHO WANTS A TASTE OF POWER?

For the most successful among the swells, the pull of Authority power is tempting. Many long to enter the Governor's service, combining their wealth with new-found power in a heady mixture. A few have the arrogance to want the Governor's job for themselves.

FOURTH RUNG**✪ MARINES**

Marines are here because they listened to the siren song of a lying recruiter. They are as effectively imprisoned as the convicts they guard. They are commanded by the Captain of Marines, and depending on their leader's temperament and inclinations they may be professional soldiers or ragged criminals themselves. Regardless, they are the biggest gang in town. The marine ranks, from lowest to highest, are private, lance corporal, corporal, and sergeant. There are also two officers with the rank of lieutenant.

◎ LAGS AND SABLES

Lags and Sables are men and women convicted of crimes against Authority important enough to merit severe punishment but trivial enough to prevent their summary execution. In practice this means they are thieves, con artists, highway robbers, and burglars. They have been convicted of crimes ranging from petty theft and burglary to manslaughter. Each has received a sentence of either seven years, fourteen years, or life.

Few of these convicts have worked an honest day in their lives and none of them know which end of a plant is up. They are, nonetheless, tough men and women tempered by the brutal realities of their imprisonment, voyage, and current dire circumstances. Lags and sables owe allegiance first and foremost to the Dimber Damber, who wouldn't have it any other way.

One ugly reality of prison life is that many convicts must form sexual liaisons with more powerful colonists—other convicts, marines, functionaries, or criminal bosses—who can protect them. For the luckiest and cleverest this is a short-term arrangement. For the rest it is a lifetime of servitude and misery.

ALL CUT FROM THE SAME CLOTH, AREN'T THEY?

Lags, sables, and marines were schooled in the worst aspects of human nature across 250 days of transport, and all share a general background in the underclass. The chain of stupidity and grief that brought most to this juncture is long and unbroken. They are hard, hungry, grasping people.

BOTTOM RUNG

EMANCIPISTS

Emancipists are freed convicts who have made their peace with Authority and earned their freedom, their "Ticket of Leave." Most become modest planters and all are haunted by their past actions and allegiances. The Ticket-of-Letter is conditional, and a single word from an Authority functionary will put them back in chains. Although emancipists can be awarded lag slave labor, few enjoy this perk, and the ones that do are doubly despised by all convicts as traitors to their station. "Free" means very little to the ex-convict, and they will never have a place in polite colonial society [although perhaps their children will, one day].

WRECKERS

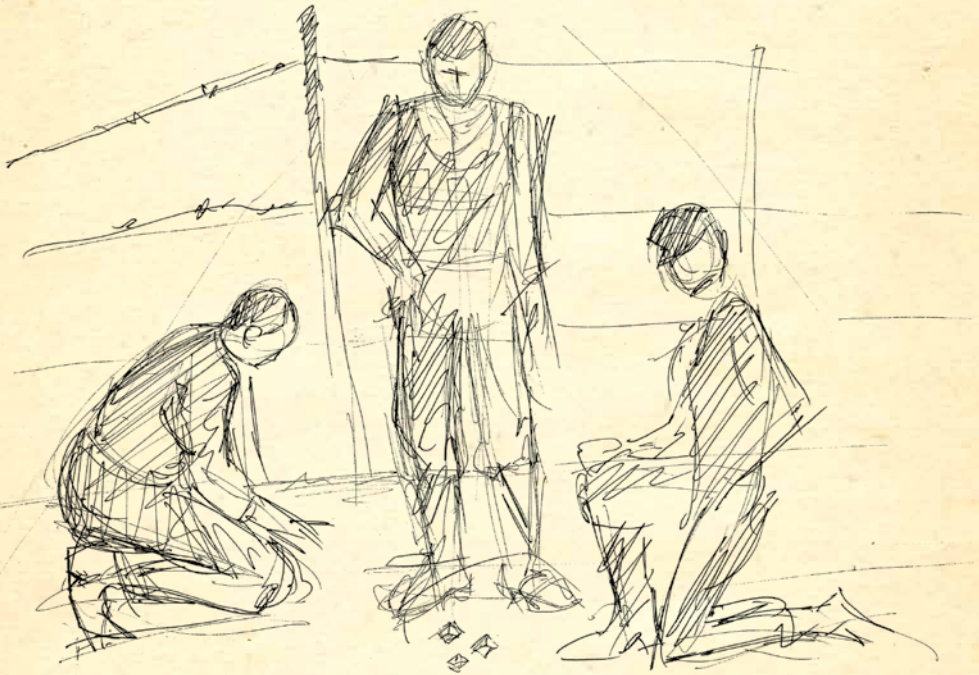
Wreckers are political prisoners and troublemakers. They are universally hated by Authority and lagdom alike, because their dangerous ideas have ruined entire planets. Whether their beliefs are religious, political, or simply philosophical, their words infect other colonists and undermine the established order of both the Authority and convict worlds. Wreckers are often assigned to swells to do back-breaking manual labor, usually as punishment.

CRAWLERS

Any lag who survives long enough becomes a crawler, the most useless of all. Crawlers are the broken, the aged, the infirm and the insane. No one pays crawlers any mind.

WHAT ABOUT ALIENS?

There weren't supposed to be any intelligent natives, but planetary surveys are often wrong. Any natives that do exist are different from the colonists in every particular—they are truly *alien*. They are operating, at least on the surface, at a very primitive level; fire-hardened spears are an apex technology among them. But they should not be underestimated. Although justifiably terrified and enraged by the new arrivals, they are not stupid. They can certainly figure out how to use guns, and they know their own planet very well indeed.



My squad shooting dice
and killing time, waiting
for orders.



Usham,
my boss,
bit of a clown.

Good man in a bad
situation. He tries to have a sense of
humor about it, make all the squads
laugh. I think the Governor is grinding
him down, and I hate to see it. He
wears that ridiculous emancipist's jacket
all the time now, never in uniform.
Morale is pretty low.

PREPARING TO PLAY

GENERATING YOUR PLANET, COLONY, CHARACTERS, AND INITIAL SITUATION

This section is directed to you, the Host. It assumes that, as the one reading the rules, you'll also be the one scheduling your friends, arranging a space, preparing and, well, *hosting*. What follows is a step-by-step guide that, should you follow it, will get you prepared to play *Durance* in about fifteen minutes.

STEP ONE: HOUSEKEEPING

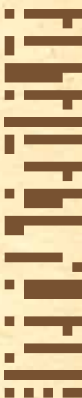
GATHERING THE MATERIALS YOU'LL NEED TO PLAY

As Host, make sure everything necessary for play is on hand, delegating where desired. You will need to arrange the intangibles of happy play—a comfortable space and snacks—as well as the materials necessary for *Durance*. These are:

- a copy of these rules,
- a printout of the Planetary Survey and Colonial Record worksheet [to be filled in during step two] and the Uncertainty Triangle sheet [Step Three],
- a printout of the Colonial Notables sheet [Steps Four and Five],
- a few pencils for filling out the handouts above,
- and three six-sided dice in different colors to put on the Uncertainty Triangle sheet.

These worksheets can be found starting on page 124. You will also need to reference the Name, Oath, and Event lists [page 106] during play, so you can either print those out or simply refer to the book when you need them. In addition, small sticky notes, index cards, and markers will be useful but are not essential.

Orient all the players to the necessary steps prior to play [see the Step by Step section on page 129 for a quick summary]. As a group you will be filling out the Planetary Survey and Colonial Record, Uncertainty Triangle and Colonial Notables sheets, taking turns adding details until your colony and its inhabitants emerge.



PLANETARY SURVEY

Atmosphere is excellent.

Geology is stable.

Biology is benign.

UTS	
A	B
C	D
E	F

Climate is mild.

Hydrology is favorable.

Intelligent life is absent.

COLONIAL RECORD

Planning is meticulous.

Workforce is motivated.

Order is well-established.

UCR	
U	V
W	X
Y	Z

Density is low.

Prosperity is high.

Justice is universal.

WHAT DRIVES US IS...

CONTROL

HARMONY

STATUS

SAFETY



PLANETARY SURVEY

Atmosphere is excellent.

~~Geology is stable.~~

~~Biology is benign.~~

UTS	
A	B
C	D
E	F

Hydrology is favorable.

COLONIAL RECORD

~~Planning is meticulous.~~

~~Order is well-established.~~

UCR	
U	V
W	X
Y	Z

Prosperity is high.

Justice is universal.

WHAT DRIVES US IS...

~~CONTROL~~

~~STATUS~~

SAFETY

~~HARMONY~~

~~INDULGENCE~~

~~FREEDOM~~

The Planetary Survey result is ADE, **Oakes Two**. The Colonial Record result is WXZ, **Corrective Colony 14**. The chosen Drive is **Safety**.

STEP TWO: PLANETARY SURVEY AND COLONIAL RECORD

CREATING YOUR PLANET AND COLONY BY COMBINING INDIVIDUAL CHOICES INTO AN EXCITING WHOLE

The Planetary Survey and Colonial Record worksheet includes a pair of checklists with the twelve assessments necessary for a successful settlement on an alien world. Half of these relate to the planet itself and half relate to life in the new colony. In ideal circumstances all twelve are favorable. In Durance exactly half are—the planet is dangerous and the colony is already falling apart. As a group you will decide how.

Start with the planet. Without adding anything yourself, hand the Planetary Survey to the player on your left and ask them to choose one of the six assessments that is truly favorable and circle it. Then have them choose one that is false and cross it out. For example, the player might decide that your planet has a pleasant Atmosphere [A] but terrible Geology [C]. In this case they'd circle "Atmosphere is excellent" and cross out "Geology is stable."

Once the first player has chosen, they pass it along to the player on their left. This person chooses two more planetary assessments and again passes it to the left. The next player will decide which of the two remaining Planetary Survey assessments is favorable and which is not, and your planet is complete. After the third player chooses, the three letters associated with the favorable categories, such as ADE or BDF, form your planet's Universal Terrestrial Survey [UTS].

Once your Planetary Survey is done, repeat these steps—starting with the next player in rotation—to fill out the Colonial Record. As the Host, you take a turn like any other player. Have each person choose a true and a false assessment as before and at the end you'll have determined your Universal Colonial Record [UCR].

When finished, look up your planet and colony [Planetary Surveys begin on page 57 and Colonial Records begin on page 83], based on the letter combinations you have collectively chosen. Write the names in the appropriate sections on the Uncertainty Triangle sheet, and read the descriptions and optional details aloud. Take a moment as a group to pitch ideas and brainstorm about the colony and the planet upon which it has been established.

A NEW PLANET...

PLANET NAME

... OUR NEW HOME ...

COLONY NAME

AND UNCERTAINTY...

SERVILITY SAVAGERY

DRIVE



The filled out
Uncertainty
Triangle sheet with
three dice placed
on it, ready for play!

A NEW PLANET...

PLANET NAME **OAKES TWO**

... OUR NEW HOME ...

COLONY NAME

CORRECTIVE COLONY 14

AND UNCERTAINTY...

SERVILITY SAVAGERY

DRIVE

SAFETY

STEP THREE: DRIVES

DEFINING YOUR SESSION'S MOOD AND ATMOSPHERE

Dramatic situations are resolved in *Durance* using the Uncertainty Triangle, which consists of three Drives. Two of the Drives, Savagery and Servility, represent the explicit and implicit exercise of power. They are universal constants in all penal colonies and are pre-set. The third point on the Uncertainty Triangle, the unique Drive that serves as counterpoint to Savagery and Servility, shapes the nature of your nascent colonial society. Because this Drive is a vital part of the game's resolution mechanism, your choice will strongly influence your game's overall feel.

Continuing from where you left off in the rotation, hand the Planetary Survey and Colonial Record worksheet to the next player and ask them to cross off one of the six Drive options. They will have Control, Status, Safety, Harmony, Indulgence, and Freedom to choose from, and should eliminate the option they find least interesting.

Continue passing the sheet around the table, with each player in turn crossing off a Drive option. Eventually only one will remain, and that will be the unique Drive for your game. Write the name of your Drive down in the appropriate box on the Uncertainty Triangle sheet next to Savagery and Servility.

As a group, take a moment to imagine how the third Drive you chose will be reflected within the colony. Does concern over safety permeate every waking moment? Does a culture of status games extend to the highest levels? Your chosen third Drive can be reflected in many forms within the game. Harmony might mean mercy toward the helpless or kindness toward the weak, but it may also take the form of a pragmatic visionary who accepts short-term cruelty as the price of long-term survival. Freedom can be literal—shrugging off the oppressive yoke of Authority—or metaphorical. Perhaps death is the ultimate freedom.



I have outlived that care that curries public favour or dreads the public frown... let the hand of law strike me down if it will, but I ask that my story be heard and considered.

—Ned Kelly

STEP FOUR: NOTABLES

CREATING A VIBRANT CAST OF COLONIAL NOTABLES

Notables are your cast of characters and the focus of the game. During play you and the other players will each advocate for the notables you create. It is likely you will also portray them in scenes, but they are fragile tools that other players can use in the service of the overall story. Your notables might even die [see page 38]. In short, don't get too attached to any one character—that's why you've got two!

After deciding on your game's unique Drive, grab the Colonial Notables sheet and put it down in front of the players. Explain the concept of the Ladder, which is that the notables are split between Authority and Convicts [vertically] and into rungs of power [horizontally]. The result is ten different positions on which rest the various roles that notables play in the colony drama.

Once everyone is clear on the concept, hand the sheet to the next player in rotation. Ask them to choose a role that interests them.

Once the role is chosen, the player should write down a name for the notable in that position. There's a list of names you are encouraged to use [See page 106]. Continue rotating until every player has named one notable.

When everyone has written down one notable, each player will, in turn, choose a role for a second notable on the opposite side and in a different position on the Ladder from their first. This rule means you cannot claim the Governor and a Marine [both Authority], or the Governor and the Dimber Damber [same rung on the Ladder] as your characters. Write down a name for this notable as before.

Note that in a five player game every spot will be filled, so pay attention: The last player in sequence won't have any choice, so care must be taken that their default is not in conflict with the rules.

NOTABLE DETAILS

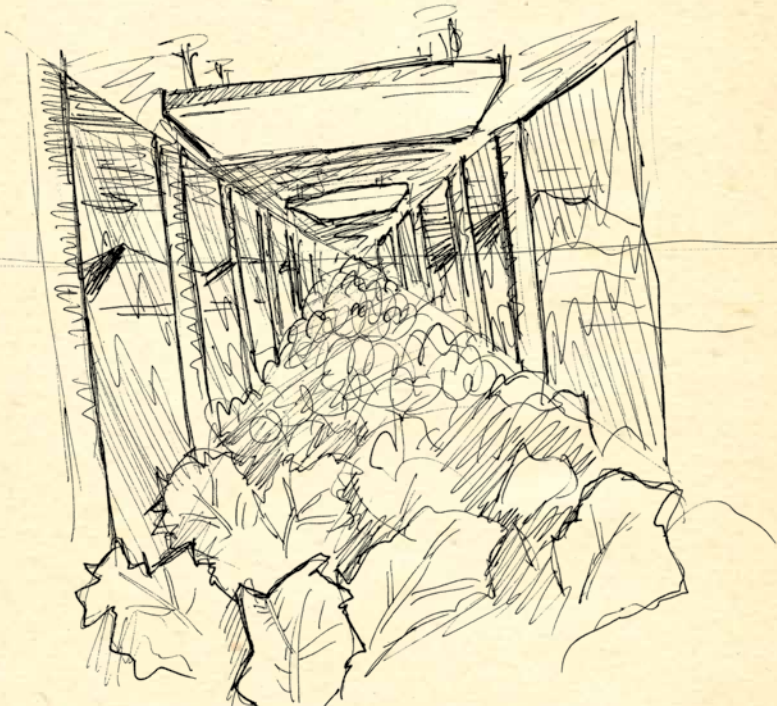
Any character in any position on the Ladder can be male, female, or something in between. If the role has further options, such as the Minion or Functionary role, choose the specific descriptor as you name the character. For example, the Functionary can either be the Judge Advocate or Captain of Marines. If you are creating a Marine, choose a rank [private, lance corporal, corporal, sergeant or lieutenant]. Swells need a little definition, too—a spouse? A planter? A professional?

MAKING CONNECTIONS

As you are filling out the Colonial Notables sheet, think about how the character you're making will relate to the others already created. Don't be shy about creating implicit relationships within or across hierarchies. Where do they work, and who do they work for? Giving a Bolter and the Captain of Marines the same surname leads to fantastic opportunities—are they married? Perhaps brother and sister?

ESTABLISHING ORDER

After every player has written down two notables, the player of the highest-ranking notable on the Authority side (most likely the Governor) should announce how convicts are identified, processed and tracked. Do they wear uniforms, and perhaps Authority Uniglot barcodes? Are there biometric devices implanted? This player should assign each Convict character a unique number and write it on the notables sheet.



Rigged-up greenhouse.

WHAT SHOULD WE BE THINKING ABOUT AS WE FLESH OUT OUR NOTABLES?

GOVERNOR

How did you come to be in charge of this colony? What measures will you take to keep the colony alive and ensure its success?

CAPTAIN OF MARINES

What does order mean in the colony, and what steps are you willing to take to enforce it? Where does your true allegiance lie?

JUDGE ADVOCATE

What does justice mean in the colony, and how will you ensure that your sentences are carried out?

SWELL

What twist of fate brought you to this colony? What do you seek to gain, and who must you ally with in order to gain it?

FREE SPOUSE

What is your relationship with your partner? Why has that brought you to the colony, and what are you are going to do about it?

MARINE

Who owns you: The rule of law, your commander the Captain of Marines, or the natural leader of people of your station, the Dimber Damber? What does your choice mean to the other two, and how will it help you better your position on the Ladder?

EMANCIPIST

What was your crime, and why were you freed? What debts and resources do you carry with you from your old life as a convict, and how will they interfere with your peaceful future?

DIMBER DAMBER

What was your crime, and what is your sentence? Who do you trust? How will you maintain control of the criminal masses while *gaining* control of Authority?

CAPTAIN SHARP OR THE ABBOT

What was your crime, and what is your sentence? What are the practical limits of your loyalty to the Dimber Damber, and what do you *really* want?

BOLTER

What was your crime? How did you escape, and why? Who did you leave behind? How you are going to stay alive?

LAG

What was your crime, and what is your sentence? What is the niche you have carved out in order to survive? What terrible things have you done in the carving of it, and who have you betrayed? How are you going to escape lagdom—shall you go up, out, or over?

SABLE

What was your crime, and what is your sentence? Who have you aligned yourself with, and who have you destroyed? What matters most to you? How are you are going to get it?

WRECKER

What was your crime, and what is your sentence? What is the core of your Wrecker beliefs? How will you tear the colony down?

CRAWLER

What was your crime, and what is your sentence? How have you collapsed—age, infirmity, insanity? What does that mean about your past, and your future? What will be your final act in life?

STEP FIVE: OATHS

AUTHORING OATHS FOR THE COLONY'S NOTABLES

An Oath is something a character has sworn never to do, and in this step you and the other players will choose them for your notables. An Oath should be a very serious thing, and it should be something that will conflict with your colony's unique Drive.

An Oath is something to be challenged—it should motivate the other players to create difficult situations for the notable. If you choose "I will never wear chains again" as an Oath, you are asking everyone else to put that character in situations where returning to convict life is tempting, or even essential. Outward-facing Oaths that involve other characters are better than inward-facing ones for this reason.

SWEARING OATHS

Continuing with the rotation, hand the Colonial Notables sheet to the next player and ask them to choose one of the notables. Then have them consult the list of Oaths [see page 108] and select one—the one thing the notable has sworn they will never do as long as they draw breath. Write this Oath down on that notables position on the sheet. The format is:

Everyone wants [UNIQUE DRIVE], but I will never [OATH] to get it.

Note that while you can assign an Oath for any notable, including your own, adding Oaths for characters played by others is more fun and makes for a better story. Surprise them!

Continue rotating the Colonial Notables sheet around the table, with each player writing down a unique "I will never" Oath for a named colonial notable. When every player's two characters have Oaths, take the sheet back as Host. The pre-game work is nearly over.

WHAT ARE SOME RELIABLY GOOD OATHS?

Good oaths look like this:

- ♦ I will never betray my beloved [person or group].
- ♦ I will never kill a man.
- ♦ I will never disgrace my position, office or uniform.

A more complete list can be found on page 108. You can, of course, invent your own if you prefer.

STEP SIX: WRAPPING UP

SOLIDIFYING YOUR INITIAL SITUATION

At this point you have a planet and colony chosen, and you know what drives the colonists. Each player has created two characters, and each character has a solemn and unbreakable oath. Now take a moment to talk about all these details and flesh out your colony together.

What is the planet like? Guided by the description and details, agree on a general look and feel. Perhaps establish a few landmarks and interesting features, like seasonal rains of sulfuric acid or bushes that shoot thorns like rifle bullets.

What is the colony like? What does technology look like here? How has the nature of the planet changed it? Choose some details or make up your own to fit the colony into the setting and paint a picture.

Finally, take a moment to discuss the relationships implicit among the colonial notables you've created. Many will be obvious but some may be tantalizingly subtle. Some will only emerge in play, and others may never have any relationship at all.

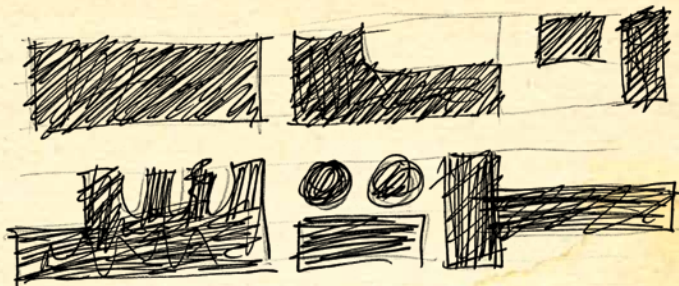
As the Host, take this time to fill in names for any blank positions on the Colonial Notables sheet. In a four-player game there will be two. You do not need to establish additional details for these characters, and they do not get Oaths for the time being. These un-authored characters will be up for grabs if the players' notables die [see "If a Notable Dies" page 38].

As you wrap up the discussion, place the Uncertainty Triangle sheet in the center of the table. Roll the dice to set initial values for each of Savagery, Servility, and your chosen Drive, placing each die in its corresponding box on the Uncertainty Triangle.

That's it—you're ready to play!

CAN WE SPEED THIS UP?

As an alternative to the turn-taking method, there's nothing wrong with flipping through the book and choosing your planet and colony from their descriptions, or to open up the assessment process and collaborate at each step. This will remove the element of uncertainty and surprise, but for a group that has a few games of Durance under their belt it can speed things up. This applies to the entire preparation process; if you choose to hash out your planet and colony all at once as a group, you can do the same with Drive and even notables if you like.



Mr. Lawson -
first-rank Swell and
Confidante of
Her Excellency. An
irredeemable Bastard who works his legs to
death.

"The law locks up the man who steals the
goose from the common, but leaves the greater
criminal loose who steals the common from the goose."

PLAYING DURANCE

BEING THE GUIDE, NOT BEING THE GUIDE, AND DEALING WITH UNCERTAINTY, TRANSITION AND DEATH

GUIDING THE SCENE

STARTING TROUBLE AND WATCHING IT UNFOLD

Starting again with yourself as the Host and rotating clockwise, each player in turn will be the Guide of a scene. You get to be Guide first because you probably understand the game and its setting best. If somebody else is itching to go first, by all means let them.

As the Guide, your job is to shine the spotlight on some interesting notables, Oaths, and circumstances in the colony and ask a question about them. You should be curious about what is going to happen, and be able to say the question out loud.

For example, “I wonder if the Governor has the stones to put the Dimber Damber on trial, having sworn never to betray him?” is a good question because it points at named notables and drags an Oath into the situation. “How will the Governor attack the Dimber Damber at her trial?” is a fantastic question, because it ramps up the tension by immediately putting an oath in jeopardy [for further examples see the Replay on page 49].

Note that it isn't your job to say what is happening in the scene, which characters are there, or how it will turn out. It's tempting, but don't do it. All of this is up to the other players, who will put together a scene that can answer your question.

Feel free to be bold and aggressive in crafting your questions. You can establish facts in your questions, but don't contradict existing ones. It's good form to ask questions about characters other than your own, but this rule is not absolute.

Consider the big, obvious problems the planet provides and choose one to use as a blunt instrument [“I wonder where the lags are going to get the materials to keep the sulphuric rain out of their huts? Ophria's sworn never to steal again, isn't that interesting?"]. Consider the insanity the colony endures and breathe life into that through the actions of heroes and fools [“I wonder how the wreckers get revenge for Mitty's public torture?"]. Consider the tangled webs of



duty, obligation and fear built into the Ladder and pick one to showcase [“I wonder what Corporal Pill will do when ordered, unlawfully, to slaughter the native camp? Isn’t his oath to never harm them?”].

And whatever you decide, it will be ten times more interesting if it somehow intersects with a character’s Oath.

Once you’ve asked a question as Guide, unless invited to join the scene by the other players, limit your contributions to prompts and questions that clarify or expand. “What does that look like?” and “Say a bit more about that” are good examples. Early in the game, “How do they know each other?” is often productive. Don’t be shy about injecting little questions, but let them play out their scene, too.

PLAYING THE SCENE

SETTING SCENES AND ANSWERING QUESTIONS

Whenever you aren’t the Guide, your principal objective is to see how things turn out. Don’t be too invested in the success of your own notables—focus instead on the story of the colony. If you aren’t sure what to do, fall back on all the interesting stuff you’ve already created.

Scenes are explicitly about the colony notables that you’ve named. Although there are many other people in the colony, the story isn’t about them. Put your heads together, create a scene [see page 49 for an example], and set the stage for the Guide. Describe the location where the scene is taking place. Let everyone know which characters are present and which might enter at their player’s discretion.

If both of a player’s notables need to be present, one should be handed off to another player temporarily. Likewise, if other minor characters are needed to answer the scene’s question, choose a name and assign them to players as necessary for the scene [see page 51 for an example].

Try to avoid dragging the Guide in to play a character. In three person games this will often be unavoidable, but it isn’t ideal. The Guide should be able to sit back and enjoy the show if that can possibly be arranged. If you really need one of the Guide’s notables, though, go ahead and invite them to participate.

The course of a scene may make the question’s answer obvious, but this won’t always be the case. If at some point you are uncertain about how the question will be answered, go immediately to the dice [See “If There is Uncertainty” on page 34].

The Guide, who has a more critical and observational role, is the one most likely to recognize uncertainty and prompt the players to go to the dice, but anyone can call for this. Don't be shy about calling out uncertainty, no matter what your role in the scene is.

When the question has been answered and the scene is winding down, the Guide should help bring it to a conclusion and then pass their responsibilities as Guide to the player on their left.

NOTABLES AND AMBITIONS

Keep in mind that beyond your colony's unique Drive, a principal objective of the underclass on both sides of the Ladder is to move up into positions of security and power within the colony. Those already eating well will naturally want to preserve the status quo. Those at the very top have a deeper understanding of the unpleasant things that need to happen to ensure the colonies long-term survival. Bolters and wreckers may have ambition, but they may also operate outside the established power structure toward their own ends. See the callout on page 26 for more ideas about the motivations of notables.

SIMPLE SCENES

Scenes with only one character—or none at all—are fine. These become monologues or third-person descriptive scenes and are encouraged [See page 54 in the Replay for an example of a simple scene]. They are a great way of revealing new information, and are an easy way to add color to your growing world. There is no requirement that a scene be labored, complex, dramatic, or interactive. In fact, the opposite often makes for the best scenes! If the Guide's question is "I wonder why Will sabotaged the atmosphere plant?" then simply describing Will's slow walk from his wife's grave to the plant, monkey wrench in hand, makes a perfect scene. Remember that scenes are not a limited resource, so use them creatively. Just don't forget to answer the spotlight question.



I think on all the risks I ran
Of lagging, scragging and so forth
To be a swell-mob man.

—*Convict Saying*

IF THERE IS UNCERTAINTY

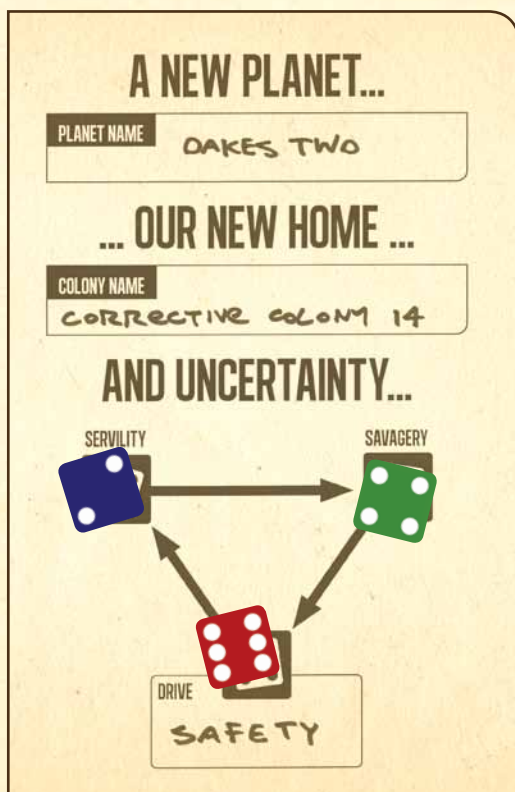
ADDRESSING UNCERTAINTY WHEN IT ARISES

When the outcome of a situation is obvious or necessary, either fictionally or thematically, it is always best to trust your instincts and go with it. If there's no uncertainty then no one needs to roll the dice.

However, when the outcome of a scene is uncertain and the scene needs guidance and resolution, go to the dice right away. The three dice should be in the middle of the table on the Uncertainty Triangle, each in its own box corresponding to Servility, Savagery, and your chosen unique Drive—the trifecta of life in your penal colony.

ROLLING AND READING DICE

Ask the Guide to roll two of the dice, leaving one untouched—its existing value does not change. The Drives in the Uncertainty Triangle are then compared in clockwise order. If the die value for one is higher than the next, that Drive can be used to resolve the scene.



For example, in the diagram to the left, only the unique Drive of Safety [6] is higher than the next drive in clockwise order, which is Servility [2], meaning that the scene will be resolved through aggressively incorporating the desire for protection and security. If the Servility die had been higher than that for Savagery [4], the scene could have been resolved through dominance and obedience. If Savagery had been greater than Safety, the scene might have been resolved through violence and barbarism. In the event of a tie, special rules come into play. See “Resolving Ties” on page 36.

Given this arrangement, it is possible that more than one option will present itself. In this case ask the Guide to choose one. It is not their job to explain what the choice means for the scene. For example, if the Guide chooses Servility, everyone else must determine who is going to be servile to whom, either in advance or as the scene progresses. If there is any disagreement that can’t be resolved, the Guide should delegate the decision to one player. Hopefully this will be rare.

Drives are pointers. They don’t, in themselves, decide anything. They tell you which way a scene is going to go and what sort of tone the resolution will take. It is an oracle of a sort, for the players answering the scene’s question to interpret as they see fit. The outcome may be obvious, but throwing a curveball is always a strong choice too. What are the implications if you decide the heavily-armed marine is on the receiving end of Savagery from a lowly Crawler?

A clever Guide can choose which dice to roll tactically to help ensure an outcome they want. Clever players can find creative ways to interpret any Drive. For an example of how all of this works in play, check out the Replay [the resolution of uncertainty for Scene One begins on page 50].

WHAT IF WE WANT MORE GUIDANCE?

Sometimes it’s important to know who wins and who loses. As an option, After you have determined the dominant Drive for the scene, identify the two prominent factions in the conflict, which will usually be obvious. Have a player on each side roll a die and compare the results. The faction with the high roll is going to come out on top.

Note that this roll doesn’t change the Drive used to resolve the scene, but it does set new die values for the next scene.

RESOLVING TIES

If any two dice tie, the normal rules apply (although there will only be one resolution option). In addition, some interesting new twist is added to the scene. Consult the Event List (page 110) for an additional inspirational element that the players must inject into the scene. The tied numbers give you a category, and the non-tied number gives you a specific item within that category. How this new item enters the situation is entirely up to the players of the scene. For an example of an Event entering a scene, see page 52 in the Replay.



Safety is the dominant Drive, and the event for tied fours with a six is “Is that smoke?”

If all three dice tie, the scene is interrupted by an epic event. Consult the Event List, which will provide the outline of the event for everyone to fit into your game. Epic events stop a scene cold and should change the colony forever. Whatever occurs should leave the current scene unresolved and begin the next scene with a question focusing on the epic event.



Three tied fours signals the **epic event** “Mobs” which ends the scene unresolved and continues in the next scene.

ENDING A SCENE

There could, in theory, be more than one instance of uncertainty in a single scene, but the usual pattern will be one instance per scene, or none at all. Once all uncertainty has been resolved and the rest of the scene is finished, the player to the left of the Guide is the new Guide. They inherit the dice at the previous scene’s values, and when the time comes for uncertainty, they’ll choose two dice to be rolled. For now, encourage them to ask a new question and see what happens.

IF SOMEONE BREAKS AN OATH

INSTRUCTIONS FOR OATH-BREAKING

Oaths, and the breaking of Oaths, are the heart of Durance. If your character breaks an Oath, their personal story is nearing its conclusion.

When an Oath is broken, the player of the oath-breaking notable must immediately choose one of the following options:

- A notable [not necessarily the oath-breaker] changes position on the Ladder [see below]
- A planetary survey or colonial record assessment changes, for better or worse
- The unique Drive for the game changes

Once the choice is made, the oath-breaker is no longer a notable. As Guide, don't ask any more questions about these characters. Players can still play oath-breakers but they should fade into the background of the story, part of the cast of minor characters.

IF SOMEONE CHANGES POSITION ON THE LADDER

MOBILITY—UPWARD, DOWNWARD, AND LATERAL

Change is inevitable. If your character is transitioning—most likely because an Oath was broken—adjust their position on the Ladder to reflect the new colonial order.

More than one character can occupy a position on the Ladder [how this is possible for Governor and Dimber Damber is a juicy mystery for you to solve]. It is also perfectly acceptable, once play begins, for a player's two notables to end up on the same side of the ladder, or on the same rung, or whatever else the developing fiction demands. Maybe the Governor becomes a swell with a ceremonial title, still "leader of the colony" in name only. Most transitions will be obvious, like a Captain of Marines who is relieved of command, tried and reduced to a convict. Characters may ascend or descend the Ladder based on the outcome of scenes, in reaction to the established fiction. There is nothing preventing the lowest crawler from becoming Governor, or vice versa.

IF A NOTABLE DIES

DEATH IS EXPLICITLY ON THE TABLE

It is entirely acceptable to kill any colonial notable (or non-notable) as part of a scene. It's also fine, with their player's approval, to simply narrate the death of a character as the background for a question ("I wonder how Her Excellency, who swore to never allow harm to come to her subordinates, will react to the death of her Captain of Marines?").

If a notable dies, tell the player who created that character to claim a named but un-authored notable on the Colonial Notables sheet. If there are no open position, add a notable on a rung the player has not yet had a character occupy, even if that position is already occupied by another notable. Ask the next player to the left to author an Oath for the new character.

When creating a new notable, consider using minor characters that have already appeared in scenes, or finding other ways to tie the new notable to the existing characters and the ongoing situation. It's possible these connections will already be obvious from previous events.

ENDING THE GAME

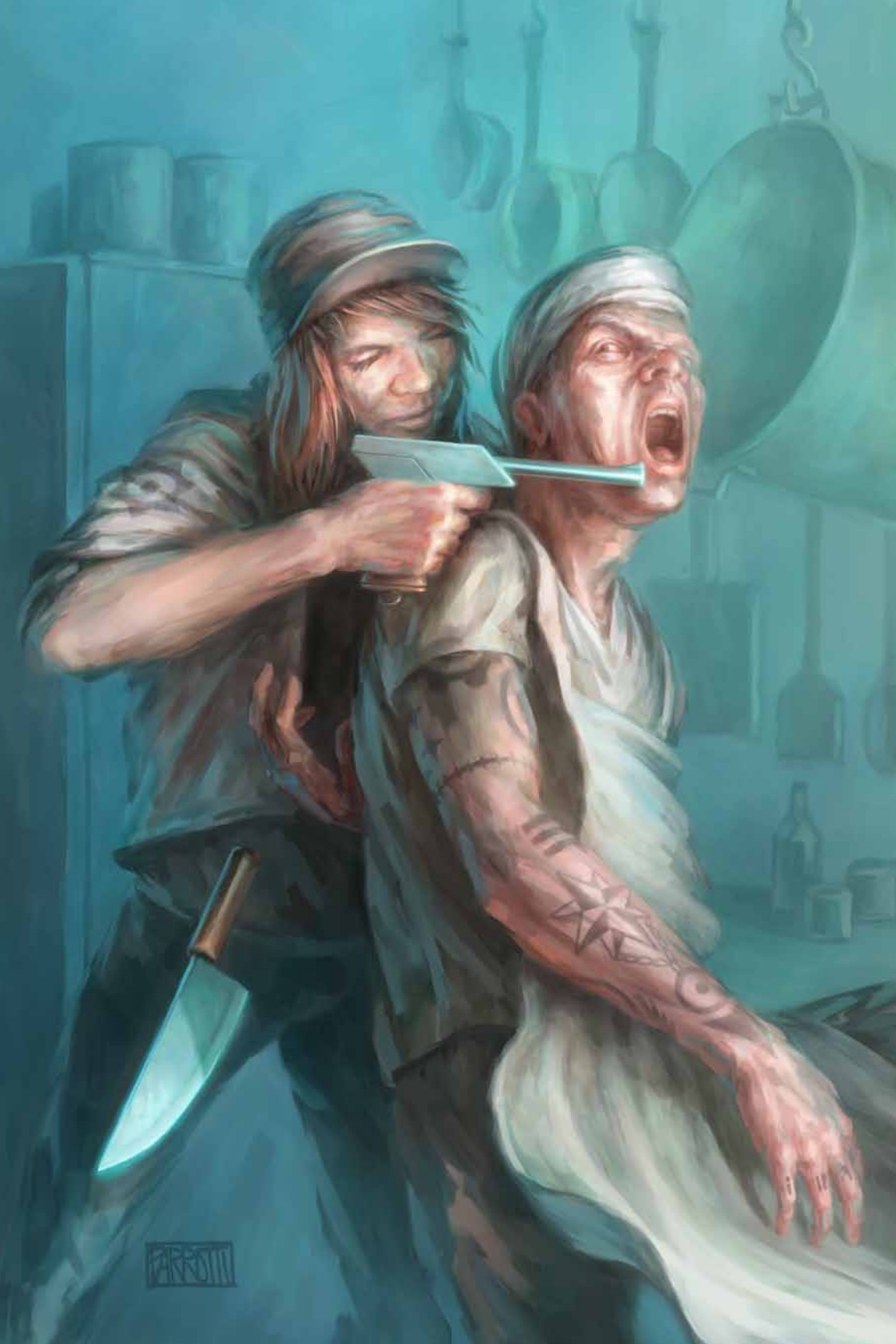
IT WILL END, BUT WHEN?

A game of Durance is about to end when the combined number of broken Oaths and dead, insane, or missing notables exceeds the number of players. In other words, when half the starting notables have had their moment, it's time to wrap things up.

As the Host, it is your responsibility to always have an eye on the endgame. Every time the Guide duties rotate around to you, take a moment to assess the direction your game's story is taking and prompt a short conversation about it. What's the combined total of broken Oaths and dead notables? Is a clear arc emerging? Is there a particular Oath that desperately needs to be challenged?

If you sense that the end is near, make that clear to everyone and play accordingly. Go around one final time to wrap up any loose ends and settle any outstanding scores.

Occasionally it will be worthwhile to break the endgame calculus—sometimes a whole pile of notables will be ruthlessly purged early in the session, and sometimes a clear arc will emerge that doesn't involve mass killings or crushing mendacity. Trust your instincts in these edge cases and end the story when the time is right.



PARSONS



Here is me.
Not a very good likeness, I
reckon. Still wearing my
load-bearing vest, just in
from patrol - all I could
think about was drawing
while we were out hunting
bolters. So tired, so tired.



Marci Brackley

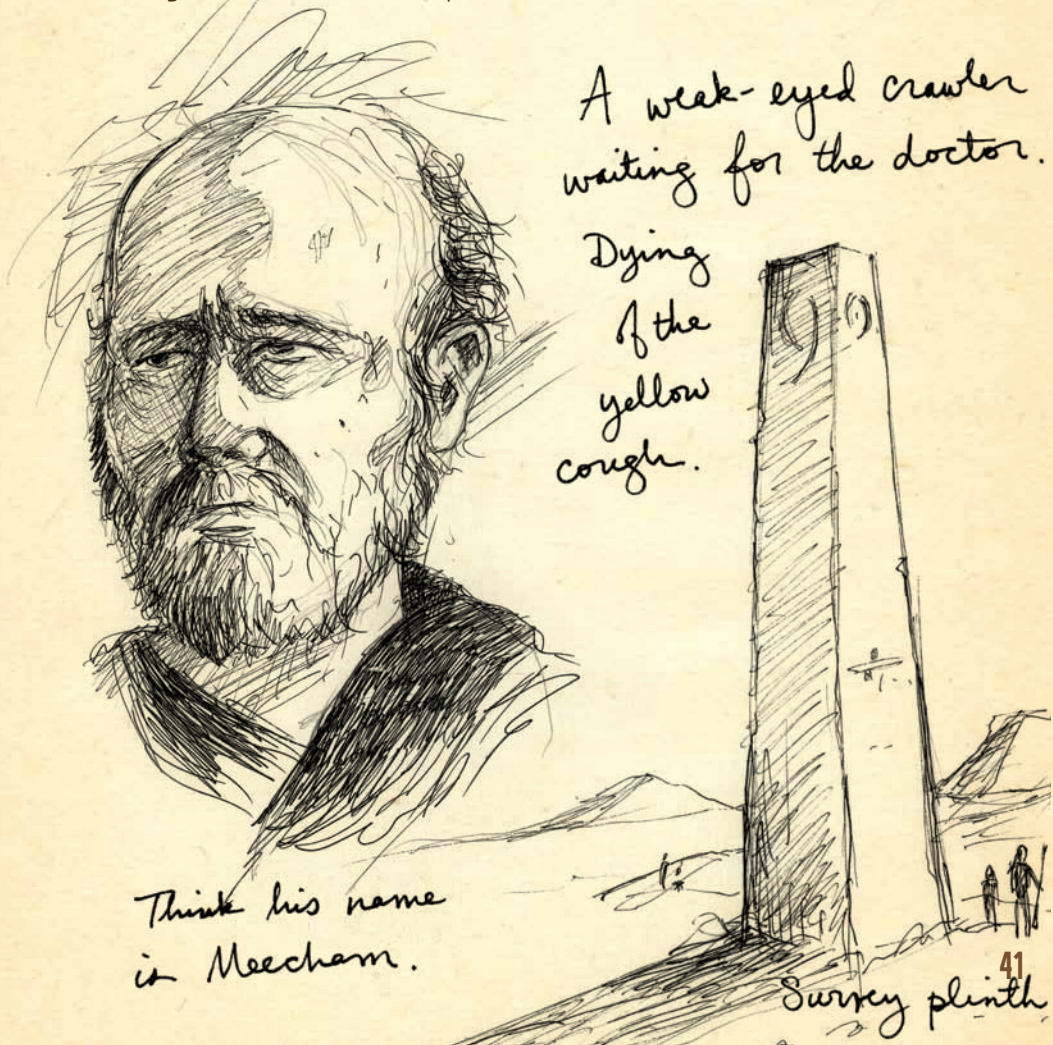
REPLAY

A SCRIPTED EXAMPLE OF SETTING
UP AND PLAYING DURANCE

REPLAY

PREPARING TO PLAY STEP ONE: HOUSEKEEPING

Andy, Tom, Joel and Beth gather to play Durance. Andy is the Host, so he assembles all the materials in advance: Event and Name lists printed from the book, the Uncertainty Triangle sheet, a blank Planetary Survey and Colonial Record worksheet and the Colonial Notables sheet. He's also got three dice, and some pencils.



STEP TWO: PLANETARY SURVEY AND COLONIAL RECORD

ANDY: Okay, I've already told you about Durance, so you know the background. Let's do this! I'm the Host and Tom, you're the player to my left so you get to kick things off.

TOM: Sounds good. What's first?

Andy hands Tom the Planetary Survey and Colonial Record sheet.

ANDY: Planetary Survey.

TOM: Right. So I'm circling one good survey assessment and crossing out a bad one?

ANDY: Yep.

Tom crosses out "Climate is mild," including the adjacent letter "B," and circles "Biology is benign."

TOM: I wanted a terrible climate and I like the idea of harmless local life.

Tom passes the Planetary Survey and Colonial Record to his left, to Joel.

JOEL: Right, I'm going to circle "Hydrology is favorable" and cross out "Geology is stable." Beth?

Beth takes the sheet from Joel and looks over her options.

BETH: Hmm, you guys left me Intelligent life and Atmosphere. Let's go with "Atmosphere is excellent" because breathing seems important.

Beth crosses out "Intelligent life is absent" and the "F" next to it and circles "Atmosphere is excellent"

ANDY: Cool, so the stuff that was wrong about our survey was climate, geology and the presence of intelligent life.

JOEL: Interesting.

ANDY: And that means our Universal Terrestrial Survey is ADE. Now we determine what our colony is like. Beth, can you hand me the sheet?

Beth passes the Planetary Survey and Colonial Record sheet to her left, to Andy.

TOM: Same deal?

ANDY: Same deal. Choose two, one good and one bad. I'm crossing off "Planning" and circling "Justice"

UTS

A
D
E

Andy crosses out "Planning is meticulous" and circles "Justice is universal."

TOM: You like justice, huh? Okay, I'll cross off "Order is well-established" then, just to mess with you.

ANDY: Thanks.

TOM: And circle "Prosperity is high." Let's have a little success around here.

JOEL: Okay, density and workforce are left to me. Let's make it cramped—maybe the geology problems keep us close together. So "Density is low" gets crossed out and "Workforce is motivated" is circled. And our Universal Colonial Record is... WXZ.

TOM: Cool. So now we look up our planet and colony information?

Andy grabs the rulebook and opens it to the Planetary Surveys [page 57].

ANDY: Definitely. Let's start with the planet. Let's see... "Oakes Two."

BETH: I don't like the sound of that.

ANDY: "Survey: Oakes Two is a geologically complex planet with abundant water supplies and a favorable atmosphere. Gas mix and pressure are human-ideal. Rugged forms of life cling to steep canyon walls. Numerous sites for potential colonies exist. Recommended."

BETH: That sounds pretty good.

ANDY: "Revised Survey: The climate has a wild daily fluctuation, from 0 °C to 30 °C and back again. Planetary terrain consists of murderously folded slot canyons and pinnacles. Native intelligence watches and waits."

TOM: Watches and waits?

ANDY: That's what it says. There are some colorful details we can choose from as well, such as "It's like a tree, only it moves. And throws spears."

JOEL: Very nice!

Andy reads off the rest of the details for the others to consider, and they talk a bit about how they imagine the planet might look.

BETH: So what does the WXZ listing say about our colony?

Andy looks the UCR code up in the Colonial Records [page 83].

ANDY: WXZ. Oh, man. Our colony bears the inspiring name of "Corrective Colony Number 14!"



JOEL: That's super harsh-sounding.

ANDY: There are two descriptions. This one is from the Authority perspective. "Authority is firmly in charge and her laws are enforced, including programs of food rationing and industrial labor, but the lags are restive, angry, and full of schemes. Little can be expected—they are a hard, grasping lot who would gladly ruin everything we've built here just to spite us were we to let up for even a moment."

JOEL: I'd imagine the Convicts have a different view of things.

ANDY: "Convict: Corrective Colony Number 14 has barely taken root. Every structure is temporary, dilapidated, and dirty. No effort has been made to expand the initial fortified compound. Why is that? We have a whole miserable planet to work with and yet Authority keeps us caged like animals inside this martinet's fortress."

BETH: Joel, you wanted it cramped, right?

Andy reads the colony details for the others and everyone throws out some colorful suggestions for their story.

JOEL: I love the image of the "assembly platform and gallows" at the center of the colony—a monument to Justice that's really not working to keep order.

BETH: I can totally work with that. Okay, I'm up, what's next?

STEP THREE: DRIVE

ANDY: We choose our unique Drive. We get the Savagery and Servility Drives by default, but we choose the third.

TOM: What are our choices?

Andy points to the Planetary Survey and Colonial Record worksheet on the table.

ANDY: Control, Status, Safety, Harmony, Indulgence, and Freedom.

BETH: Ooooh.

JOEL: And we decide how?

ANDY: We each cross one off until only one remains. Beth, you're up.

BETH: Not interested in Status.

ANDY: Harmony is gone.

TOM: I liked Harmony! Oh, well. Crossing off Freedom.

JOEL: Indulgence is gone.

BETH: Control or Safety? And whatever I don't pick is our Drive?

ANDY: Yep. Remember, this is what everyone in the colony is striving for, in some way.

BETH: Safety sounds cool but Corrective Colony 14 does not sound like a safe place. It sounds like a place where everybody is struggling for power. I'm crossing out Safety and giving us Control as our Drive.

TOM: Cool, I like it.

ANDY: Me, too. Okay, next let's create our notables.

STEP FOUR: NOTABLES

BETH: Does that mean our characters?

ANDY: Sort of, although we'll each author two and we won't really have total control over them.

BETH: Weird.

ANDY: You'll see how it works. Here's the Colonial Notables sheet.

Andy uses the sheet to explain the concept of the Ladder.

ANDY: So the notables are split between Authority and Convict sides, and further separated into a hierarchy of status, with fixed roles on both sides at every rung of the Ladder. As a general rule, notables low on the Ladder want to move up to better positions.

JOEL: Makes sense.

ANDY: Right. So now we'll each choose one role and give that notable a name. The idea is to pick somebody in a position that interests you. I'm up, and what interests me is mundanity, so I'll go with a bog-standard marine named... Wilton Pilver.

Andy grabs the Colonial Notables sheet and writes the name in the "Marine" slot.

BETH: What's his rank?

ANDY: He's a corporal. Your turn, Tom.

TOM: I want to play a real outsider. Some kind of dreg. Any ideas?

ANDY: Maybe an Outcast? Wreckers are basically convicts handed out to planters as slaves. Political prisoners. And Crawlers are old, broken down convicts.

TOM: Awesome, I want to be an old Crawler. I'm just going to roll dice for his name, okay?

ANDY: Sure.

Tom consults the Name List [page 106] and rolls 6,1 for his first name and 5,5 for his surname. He writes the name in the Outcast slot on the Notables sheet and circles the "Crawler" option.

TOM: The Crawler, Evert Larley.

JOEL: Where's the Name List? Okay, I got it. Gidner Croffin, The Governor.

ANDY: How did I guess you'd pick the Governor?

BETH: Me next?

ANDY: Yep. What'll it be, Beth?

BETH: Viola Keech, a minion of the Dimber Damber!

ANDY: Cool! She should be Captain Sharp, the scary enforcer.

BETH: Viola's all about the money. She's a more mercenary Captain Sharp, probably at odds with The Abbot.

ANDY: Okay, now that we've all named one notable, we go around again and create another.

JOEL: Awesome! I want to be the Dimber Damber!

ANDY: Well, you can't.

JOEL: The hell I can't!

ANDY: The trick is that the new character has to be on the opposite side and on a different rung from your previous one. The Dimber Damber is right across from the Governor, so you're out of luck there, sport.

JOEL: This game sucks!

ANDY: You'll need to pick someone on the other side of the Ladder, so since you are already playing the Governor you need to pick a criminal who isn't on the same rung.

JOEL: Okay, I get it. That makes sense, actually.

BETH: You're such a drama queen, Joel!

ANDY: Now that you're on board, I'll create my new notable. I'm going to claim the Dimber Damber.

JOEL: Arrgh!

ANDY: His name is Tim Wills. Doesn't that sound ominous somehow?

BETH: It does, sorta! Everybody has a weird name and then there's... Tim Wills.

TOM: Okay, my new guy's a functionary. Let's make her the Captain of Marines. Percia Hatts.

JOEL: I'll play an outlaw! A Bolter named...

Joel rolls some dice for a name and then looks at Tom.

JOEL: ...named Rhona Hatts.

TOM: That's my Captain's name! I think they're related.

JOEL: Yeah, maybe they're sisters.

TOM: Definitely they are sisters.

BETH: Back to me, finally. I'd like to play the Judge Advocate but I can't, so I'll choose the Swell position and play a planter. His name is Dalker Marre.

ANDY: Right, so nobody picked an Emancipist or, weirdly, a regular old Convict. We'll come back to them in a minute.

BETH: What's next?

ANDY: Joel, as the Governor, gets to decide how the convicts are incarcerated and managed. Joel, how do you keep order? You also need to assign some numbers for the convict notables.

JOEL: Sweet! All the prisoners have those cool circular symbols on the front and back of their jumpsuits, including a barcode big enough to scan from a distance. It also works well as a sniper target for runners.

TOM: That's cool, and also terrifying.

Joel makes up a series of numbers for each notable on the convict side, including his own bolter. He describes how Rhona switched her jumpsuit for a planter's clothes and disabled her locator implant in order to escape. [For more suggestions on fleshing out your notables, see page 26.]

STEP FIVE: OATHS

ANDY: Okay, next we give our notables Oaths.

Andy opens the rulebook to the Oath list [page 108].

ANDY: The basic idea is that these are things the characters have sworn never to do, and it should butt up against our unique Drive, Control.

TOM: Do we do Oaths for our own guys?

ANDY: Actually it's better to assign one to somebody else's guy. Since I'm next in the rotation, I'll say that even though everyone wants control, the bolter and ne'er-do-well Rhona Hatts will never allow an innocent to go hungry.

BETH: I see how this works. I like that Oath for Rhona!

ANDY: Yeah, going for a Robin Hood angle there. Tom, you're next. Pick anybody and assign an Oath to them.

TOM: Right. I need to choose from this list?

ANDY: You can make up your own but the list is pretty solid.

TOM: In that case Corporal Wilton Pilver will never kill a man.

ANDY: No he won't! Never!

JOEL: I'm next. Percia Hatts, Captain of Marines, will never betray her beloved sister Rhona.

TOM: Awesome!

BETH: I think His Excellency, Governor Croffin, will never allow the Dimber Damber to best him.

ANDY: Captain Sharp will never allow her husband to come to harm.

TOM: I want to do one for my own guy.

ANDY: Go ahead.

TOM: Evert Larley will never take charity from anyone. He's a proud man.

JOEL: And the planter Dalker Marre will never pay for "protection."

BETH: Nice. Tim Wills, the Dimber Damber, will never tolerate insolence or disrespect.

STEP SIX: WRAPPING UP

Andy takes a moment to assign names to the un-authored roles on the Colonial Notables sheet.

ANDY: Okay, our Emancipist is named... Frandon Halkes.

JOEL: Why do you get to decide, Andy?

ANDY: Because I'm the Host. Next time you can be the Host. Our Convict will be a Lag named Holace...

BETH: Ooh, can we name him "Keech" and make him Captain Sharp's husband?

ANDY: Yeah, that makes sense, given her Oath. Holace Keech. These two are characters that we can use in our scenes, and if one of our Notables dies, that player will pick up one of those guys and we'll assign an Oath at that point.

BETH: What's next?

ANDY: That's it. We've got our planet, our colony, and our cast of characters. What do you think this place looks like?

TOM: I'm imagining not a lot of high tech.

JOEL: Yeah, pistols and shotguns. More *Outland* than *Star Wars*.

BETH: Oakes Two sounds like a hell-hole. We need to remember to introduce the wild weather and rugged canyons.

JOEL: And freakin' aliens!

BETH: Yeah, primitive aliens just outside the perimeter...

ANDY: ...of our filthy fortified compound. Crammed to the gills with like two thousand people.

TOM: Angry, scheming convicts. Is the Dimber Damber fomenting revolution?

ANDY: Maaaaaybe.

BETH: Captain Hatts is in some kind of collusion with her outlaw sister.

JOEL: And the Governor is going to order her to put an end to the banditry, of course. Dalker Marre demands strong and immediate action, right? Outlaws stealing his food and threatening him.

ANDY: I imagine Holace Keech is going to do something to end up on the Dimber Damber's bad side.

BETH: Dare I say insolence? Oh man, so many possibilities. And how are we going to get Corporal Pilver to kill somebody?

ANDY: I think we're ready to play. I'll toss the three dice on the Uncertainty Triangle...

JOEL: The what?

ANDY: ...to give us some random starting values. All in good time, Joel, all in good time.

PLAYING DURANCE

FIRST SCENE

ANDY: Well, let's find out how things turn out around here. I'm hosting this game so for the first scene I'm the Guide.

BETH: Guide?

ANDY: Yeah, I get to ask a question and you guys create a scene that answers it. We've got so many interesting things going on it's hard to choose.

TOM: Aren't you supposed to pick something that isn't about one of your two guys?

ANDY: Well, ideally I won't play a character in the scene, so it's easier if the question focuses on other notables. Okay, I've got it. I wonder "what will Captain Hatts do when the Governor orders her to hunt down her own sister?" That's my question.

JOEL: That's me and you, Tom.

TOM: Yep.

JOEL: Hmm. All right, so the Governor lives in a converted shipping module. It's the nicest place in the colony but that's not saying much. It's heavily insulated, but he has a couple of convicts whose entire job is to regulate its temperature by opening windows, drawing shades, turning on fans and stuff.

BETH: Should my planter be there?

TOM: Yes, definitely. Maybe you two are there when I arrive.

BETH: Solid. Let's go.

Joel, Tom, and Beth all slip into character.

JOEL: Captain, welcome.

TOM: Your Excellency. Mr. Marre.

JOEL: Have a seat, Captain. Have some tea.

TOM: As you wish, sir.

JOEL: Mr. Marre here has been detailing his... concerns about the bolter situation, Captain.

TOM: Really.

BETH: They are worse than the natives, Captain. They steal, they threaten, they demand tribute. Filthy outlaws.

TOM: I'm aware of how the bolters operate, Mr. Marre, and I feel that we have the situation well in hand.

JOEL: You do? Well in hand, Captain?

TOM: Yes, sir. My marines keep a lid on them.

BETH: They are threatening my entire operation, and with it the food security of the colony. You understand? These bolters could destroy the colony.

TOM: That's a little dramatic, Mr. Marre.

JOEL: Your editorial comments are not welcome, Captain. In my eyes you have failed and I will not tolerate failure. I want them stopped, by whatever means are necessary. Kill them. Capture them and clap them in irons, I don't care, but the raids must stop.

TOM: You know the bolters are redistributing food, right?

JOEL: That's irrelevant.

TOM: Not to the convicts who would otherwise starve it isn't.

BETH: Theft is theft.

TOM: If the colony itself is at stake, Mr. Marre, why are you holding out on us? Why are you stockpiling grain? And why are you allowing it, Governor?

Sensing a tense moment, Andy interrupts.

ANDY: I think we've reached an interesting point here! Things are uncertain.

JOEL: They sure are.

The dice, untouched since the start of the game, are Servility 4, Savagery 1 and Control 3.

ANDY: Okay, so here's how this works. As the Guide, I'll choose two dice to roll, leaving one as it is. Right now the dice are sort of a toss-up. I think I'll leave Savagery at 1 to keep Servility in play.

Andy rolls the Servility and Control dice. The final numbers are Servility 2, Savagery 1, and Control 4.

BETH: So that's either Control or Servility? How do we know?

ANDY: As the Guide, it's my job to pick. I choose Control.

TOM: That outcome seems pretty obvious to me.

ANDY: Run with it!

Tom, Joel and Beth return to the scene.

JOEL: Captain Hatts, I am issuing a direct order. You are to kill or capture the bolter gang. No excuses. Do you understand?

TOM: Yes, Your Excellency.

JOEL: Good. Please accompany Mr. Marre to his farm outside the compound with a squad of marines. Don't return until the thing is done.

TOM: Kill or capture, aye-aye sir.

JOEL: As you are leaving, the Governor pulls you aside. Percia, he says, I know you have a personal stake in this. I need to know you'll not be swayed by the ties of kinship.

TOM: You have my word I'll do my duty. I promise if I can't bring Rhona in I'll kill her.

ANDY: Nice! Great scene, guys. I love that Captain Hatts is already dangerously close to breaking her Oath to never betray her sister. Have you got a question, Tom? You're Guide next.

SECOND SCENE

TOM: Do I ever! Okay, my question is "can Viola Keech talk the Dimber Damber out of murdering her husband?"

BETH: Whoa! All right, then. Me and Andy. The Dimber Damber will never tolerate insolence and Captain Sharp has sworn to protect her husband. Somebody is going to lose. Joel, will you be Holace Keech?

JOEL: Sure thing. I imagine he's a milquetoast and a snitch.

ANDY: He's in the Dimber Damber's chambers, which are a pair of ship-ping modules that are a twisted mirror of the Governor's quarters. Not as clean but somehow more opulent. A bunch of the Dimber Damber's goons have worked Keech over and he's unconscious and bloody.

BETH: Viola Keech bursts in.

TOM: Maybe it's late at night, with the temperature just below freezing.

BETH: And she's shaking off the frost and cold.

Everyone slips into character.

ANDY: Viola.

BETH: Boss. There's been some kind of mistake.

ANDY: No, no mistake.

BETH: What's the problem?

ANDY: Other than your intemperate violation of my peaceful inner sanctum? This man has betrayed the ancient order of thieves. He's been ratting us out to the marines. The punishment is well known.

BETH: He's my husband.

ANDY: And a friend to many and perhaps a father to countless unnamed bastards, who can tell? He's a rat. He must die.

BETH: I won't allow it.

ANDY: You won't allow it? My dear, do you seriously wish to embark on this rash course of action? I do not tolerate insolence, even among my most trusted advisors. Say it again and see what profit it brings you.

Beth breaks character.

BETH: Oh, man, we need to sort this out!

TOM: Cool, massive uncertainty. Let me look at the dice.

The dice are Servility 2, Savagery 1 and Control 4.

JOEL: Re-roll that Savagery, dude. Let's get that into play.

TOM: Yeah, I agree. I'll leave the Control die alone.

Tom rolls the Servility and Savagery dice. The final numbers are Servility 5, Savagery 4, and Control 4.

ANDY: A tie!

Tom consults the Event List.

TOM: Tied fours list, element 5: "A terrible truth is revealed." Huh.

BETH: What do we do with that?

ANDY: Up to us. Servility for sure, with a truth revealed. And we need to see if Viola can talk the Dimber Damber out of killing her man.

BETH: A terrible truth.

ANDY: Right. Got an idea? I'll follow your lead.

BETH: Cool, but brace yourself because it is going to get unseemly up in here. Okay, Viola seems to collect herself and walks right up to the Dimber Damber, eyes downcast.

Everyone goes back into character.

BETH: I know what you want. I'll give it to you.

ANDY: I've wanted this a long time.

BETH: I know you have.

ANDY: It's why you are Captain, to keep you close, wait for my moment.

BETH: Promise not to kill him.

ANDY: One condition.

BETH: Name it.

ANDY: He has to watch.

BETH: And Viola nods and empties a water jug onto her husband, who sputters back to life.

JOEL: Oh my God. Oh my God. Viola!

BETH: ...and let's just fade to black on that.

TOM: Please do.

ANDY: OK, but this isn't over. They, uh, finish, and the Dimber Damber walks over to Holace Keech.

JOEL: He's just quivering in the corner, still caked in his own blood, soaked.

TOM: Devastated by what he just witnessed.

ANDY: And the Dimber Damber regards him for a moment, then pulls out a pistol and shoots him in the forehead.

TOM: What?

ANDY: Unless you aren't cool with that, Beth.

BETH: I am totally cool with that.

JOEL: There's Viola's Oath, up in smoke.

TOM: What happens now?

ANDY: When someone breaks an Oath, they're not central to the story anymore, so we won't ask any more questions about them. Beth also needs to choose to either change a notable's position on the Ladder, change one of the planetary or colonial assessments, or change the unique Drive.

TOM: Wow, that's serious business.

BETH: It makes the most sense to move Viola on the Ladder. I imagine she's gonna be a regular old lag the next time we see her.

JOEL: The Dimber Damber just made one hell of an enemy. But he kept his Oath!

ANDY: Barely. There was some disrespect there. We sorted it out though.

BETH: What. A. Bastard. High five, Andy.

THIRD SCENE

ANDY: You're up, Joel.

JOEL: Excellent.

Joel examines the Colonial Notables sheet.

JOEL: You know who we haven't seen? Evert Larley.

TOM: My crawler!

JOEL: What's he like?

TOM: He's old. Like, really old.

JOEL: Of course he is. His Oath is "I will never accept charity from anybody." I think I want a scene where we explore that. How about this: "Why is Evert Larley so proud?" That's my question.

BETH: Sounds good, let's get to work. Got any ideas, Tom?

TOM: I'm thinking this might be a simple solo scene.

BETH: The life of Larley.

TOM: Exactly. We see him as he is, an old man, all sunken eyes and frail, shaky limbs, liver spots and rags. And then we see him, the same guy as a young man. He's in a uniform. A Colonial Marines uniform.

ANDY: Nice.

TOM: We see him giving his all, in combat rescuing a fellow marine, on relief missions to starving colonies, giving his last bit of food to some dirty kid on some backwater. Getting a medal pinned to his chest, older now. Then things go wrong. He's a civilian and he's killed someone. Maybe he's drunk, maybe it was an accident, only his reputation saves him from execution. Years in the orbital hulks, living like an animal but still helping others. Older still. Now he's here. That's it.

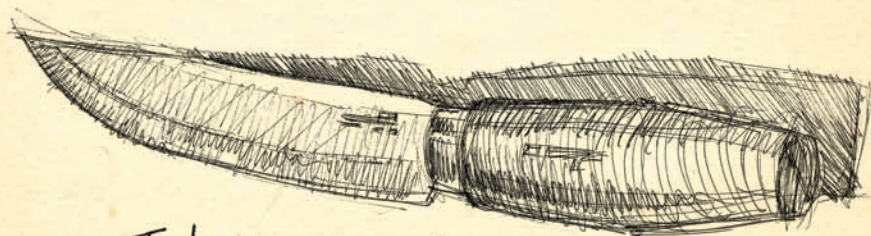
BETH: That's it?

JOEL: I'm satisfied. The question got answered. It sounds like Larley might still have a few tricks up his sleeve.

After three scenes, the game is picking up speed and opening up new avenues for exploration. The characters, all under intense pressure, are starting to come to life. Fault lines between the Governor and the Captain of Marines, the Dimber Damber and Captain Sharp, and Captain Sharp and her husband have all been introduced—where will they lead?



The Lags call Smolt "Captain Sharp,"
and a more ferocious god they have
never worshipped. The Dimber Damber's
mad dog, and no leash in sight.



Took it off a lag. Marine issue.



Abrah Weld, sable.

Works for Lawson, doesn't cause
trouble, seems to do all right for herself.

Not a typical Lawson girl in that she is
neither dead nor insane.

PLANETARY SURVEYS

DESCRIPTIONS AND OPTIONAL DETAILS TO INSPIRE YOUR PLANET

The Universal Terrestrial Survey (UTS) consists of six letters, each corresponding to an assessment about the viability of the planet. In practice, the code will be three letters, matching the favorable assessments. Thus, as surveyed, the planet Jorca Ten's UTS is AEF.

Each of the following Planetary Surveys includes the original flawed survey report and a revised report as recorded by members of the colony. In addition, there are six optional details that you can use as color and inspiration for your scene descriptions.

UTS		
Atmosphere is excellent.	A B	Climate is mild.
Geology is stable.	C D	Hydrology is favorable.
Biology is benign.	E F	Intelligent life is absent.

Atmosphere (A) refers to the availability of breathable air in the right gas mix and pressure.

Climate (B) refers to surface temperature, weather patterns, and atmospheric stability.

Geology (C) refers to planetary crust and surface, including topology and geophysics.

Hydrology (D) refers to surface fluids, ideally liquid water.

Biology (E) refers to native flora and fauna in all its beautiful abundance.

Intelligent life (F) refers to presence of intelligent life on the planet. If there are sentient natives, chances are good that they are not friendly, whatever form they take.



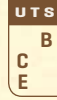
Vorkuta 58 page 59



Twynn's World page 69



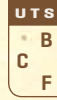
Pratt's Folly page 60



Broken Ladder page 70



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Numalla page 72



RFS 617 page 63



New Kolyma page 73



Banja Luka page 64



Leorica page 74



Sixteen page 65



KKV Nazino page 75



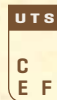
Oakes Two page 66



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Bibeault page 67



Kulak page 77



Jorca Ten page 68



New Barsana page 78

VORKUTA 58

SURVEY

Vorkuta 58 boasts near-perfect conditions for human colonization. The atmosphere is breathable and healthful, and weather patterns are mild and temperate across the planet. Vorkuta 58 is geophysically stable and an excellent candidate for a colony.

REVISED SURVEY

All surface water is contaminated with organic compounds. The local fauna has surprised us with unexpected and hazardous life cycle stages. Intelligent natives watch and wait. We are in trouble.

DETAILS

1. An endosymbiont bloom darkening the sky
2. A cache of hand-made tools—mostly weapons
3. A virulent infection that kills only children, requiring quarantine
4. Elyena Swepp, bolter gone native with visions of her own colony
5. Aquatic colony animals that grow in intelligence as they clump together
6. A skimmer crew, flayed alive

UTS
A B
D

PRATT'S FOLLY

SURVEY

Not sure how this place got its name but it is a gem. A healthy atmosphere and surface water in great quantities. The climatology report is stellar. Regional and seasonal variations are minor and life here would be very pleasant. Recommended.

REVISED SURVEY

Gigantic, impassable mountains punctuated by glaciers tens of kilometers thick. Narrow bands of arable land among the bergschrunds. We've learned that the planetary biome aggressively dominates non-native introductions. The natives... intelligent and savage.

DETAILS

1. The "Burning Ground," swept daily by marines to keep ice and predators at bay
2. An actual paper book, first waterlogged and then frozen
3. A battered sign still defiantly proclaiming the colony's original name—*Chalchiuhtlicue*
4. Evidence of what seems to be a long dead civilization on the planet's surface
5. "These things look human but twisted; their features are not fixed to the skull"
6. A pair of makeshift skis with the name Lunicent Pilver carved on them

SUTTON'S WORLD

SURVEY

Sutton's World is a paradise. Breathable air right in the human mix zone with perfect pressure, a mild and stable climate, and a thriving planetary biome that poses no threat to colonization. Highly recommended.

REVISED SURVEY

We learned quickly that the entire surface is lightly contaminated with radiation here. Water is volatile and exists as a subsurface layer, fouled by the output of uncountable natural reactors. Scattered bands of natives roam the blighted landscape. We all want to go home.

DETAILS

1. Quietly "adjusted" dosimeters
2. With twin suns, there is no darkness. A few go mad as a result
3. The natives enter the reactor from time to time, bearing gifts
4. "Wear orange and they fear you; wear blue and they'll try to kill you"
5. A desiccated human head
6. Thread trees so thick they block out the suns

UTS
A B
F

AMUR SIX

SURVEY

There is no intelligent life on Amur Six. The atmosphere is ideal and weather patterns are highly favorable to agriculture. Amur Six is a viable candidate for a colony.

REVISED SURVEY

Amur Six is an ellipsoidal planetary body; equatorial mountains reach the stratosphere. Water exists only in pockets near the planetary core and is extremely difficult to reach. Common compounds within the planetary biome are neurotoxic. I don't see how we can survive here.

DETAILS

1. The summit of the King Amur, the highest peak on the planet, basically in outer space
2. A report on the planet's biochemistry, encrypted
3. Subterranean lizards commonly found nesting near core pools
4. A cache of crux antitoxins, inert or worse without the enzymatic key
5. A frigid, polar ocean made of liquid methane just waiting to be mined
6. A surveyor's ytterbium laser, modified to cut through steel

RFS 617

SURVEY

Recommended. The surface's water is clean and plentiful, atmosphere is perfect gas mix and pressure, and the planet is geologically stable. Excellent colony candidate.

REVISED SURVEY

The climate of RFS 617 is hot and wet, averaging 35 °C with torrential downpours. All our crops were either washed away or trampled during seasonal migrations of native life on a massive scale. There are intelligent natives and they also bring us only trouble. We all want to be cool and dry, just once.

DETAILS

1. A vine-covered fort out by the Big Kill
2. A herd of spin-tails that covers ten square kilometers
3. A marine gang called The Huntsmen provide... varied "indigenous protein sources"
4. An aggressive bacteria strain lurks in the natives
5. Deep beneath the surface of the planet there is an advanced civilization
6. Rotting uniforms falling off emaciated shoulders

UTS
ACE

BANJA LUKA

SURVEY

Banja Luka, named after our Medical Officer's home town, has a near-perfect atmospheric chemical profile and a good geophysical profile, with tectonic and volcanic activity relegated to the extreme polar regions. Native life is diverse but harmless. Recommended for a colony.

REVISED SURVEY

I guess the initial survey missed the periodic deluges of concentrated hydrochloric acid. Water, hydrogen dioxide, the stuff we desperately need, exists as upper atmospheric vapor only. And to top all this off, there are primitive but intelligent natives that have been watching us from a distance. The situation is grim.

DETAILS

1. The cobbled-together water plant, barely functional
2. A strange mark left on the side of an outbuilding by non-human hands
3. Glowing, metal-eating moss that is attracted to surface-level carbon monoxide
4. Drums in the night
5. A tornado of water vapor, deadly yet essential to life
6. The water-chaser fleet, all six tires on each truck slashed

SIXTEEN

SURVEY

This is the sixteenth and final candidate planet our team assessed. It possesses favorable atmospheric chemistry and pressure and can easily sustain human life. It is a very old and geologically dead world and thus tectonically inactive. There is no intelligent life here. A good location for a colony.

REVISED SURVEY

Planet Sixteen is hellishly hot, averaging 45 °C and dry as a bone. Vast salt flats ring dead oceans. All life here is acidic, corrosive, or otherwise unpleasant. Send help and get us off this rock.

DETAILS

1. A convict's insulated worksuit, the air-tight seals badly corroded
2. "The Ghost," a shimmering apparition that occasionally appears before work details
3. Someone's been stealing piss from the reclamation still and making bootleg water
4. Bolter Praise-God Croff comes back with water, says he's found paradise
5. Spikeleaf acid, meticulously wrung from deadly flowers
6. Pits dug in the sand and hastily refilled

UTS
A
D
E

OAKES TWO

SURVEY

Oakes Two is a geologically complex planet with abundant water supplies and a favorable atmosphere. Gas mix and pressure are human-ideal. Rugged forms of life cling to steep canyon walls. Numerous sites for potential colonies exist. Recommended.

REVISED SURVEY

The climate has a wild daily fluctuation, from 0 °C to 30 °C and back again. Planetary terrain consists of murderously folded slot canyons and pinnacles. Native intelligence watches and waits.

DETAILS

1. An industrial flame-thrower, low on fuel
2. Popcorn Canyon, where the massacre took place
3. "It's like a tree, only it moves. And throws spears"
4. Break-rock crystals that re-knit into fantastic shapes with the weather
5. A hut atop a canyon wall, abandoned since the landing
6. A water sample tagged for immediate incineration

BIBEAULT

SURVEY

Bibeault is a fantastic planet with abundant surface hydrological resources. The atmosphere is ideal for human settlement, and Bibeault teems with life, although no intelligence. Ideal for a colony.

REVISED SURVEY

Bibeault is cold and wet, with a miserable climate hovering just above 0 °C with constant freezing rain. Life is possible between the millions of methane-ethane sinkholes that create uninhabitable regions. And everywhere are, to parrot the late Dr. Laskey, "Aggressive megafauna." This place is a horror and coming here was a huge mistake.

DETAILS

1. A slithering horror, sweating hydrochloric acid
2. The methane refinery module straddling the edge of Jeffer's Deep
3. Dr. Laskey's convincingly-faked death
4. The incomplete settlement monument, befouled by flying monsters
5. The return of the herd
6. Adorable, big-eyes critters that make tractable pets

UTS
A
E F

JORCA TEN

SURVEY

Jorca Ten's atmosphere conforms closely to an ideal human nitrogen/oxygen mix. Native life has not progressed past the multicellular stage. Ideal location for a colony.

REVISED SURVEY

A dense nickel core has resulted in crushing gravity. Water exists in a narrow, difficult to access equatorial band. The survey team didn't stay long enough to experience Jorca Ten's unpredictable continent-wide megastorms. Completely unsustainable.

DETAILS

1. A cyclone eyewall as tall as the sky, black as death, alive with lightning
2. The communication and early warning array at the edge of Big Six
3. A dugout that shields from the elements, scarcely big enough for two
4. A water purifier whose filters are long past their prime
5. A perfectly polished and symmetrical orb of nickel, fully a metre across
6. A sudden electrical storm, filling the air with lightning

TWYNN'S WORLD

SURVEY

I have named this planet after myself because it is such a promising prospect that I am sure to be enshrined forever by this action.

Twynn's World has a stable geological profile, a gentle climate, and abundant water. Recommended for colonization.

-Twynn, Captain,
Survey Vessel
Frederick Valentich

REVISED SURVEY

The atmosphere is dense and difficult to breathe, making field work slow and painful. Local flora is alternately aggressive and explosive. Intelligent creatures are very hostile. Coming here was a mistake.

DETAILS

1. Twynn's Abyss, uncharted cave system and bolter haven
2. A garden of death, cultivated by a madman
3. An eight-foot animal snare-pole, modified to deliver an electric shock
4. A rare shrub yielding berries with hallucinogenic properties
5. An abandoned research station with windows shattered outwards
6. "Creech tried to reason with it"

UTS
B
C
E

BROKEN LADDER

SURVEY

Water everywhere, filled with a variety of harmless life forms, and extremely favorable climatology indicators. Hydrography and geophysics indicate minimal subsurface activity and a stable environment. Good choice for a colony.

REVISED SURVEY

The atmosphere is badly polluted with hydrocarbons, and the existing water is contaminated with metal salts that must be elaborately filtered. Semi-intelligent natives seem to delight in wrecking our filtration equipment. This colony is already dying.

DETAILS

1. Natives jam the filtration with huge jellyfish in ducts, requiring a tedious and dangerous cleaning
2. Food is an algae-based soup tasting vaguely of graphite
3. A much sought-after delicacy are the mollusks found deep underwater
4. A floating marine corpse found in an algae pool at sunrise
5. The Governor's luxurious volcanic mountain redoubt complete with game reserve filled with imported prey
6. Massive fishing boats with varying loyalties

Details by Tewhill

UTS
B
C
F

LADY PENRHYN'S PLANET

SURVEY

Upon long distance scan in transit this planet appears ideal for colonization. Only cellular life exists on a stable and temperate terrestrial surface. Effectively unlimited flat and arable land forms.

REVISED SURVEY

Lady Penrhyn clearly has never seen the awful rock that bears her name. Only a trace of atmosphere remains. Breathing apparatus are required and we do not have enough. There is no naturally occurring water, although this place boasts particularly aggressive bacteria. If I meet the scout who approved colonization here I will murder him.

DETAILS

1. A skin infection that can't be contained
2. Three air masks for seven people
3. "It's in her blood now. She's finished"
4. The "colonial lung", rigged from other less-vital equipment
5. A dosimeter turned black from 200% exposure
6. A lenticular smudge in the sky; atmosphere where there is none

UTS
B
D
E

NUMALLA

SURVEY

A small planet filled with life in all its variety, with predictable and mild weather patterns and large freshwater oceans. Perfect for a colony.

REVISED SURVEY

Active volcanoes pepper the entire planetary surface, a point apparently lost on the survey team. The atmosphere is choked with ash and debris. The intelligent primitives here are implacably hostile to us. We cannot survive in a place like this forever.

DETAILS

1. A seismic chart clearly showing some bad news; the colony is located directly over a non-dormant volcano
2. A pair of homemade haptic gloves connected to a secure network
3. A native on a leash, forced to jump and dance
4. Wrecker Rufaro Chiunda says she has a bomb big enough to trigger an eruption
5. The sky momentarily clears of ash, bombarding the surface with hard radiation
6. Something terrible emerges from the ocean

UTS
B
D
F

NEW KOLYMA

SURVEY

New Kolyma is a water world, but her seas present no challenge to colonization, averaging only two meters deep. The climate, planet-wide, appears temperate and stable. No signs of intelligent life were noted. A strong contender for a colony.

REVISED SURVEY

We brought filters, but not enough. The atmosphere here contains corrosive fluorine and is lethal to breathe directly. The warm, shallow seas make construction and agriculture (aquaculture as well) difficult. We've learned that life here has unusual and deadly biochemistry. Nobody wants to stay here.

DETAILS

1. A grove of pain trees, secretly tapped to harvest their ichorous sap
2. The Sinking Palace
3. "We call it The Raft of the Medusa"
4. The Island, a marine behind every gunport
5. The last case of filters
6. "Save the bones, lads, Captain Sharp has a use for 'em"

U T S
B
E F

LEORICA

SURVEY

Our orbital survey indicates excellent scores in both climatological and biological ratings. This planet is definitely a good colony candidate, a gentle giant. Life on the surface is varied and rich, with no sign of intelligence.

REVISED SURVEY

The atmosphere is low in nitrogen and high in oxygen, corrosive and deadly. Water is contaminated with hydrocarbons from a geologically active, planet-wide oil shale seep layer.

DETAILS

1. A fire that has been burning for half a million years
2. An illegal chemical gun that, if used, will ignite the atmosphere around it
3. A nova bug where it shouldn't be, nearing time to explosively implant its larvae
4. "If you spend too much time outside you... change"
5. A lag, drowned in petroleum as a warning and left on Authority's doorstep
6. A decomposing sternwraith carcass, ten meters long, protecting a still-viable clutch of eggs

KKV NAZINO

SURVEY

KKV Nazino is a strong choice for a colony with plentiful surface water that sustains a variety of inoffensive native plants and animals. Geological activity is slight. This should be a prime candidate for a new colony.

REVISED SURVEY

This colony is in serious trouble due to a poor initial survey. Local microclimates spawn tornadoes and “stone rain” in an atmosphere that is thin and tainted by methane. The natives are carefully observing us and waiting for... something.

DETAILS

1. The remains of a native shield-hut, burned down with a family inside
2. Black Four, a half-assed conversion plant squatting atop an oxygen seep
3. A circle of monoliths less than twenty clicks out from the colony. A calendar?
4. “It’s a ritual sacrifice. Apparently we’re the offering”
5. A native raiding party, looking for the right person, for something terrifying and impossible
6. The sky collapses like the roof of a cave

UTS

C D

F

MARKER 4407-3

SURVEY

4407-3 is tectonically stable; the last volcanic activity was many millions of years ago, resulting in archipelagos dotting planet-spanning oceans. No intelligent life has developed in this paradise. Perfect home for a colony.

REVISED SURVEY

Atmosphere is choked with infectious spores. The climate is constantly wet, with a 28 °C dew point average. Humid and awful. Native biome includes infectious and invasive microbes suited for human hosts.

DETAILS

1. A particle filter with a tiny hole punched in it
2. Folly Beach, with the skeletal remains of a crashed lander
3. "The spores are in the air; the source is in the depths"
4. Clothing in tatters from fungal rot
5. A crudely made boat, packed with supplies
6. The first person to die of "yellow cough"

KULAK

SURVEY

Kulak is a cold world that bears a lot of potential. It is geophysically inert, has no intelligent life, and only the most basic plants and lichens. For hardy and bold colonists Kulak appears to be a winner. Recommended.

REVISED SURVEY

The atmosphere is tainted and toxic to breathe without a filter. Not that anyone ventures out; the climate is brutally cold, averaging -20°C with dips down to -60°C . What water there is is frozen in polar glaciers. This place is a circle in Dante's Hell.

DETAILS

1. The Melt Plant, deep inside a glacier
2. Irreplaceable atmosphere intermix venturis, smashed to pieces with a hammer
3. A bronze bust of a long forgotten world leader, left behind by early explorers
4. A series of hot springs near the Melt Plant, sadly spoiled with toxins
5. Frostbite Fever. First hypothermia, then energetic madness
6. "I don't know what you'd call 'em but I call 'em ghosts"

UTS
DEF

NEW BARSANA

SURVEY

New Barsana boasts abundant supplies of fresh water. There is only the most primitive native life and it is entirely benign. It is the perfect place to locate a colony.

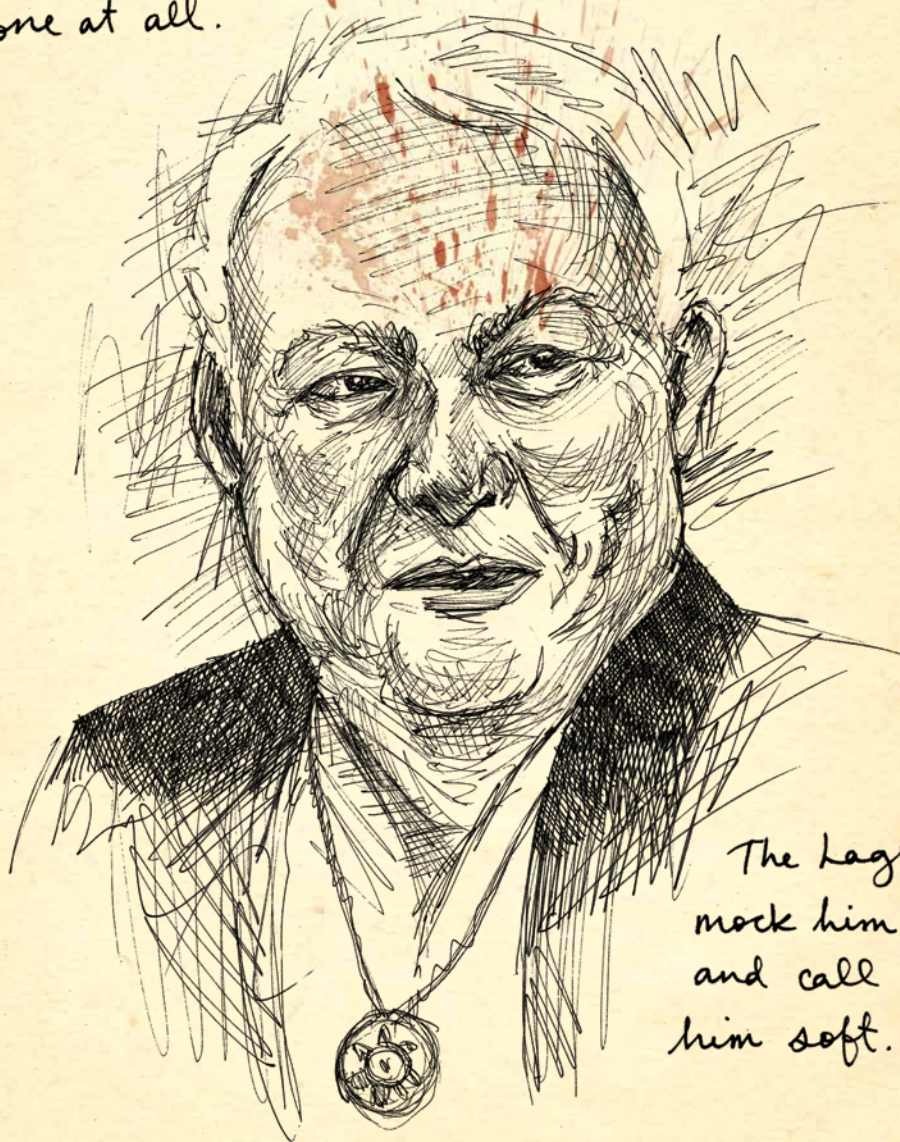
REVISED SURVEY

New Barsana's atmosphere is thin and difficult to breathe. The entire surface is scoured by merciless katabatic winds that never diminish. Lack of metals means New Barsana's gravity is very weak, which may lead to health problems from bone density and muscle loss over time. This is a terrible place.

DETAILS

1. Useless sand samples, acquired at great cost
2. The skid truck, useful only as a windbreak
3. Natives worship gravity-altering rock deep underground
4. While phenotypically distinct, the natives are genetically similar enough to humans to produce [mostly] non-viable offspring
5. A nomadic tribe that raids supplies
6. The stars at night look wrong

Our Judge Advocate. A true believer.
I've seen him show more mercy than
all the rest of Authority combined, and
it does him
no credit —
none at all.



The Legs
mock him
and call
him soft.



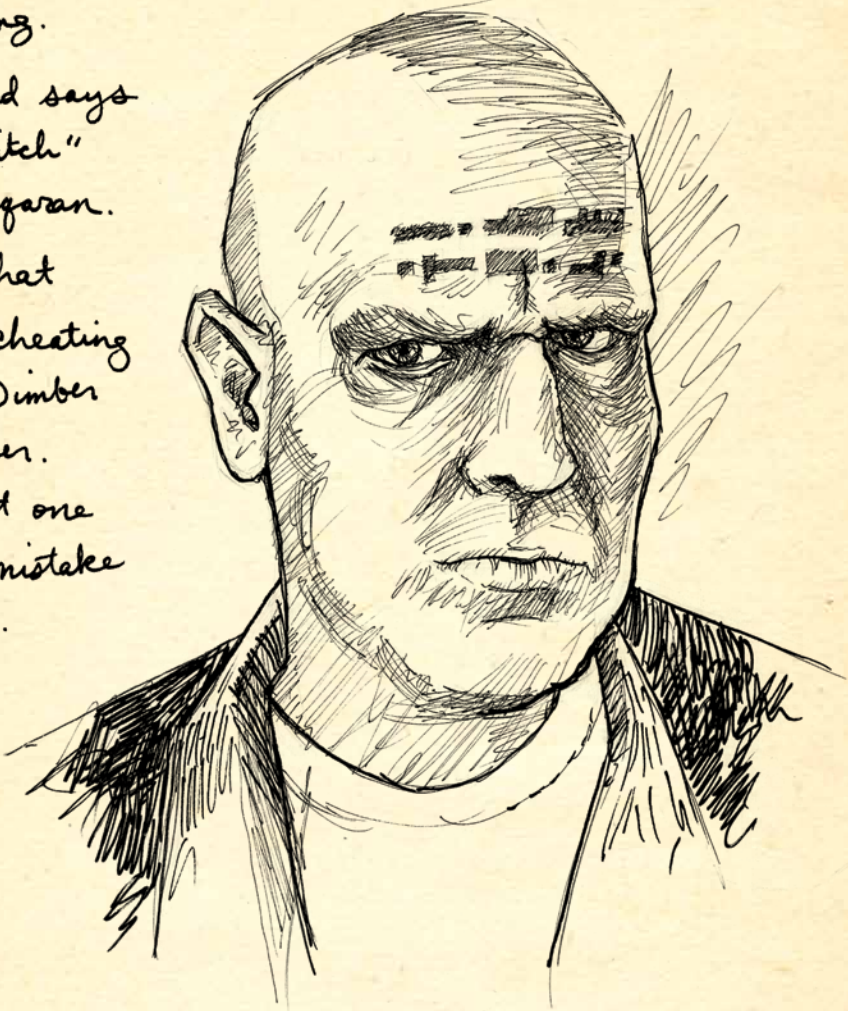


Leg on the iron
gang.

Forehead says
"Bitch"
in Saggasan.

Won that
tattoo cheating
the Dimber
Damber.

You get one
free mistake
here.



Looking north.



COLONIAL RECORDS

AUTHORITY AND CONVICT PERSPECTIVES AND OPTIONAL DETAILS ABOUT YOUR COLONY

The Universal Colonial Record (UCR) consists of six letters, each corresponding to an assessment about the viability of the colony. In practice, the code will be three letters, matching the favorable assessments. Thus, as surveyed, the Winterset colony's record is WXZ.

The following colony records include a brief description written by a member of Authority as an official report on the colony, as well as an unofficial report from the convict perspective. Each record includes six optional details that you can use as color and inspiration for your scene descriptions.

UCR		
Planning is meticulous.	U V	Density is low.
Workforce is motivated.	W X	Prosperity is high.
Order is well-established.	Y Z	Justice is universal.

Planning (U) refers to the intelligent arrangement of dwellings, structures and services within the colony.

Density (V) refers to the land footprint, and living area within it, occupied by the colony.

Workforce (W) refers to the skill, health and motivation of the convict labor pool.

Prosperity (X) refers to the relative success of agricultural and industrial projects.

Order (Y) refers to the compliance and docility of the convict population.

Justice (Z) refers to the colony's rule of law and its just enforcement.

UCR
U V
W **Glough** *page 85*

UCR
V
W X **Mint Hill** *page 95*

UCR
U V
X **Settlement Number One**
page 71

UCR
V
W Y **Croffin's Hole** *page 96*

UCR
U V
Y **Kiddstown** *page 87*

UCR
V
W Z **New Launceston** *page 97*

UCR
U V
Z **Iku Pya** *page 88*

UCR
V
X Y **Temp. Settlement Orange**
page 98

UCR
U
W X **Harmony** *page 89*

UCR
V
X Z **Despoblado** *page 99*

UCR
U
W Y **Victory Downport** *page 90*

UCR
V
Y Z **Capital** *page 100*

UCR
U
W Z **Delta Colony** *page 91*

UCR
W
X Y **Port Jobe** *page 101*

UCR
U
X Y **Burke's Town** *page 92*

UCR
W
X Z **Corrective Colony 14** *page 102*

UCR
U
X Z **Kollopodion** *page 93*

UCR
W
Y Z **Platt Nine** *page 103*

UCR
U
Y Z **Freetown** *page 94*

UCR
X
Y Z **Winterset** *page 104*

AUTHORITY

Glough has been firmly established according to Authority specifications. The colony modules have been arrayed around the administrative hub, built from the hull of the one-way initial transport. The secondary phase of bringing the industrial and residential infrastructure online is underway with crews working around the clock. Though these efforts are currently using all of the work cycles intended for food production, rest assured that this is only a temporary measure.

CONVICT

The modules were damaged on arrival, and the precious schedule got so very bolloxed. Corrupt bastards have been grinding us to death trying to catch up ever since, and every ounce of our sweat and blood goes into expanding the colony instead of finding a way to feed ourselves. The marines take any food we produce straight to the top, while we all starve. We can't take this much longer—even the swells are poised to riot.

DETAILS

1. Geora Ells, emancipist and secret wrecker
2. An elaborate meal served on fine tableware
3. A shrine to a living man, made out of piled stones
4. A food cache, booby-trapped with a grenade
5. Two of three missing lags found, their throats cut, way out by the weather station
6. A human hand sent as a message

UCR
UV
X

SETTLEMENT NUMBER ONE

AUTHORITY

While Settlement Number One has been established according to plan and is well-kept, the situation here is somewhat grim. Thanks to an abundance of natural resources, the industrial output at the various outstations exceeds projections, but the convicts are lazy, troublesome, and unsuited to the work. In fact, the only thing keeping the lags in line is greater violence and intelligence than they can muster themselves. I'm not sure why we need them at all.

CONVICT

Don't Trust Anyone, am I right? That's the first rule. Everyone's desperate and you never know which of your mates is a snitch for the Governor's men. The Judge is completely corrupt, more's the surprise there, and our complaints about food and working conditions are answered with unspeakably brutal reprisals. We steal as much as we can, but they still get most of it back in bribes. They ship the worst troublemakers off to the work camps. If they think that's going to stop us, they're wrong.

DETAILS

1. The Iron Gang, and what they find at the quarry
2. The aristocratic lag, Hancy Mullip-Stews, and his "mechanical manservant"
3. An official map of the colony, with something marked in blood
4. A swell, Prew Fowderhop, the morally questionable genetic scientist
5. A bowl of meaty broth, containing a barely visible fingertip
6. A contract, inked in burnt plastic, signed in blood

AUTHORITY

The Governor's first directive was to turn the eyes of the communications relay we left in orbit toward the planet's surface, providing us with surveillance of the convicts assigned to labor details in the various outstations. The work is understandably hard—the planet doesn't yield easily, after all—but it keeps the lags docile. Any convicts who deviate from their assignment or cause trouble are immediately tracked and removed from the general population for reconditioning.

CONVICT

Do we like the outstations? No we do not. The outstations of Kiddstown are not pleasant. The colony is a vicious police state and we lags alternate between terror and exhaustion, forced labor and complete idleness. Justice is a joke. There is no food, and what little there is they dole out to us based on labor quotas. The weakest are already starving to death, aren't they?

DETAILS

1. A starving crawler too weak to move
2. A vermin control crew, geared up with improvised armor
3. The unyielding facade of the guard tower. Guards observing every movement
4. A lag begs for help and is assiduously ignored by everyone
5. A guard patrol. Everyone looks identical and no variations are visible. All the uniforms are as new
6. The storehouse, under heavy guard

Details by Claes Svensson

UCR
U V
Z

IKU PYA

AUTHORITY

Our hold is growing weaker by the day. The mining domes provide protection from the elements, and we have plenty of room to distribute the convict population, but starvation and disease are rampant. All stages of the agricultural plan have failed, the crops now all dead. All we have now are the myco-nutrient vats from the colony ship, and it is not enough. By mandate from the Governor, everyone is rationed the same, but the lags believe we are holding out on them. I wish it were true.

CONVICT

Oh, what a fine pickle, is it not? Nothing ever according to plan. Everything on the backs of the lags, who are sick and tired, aren't they? Well the day of reckoning approaches, friends, and it is not too far away. They can ration their mushroom pap, but we know they eat like kings and queens behind locked doors. We'll do more than spit in their eye when the day comes.

DETAILS

1. Jeria Kayde, a sable who sells her body, but not in the usual way.
2. Fresh human bones, covered in tool-marks
3. Crawler Jered Greashey's getting fat, and everybody wonders how
4. The *Reliance* arrives, 150 virgin mouths to feed, but more supplies? No, not one seed
5. A useless robotic grain combine with soil-cutting discs
6. A strange poppet fashioned from rags and dead grain stalks

UCR

U
W X

HARMONY

AUTHORITY

Harmony may have many problems, but cleanliness and prosperity are not among them. The colony is organized and operated according to modern principles and convicts are afforded a great deal of autonomy—as much as they prove they deserve. Food is likewise rationed according to merit. Convict protests have resulted in some attrition and subsequent drops in productivity but our marines are well trained and this protest behavior will burn itself out.

CONVICT

We're all afraid, all the time, full stop. They cram us together and work us like dogs, taking all that we make and giving us back a pittance. They use us as they please, when they please, and when anyone steps out of line he's cut down, and cut down for good. They've got a nasty little god complex, our masters in Authority do, and they are not afraid to make examples among the slaves. For the most part they keep us too hungry to raise a fist—but not for much longer.

DETAILS

1. Adolian Lockson, the swell who thinks he's a marine
2. The gibbet, stark and terrible on the parade ground
3. Battle-scarred marines with dead eyes and twitchy fingers
4. The Cage, where few survive the night
5. "It's meat, don't ask any more questions"
6. A needlegun in a waterproof case

UCR
U
W
Y

VICTORY DOWNPORT

AUTHORITY

I'm not sure a pre-fabricated commercial downport was the perfect solution for a penal colony, but perhaps somebody's cousin makes pre-fabricated commercial downports. Don't get me wrong, it's nice—very modern, all flash and style just waiting for the merchant vessels that will never come. So we build it out instead of building more habitats, and grow increasingly corrupt as supplies grow thinner and the writing on the wall grows ever clearer—this place isn't going to last.

CONVICT

Victory Downport my chapped, leathery ass. What a joke, what a very off-color joke. Authority is obsessed with appearances, and we polish the white walls even as our crops collapse. They terrorize us at every turn in service of a failed vision. Everyone is hoarding in advance of the day when there is nothing left, a day that isn't too far off at all. A curse upon them, each more venal and filled with venom than the next, a curse upon the entire bloody system.

DETAILS

1. Lydiniel Penton, who never took her husband's name but does take other things from him
2. The "executive lounge" repurposed for a more disturbing activity
3. Andrew Swift, an old emancipist who saw the downport being built knows all the nooks and crannies
4. The main well, and the diversion pipes leading to a secret project
5. Jane Bracken, lag matriarch to orphans and moneylender to all
6. The massive drydocks, with still-functioning anti-grav fields, now a high-stakes fretball court

DELTA COLONY

AUTHORITY

Don't work, don't eat. That's our motto, and it is hard but fair. There may not be enough food, but there's work enough for all—maintaining the defensive perimeter wall, keeping our densely packed colony tidy and ship-shape, assisting Authority in myriad tasks necessary for the continuance of our functioning judiciary. The lags are docile and obedient. Only the terminally lazy go hungry.

CONVICT

Don't work, don't eat. Don't fight, don't eat. Don't know the right sort of people, don't eat. Don't do what the Dimber Damber asks of you, don't eat. There is a spiral, there is, of the weak getting weaker and the fat getting fatter, and Authority don't care. They do not and it is a fact writ large upon every hateful well-fed face among them. A lag gets his food stolen by a stronger lag and, well, that's just lag trouble, isn't it? They make us into animals and then whip us and call us beasts.

DETAILS

1. A crudely hacked passkey to the thermopool core
2. If celebrating death is a sin, may Margary Hood live forever
3. Lieutenant Gurith's undoctored medical records
4. A blank arrest warrant
5. A crack in the wall, crudely plastered over
6. The case of "missing" fragmentation grenades, carefully shepherded by cooler heads

UCR
U X
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BURKE'S TOWN

AUTHORITY

Burke's Town is on solid footing after a few uncertain months. The colony was well organized from the beginning, and our Governor has long had a vision of order and progress that has carried us far. Walk around Burke's Town—inside the walls or out—and you'll see prosperous farms and obedient lags hard at work bettering themselves and the colony.

CONVICT

Would Burke be proud of his eponymous town? Not if he stayed long enough to see through the tidy walkways, the freshly-painted buildings, and the functional defensive walls. What he'd see if he lingered was a virtual police state, a vicious Authority mob using terror as a cudgel to keep the Lags in line. He'd see food rationing as a weapon. Men working only when forced to. A disaster waiting to happen.

DETAILS

1. The Governor's underground "mansion"
2. A badly forged ration card
3. A hidden stash of delicious food, now gone bad
4. A secret club house for the Authority elite, overlooking the colony and serving the very best food
5. Authority's yearly report, larded with lies but electronically compromised by savvy lags
6. A woebegone line of men shuffling toward the horizon

UCR
U
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Z

KOLLOPOTION

AUTHORITY

Within the well-maintained walls of Kollopodion, the law is enforced with an even hand. Food is rationed according to need, and work is required of everyone according to ability. Unfortunately, the lags are as useless as they are stupid. If we give them a moment unwatched, they steal or destroy everything within reach. Don't they understand we're trying to build something here?

CONVICT

We'll steal, oh how we'll steal—every jackscrew that isn't nailed down we'll steal, and devil take the hindmost. We'll take what we can and barter it for food and pleasure, because that is our way. Now Authority don't care for our way, and that is Authority's cross to bear, isn't it? They think they are fair and even-handed but they are louts, scum, worse than the worst of us. Is it any wonder we hate them? Is it any wonder we tear down anything we can?

DETAILS

1. A stolen marine's rifle with the voice-lock safety disabled
2. Alfrey Grandon and his gang, roaming in the dark beyond the wire
3. Henry Rikethorpe, a muscle-bound nerd. His soft heart may be his weakness
4. Enthusiastic swells struggle to keep mushroom farms running in ever malfunctioning biodomes
5. A set of painted face masks, traded between swells during "raids"
6. The Agorà, a hidden marketplace where the first black market of the colony was established

UCR
U
Y Z

FREETOWN

AUTHORITY

Freetown is the shining administrative hub for a planned series of small communities that have yet to be built. Likewise, our agricultural and energy initiatives have so far failed to bear fruit. These delays are due entirely to the lack of skill and motivation of the convict labor pool. Still, our fair treatment and training programs have at least secured a measure of docility among the lags. With luck, the well-oiled machine of Authority will not be stopped for long.

CONVICT

Freetown, what a laugh, a cruel laugh. Nothing free about it, is there? They certainly ain't free with rations, or with proper time to rest our bones. They keep our crews working all night long, hot-swapping bunks because there ain't enough beds to go around, and for what? All the sweat in the world won't make food grow in this hellish place.

DETAILS

1. Graffiti reading SLAVE TOWN in Saqqaran slang
2. Crate after crate of ruined medical supplies
3. The first attempts at expansion to the satellite areas met a swift and mysterious demise
4. Melissa Tham, wrongfully sentenced to lifetime hard labor on Freetown for the murder of her lover
5. Rodrigo Penmith, a con man who impersonated the wrong person and is now serving that man's sentence
6. "They aren't just fatty tumors, and it isn't an isolated problem"

UCR

V
W X

MINT HILL

AUTHORITY

We're scrambling here, out of our depth. The central compound is all but under siege by the convicts in control of the surrounding industrial outposts. They run the farms and factories, and have all they need while we struggle for resources. The few in the ranks of Authority who have not been bought and paid for by the criminal elite are trying to hold things together but larger, more potent forces are working toward a more dangerous course—collapse, anarchy, the end of everything we've built.

CONVICT

They say Mint Hill was supposed to be a neat, orderly place, a model Authority colony they could all be proud of. Whatever they thought, they didn't count on what they got with this planet, or from the Dimber Damber and this bunch of black-hearted lags. As soon as the outposts were up and running, we started showing them who was really in charge. And we're not done yet, not by a long stretch.

DETAILS

1. Malcold Warry, once a marine and now a damaged, dangerous liability
2. A carefully tended garden, fertile and green
3. Agents provocateurs turn assembly into riots
4. Rock drills that easily overheat and explode
5. A man with a plan... and insurrection is only the first step
6. A pack of local vermin, trained to carry messages and small items

UCR
V
W
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CROFFIN'S HOLE

AUTHORITY

Around Croffin's Hole are four sub-colonies, each a rude collection of huts built largely from native materials. Lags dare not display the slightest sign of disobedience in the face of a savage and oppressive Marine presence. All is peaceful, on pain of death. Convicts work hard because failure to do so is unthinkable. Unfortunately, while we've tamed the lags, the planet steadfastly resists our efforts.

CONVICT

Oh, how we burn with hate. How we toil in ignominious fury, awaiting the main chance. The marines work us ceaselessly, and beat us down when the quotas aren't met. Oh how blessed will the day be when those tables are ruthlessly turned. Soon may they come. Soon may we give to them a tenth of what they've given us here in the Hole. They will suffer and we will laugh. We will eat their food and laugh.

DETAILS

1. The grim workspace of Petephrey Humson, called Dr. Peth
2. A stun baton, cracked open and "hotted up"
3. A feared extremist and agitator is imprisoned on the colony
4. A mass grave, the Slime Pit, filled with bodies of 'disciplined' lags, decomposing with chemical help
5. The three-player chess tournament, an ongoing source of intrigue and tension among the marines
6. Gemma Stuck, a swell who treats her lags like animals

UCR
V
W
Z

NEW LAUNCESTON

AUTHORITY

New Launceston exists in name only. In reality the colony consists of filthy shacks scattered over a hundred square kilometers, each housing only a few lags busy with cottage industry. Authority is necessarily mobile, and the force of law is only truly in effect when Authority is in sight. When Authority is not, angry and disaffected Lags plot and scheme.

CONVICT

So much open space! So much freedom we have! In our shacks we rule ourselves and work according to our talents, producing all that we need. It is a beautiful freedom indeed, until Authority sends in a flying squad of marines to put their laws on us and take what we have made. It is an awful life, a life of fear, and we no longer have a taste for it in truth. We would change it if we could, and some say we can.

DETAILS

1. Corporal Terey Adall, who longs for peace and freedom
2. A plastic tube, long as an arm, stuffed with explosives
3. A misplaced Authority route schedule
4. A sealed off room with a human outline on the floor and a tuning fork resting nearby
5. Recreational drugs hacked into unpleasant performance-enhancers
6. Settlement Eight, silently waiting for Authority to arrive

UCR
V
X
Y

TEMP. SETTLEMENT ORANGE

AUTHORITY

Although food is carefully rationed according to station in Temporary Settlement Orange, there's never enough to go around. Each of the three sub-colony outstations was designed around a different industry, and their success has been decidedly mixed. A better breed of convicts would certainly help—they complain incessantly about the living conditions and poor treatment, and require constant correction to keep them working.

CONVICT

We are sick, starving, not enough food and oh how our bellies do growl. They say there's not enough and that we all eat the same, but we lags see how much food goes straight to the Governor's dome. We mutter among ourselves and sometimes conspire to steal what we need—always food, always devoured on the spot—and sometimes Authority kills us for our audacity. To hell with them. It is a slow death or a quick one but it is still a death, this place is death itself and we are all of us doomed.

DETAILS

1. The marines' secret pact
2. A tiny doll in hand-made clothing
3. A dime-sized video camera, the previous owner's footage unencrypted
4. Proceedings from the Settlement Dissolution assembly
5. Frozen meat, and lots of it
6. Mare Bentwith, crawler and soothsayer

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DESPOBLADO

AUTHORITY

Despoblado was once a pleasant series of outstations connected by well-maintained roads. Authority still governs with an even hand and a stern but fair bureaucracy. Unfortunately lags only work now when forced to, reveling in a culture of resistance, protest and dissent. What they cannot steal they destroy; their corruption has ruined this colony, and infected Authority at every level. I fear for our future.

CONVICT

We run this place. We have taken over the means of production, corrupted it and made it ours. Authority can go hang; they are powerless here and have dug their own clean, white-walled grave. We take what we want and they are powerless to stop us. In every outstation we conspire and suborn, taint and destroy as it suits us. This is a good place.

DETAILS

1. Benneth Bale, a lag with a gift for finding weak spots in the social order
2. A weird necklace fashioned from stripped insulation and gold teeth
3. Old roads, built before the colony was established
4. John-Francis O'Dell, an Authority bureaucrat who actually believes in the system's ability to help people
5. The maintenance tunnels beneath the roads are the "Lag Highway" —unregulated, unseen, and untaxed
6. The road-train, well guarded

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CAPITAL

AUTHORITY

We have standards to uphold. This will be the center of Authority's empire across the Rift one day and we'll make it a success through a combination of force (the language lags understand) and the rule of law. It is not easy, currently. For those who comply with regulations, life is only marginally terrible. For those who resist—and their numbers are unfortunately growing—it is going to be extremely terrible.

CONVICT

We all eat the same grub in Capital, mighty Capital, capital of nothing but misery. The outstations were all built based on surveyor lies—the work is pointless toil, the planet unyielding, and eventually the supplies we brought are going to fail. And yet Authority presses ever on, insisting that everything in Capital be done according to established procedures, even the summary executions.

DETAILS

1. A flag, desecrated
2. Three quiet men with identical tattoos
3. A swell's outstation brothel, thriving on sex slavery
4. The sickly-sweet odor of rotting meat
5. The bake shack, its oven converted to an unwholesome use
6. An open letter in a shaky hand, addressed to the Governor

PORT JOBE

AUTHORITY

Our first job after planet fall was to bore out tunnels in which to build our new paradise. That wasn't the original plan, but plans must make way for the necessities of surviving this hellish place. We've established light industry with some small success. Security is tight and we've learned that when dealing with lags an iron fist is a better tool than an open hand. It is the way of things, as unpleasant as it is.

CONVICT

There's the tunnels, which is safe and secure, and then there's the hovels on the surface we live in, collapsing old prefabs that aren't safe or secure, oh no. There's the wire, and we don't go beyond that do we? Here we are in old Port Jobe, half dead with fear, without a friend or a meal, targets for any marine half bored and looking for sport.

DETAILS

1. The Judge Advocate is working lags on the side for personal profit
2. Ricton Tens, emancipist-turned-swell, who has accumulated a constellation of enemies
3. A hand-held rock-melter, up for sale on the black market
4. A thick book, marked "Official Use" and filled with onion-skin pages detailing every corridor, every secret entrance
5. An impromptu hunt, staged while the Governor is away
6. "I wish to lodge a formal complaint in accordance with Article 7 Section 9"

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CORRECTIVE COLONY 14

AUTHORITY

Authority is firmly in charge and her laws are enforced, including programs of food rationing and industrial labor, but the lags are restive, angry, and full of schemes. Little can be expected—they are a hard, grasping lot who would gladly ruin everything we've built here just to spite us were we to let up for even a moment.

CONVICT

Corrective Colony Number 14 has barely taken root. Every structure is temporary, dilapidated, and dirty. No effort has been made to expand the initial fortified compound. Why is that? We have a whole miserable planet to work with and yet Authority keeps us caged like animals inside this martinet's fortress.

DETAILS

1. A convict tattoo rig
2. The assembly platform and gallows
3. A custom-built device carefully packed in its own protective crate
4. Crawton's Crawl, an above-ground warren of dilapidated shacks
5. Shab Mannin, a lag who used to be a Marine
6. The burn Pit, and what it contains

PLATT NINE

AUTHORITY

Here on Platt Nine we have it good. The lags are kept within easy reach in our compact little colony. Our eyes are always upon them and the work is light, since we've brought machines to do the truly heavy lifting. True, the local environment has presented certain challenges for our equipment, but we're a match to the task. We stay within our walls and our lags are passive and complacent.

CONVICT

They brought machines but the machines don't work, do they? Our new home is a colony half-built and littered with the giant, rusting wrecks. They began to break immediately and we lags, well, we're harder to break. So Authority's precious machines fall by the wayside and we take their place. We do our part, we do the work, but it's not enough. The rations grow thinner by day and we're tired, so very tired, of doing the work of clanking machines.

DETAILS

1. Private Willia Ranner, as cruel as she is stupid
2. A menacing digging machine—they think it is broken but it isn't, not all the way
3. Native microbes, energetically devouring lubricants and fuel
4. A card game with the highest possible stakes
5. A sharpened push-rod with a friction tape handle
6. The Old Hole, miserable home to those who have been forgotten—or overlooked

WINTERSET

AUTHORITY

We have law here and it is enforced. Article 34 is very clear on treasonous dissent and we have interpreted that statute as liberally as has been necessary to keep the lags in line and the colony prosperous. As a result there are two sorts of lags here—those who are docile and obedient and those who are dead. Given our circumstances there is no other practical approach and no one in Winterset is going to apologize for it. Article 34 is very clear.

CONVICT

Some say Authority has gone monster here, infected by some madness. A terrible madness that makes the Judge Advocate kill-crazy, screaming day and night about violations of Article 34, putting bullets into heads at the slightest provocation. I say Authority was a monster long before it sent us to Winterset. I say monsters need to get stakes put through their hearts. I say there has been enough killing, and that to stop the killing there needs to be a little more killing.

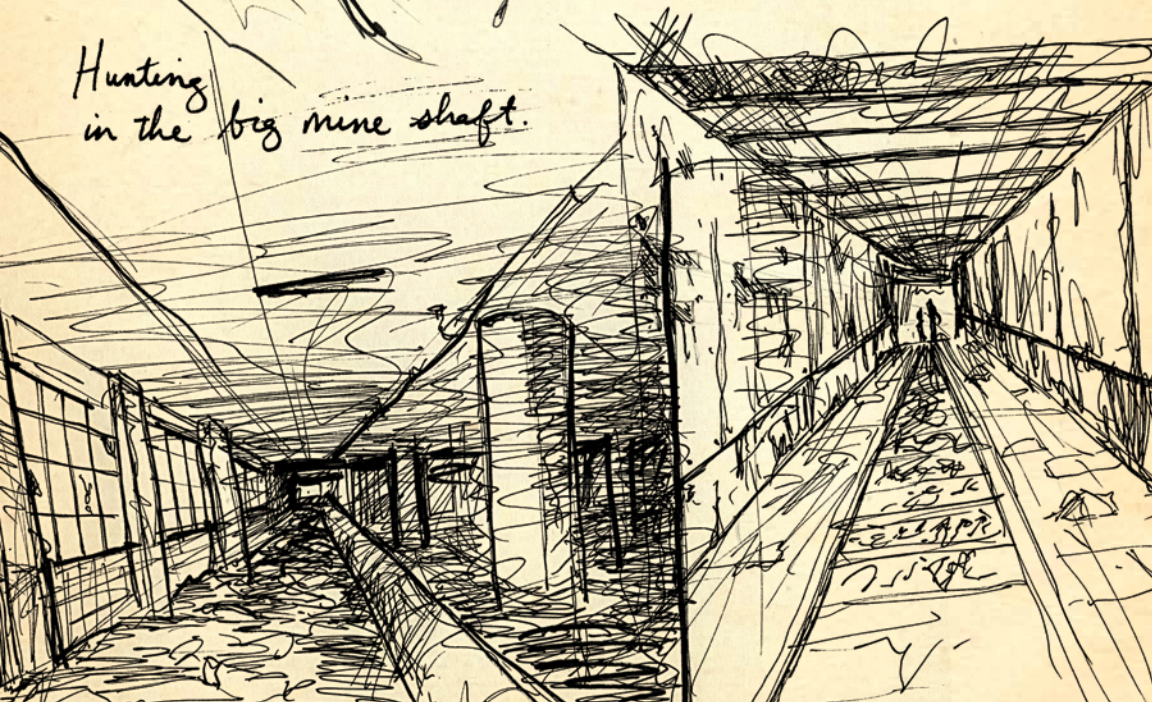
DETAILS

1. Clion Bard, murderer and pimp and Sergeant of Marines
2. A secret child
3. Orphia Marre, the most cunning and beautiful of all sables
4. A map leading to a forgotten stash of firearms
5. A mass grave, off limits under Article 34
6. Three crowns made out of networking fiber and melted silver



We trapped Powe in the tunnels and brought him up alive. He was hungry and sick. Typical Bolton - lasted a week.

Hunting in the big mine shaft.



NAME LIST

Use these for inspiration. Pick and choose, or roll randomly if you prefer.

MALE NAMES

ONE

1. Gidner
2. Lymand
3. Rogan
4. Pereman
5. Hugust
6. Mard

TWO

1. Ed
2. Levey
3. Kenniel
4. Hamin
5. Tim
6. Cornall

THREE

1. Docton
2. Holace
3. Wilton
4. Frandon
5. Dalker
6. Irvin

FOUR

1. Anders
2. Dencius
3. Fordison
4. Lynard
5. Kencer
6. Keecham

FIVE

1. Rustis
2. Rayle
3. Alben
4. Hamer
5. Ollis
6. Monrad

SIX

1. Evert
2. Dalvin
3. Prew
4. Gille
5. Clarvis
6. Will

FEMALE NAMES

ONE

1. Olinie
2. Laull
3. Judia
4. Edie
5. Vella
6. Almie

TWO

1. Linna
2. Lunicent
3. Jemmy
4. Halia
5. Chara
6. Marola

THREE

1. Percia
2. Sela
3. Wend
4. Drusane
5. Orphia
6. Philvia

FOUR

1. Mitty
2. Dinica
3. Nance
4. Leorica
5. Prude
6. Myrtha

FIVE

1. Lora
2. Rhona
3. Juline
4. Freta
5. Robela
6. Tinda

SIX

1. Margaret
2. Viola
3. Laudra
4. Fay
5. Theria
6. Nelma

SURNAMES

ONE

1. Croffin
2. Robbes
3. Pill
4. Saux
5. Haley
6. Fierbes

TWO

1. Shepett
2. Gunmith
3. Grison
4. Wills
5. Bracer
6. Stakens

THREE

1. Halkes
2. Wriham
3. Kilch
4. Balton
5. Waycox
6. Atkin

FOUR

1. Hatts
2. Keech
3. Marre
4. Pilver
5. Varford
6. Geambe

FIVE

1. Jacks
2. Fraham
3. Calton
4. Glour
5. Larley
6. Fowderhop

SIX

1. Kidd
2. Pardon
3. Colt
4. Smickley
5. Oakes
6. Haylow



Man's flesh is delicious. It tastes far better than fish or pork.

-Alexander Pearce

OATH LIST

1 BETRAYAL

1. I will never betray my beloved [person or group]
2. I will never rat out my mates
3. I will never keep a profitable secret
4. I will never deny or abandon my faith
5. I will never miss an opportunity to eat well
6. I will never trust again

2 MERCY

1. I will never allow harm to come to [person, group, object or location]
2. I will never prevent [person, group, object or location] from being harmed
3. I will never allow an innocent to go hungry
4. I will never show a weaker man mercy
5. I will never kill a man
6. I will never allow the natives to suffer because of our folly

3 PRIDE

1. I will never abandon what I have built here
2. I will never see goodness or value in any of this
3. I will never pay for “protection”
4. I will never take charity from anyone
5. I will never ask for mercy
6. I will never disgrace my [position, office or uniform]

4 AUTHORITY

1. I will never tolerate insolence or disrespect
2. I will never forgive those who break the law
3. I will never punish those who break the law
4. I will never abuse my power
5. I will never moderate my power
6. I will never tolerate incompetence

5 HONOR

1. I will never let honor interfere with personal gain
2. I will never break a promise
3. I will never keep a promise
4. I will never go back there again
5. I will never give [object] back
6. I will never steal, nor let a theft go unpunished

6 SELF INTEREST

1. I will never allow [person or group] to best me
2. I will never forgive [person or group] for what they've done
3. I will never place my own safety over the people's freedom
4. I will never place the people's freedom over my own comfort
5. I will never treat [person or group] as an equal
6. I will never step out of line



Dog must not steal from dog.

-Convict saying

EVENT LIST

TIED ONES

- 1. Epic Event: Unexpected visitors.** A long overdue transport arrives. Is it badly damaged, with new convicts but no supplies? Is it carrying an unknown plague and many sick convicts and crew? Does it overflow with fresh goods, vital equipment—and guns?
2. Love, that rarest of commodities, exerts its fleeting influence
3. What seems like cruelty is actually kindness
4. Regret stays a cruel hand
5. Mercy tempers justice
6. A brief moment of quiet dignity

TIED TWOS

1. Death, amid mind-numbing terror
- 2. Epic Event: Horrific disaster.** A massive explosion rips through the colony. Scores are dead, and every soul must be put to work picking up the pieces if the colony is to survive. Was it an accident? Sabotage? An attack by bolters? All three? Does an environmental problem amplify in a terrible way? The fight for survival begins now.
3. Well-founded paranoia
4. What is coming cannot be stopped
5. What we know could fit in a hat. What we *don't* know...
6. Hate, that most common commodity, exerts its powerful influence

TIED THREES

1. Death, amid violation and agony
2. It's in the water
- 3. Epic Event: Creeping madness.** Something is driving people insane. Who is it effecting, and how? Is it something in the air or the water, or is it the pressure cooker life in the colony that is causing it? Can it be stopped or will it spread until the entire colony collapses into insanity?
4. The gravity of absolute power bends reality around it
5. Desperation and desire are comfortable companions
6. What seems like kindness is actually cruelty

TIED FOURS

1. Death, amid bad choices and hasty actions
2. Starvation leads to poor decision making
3. Family—biological or otherwise—closes ranks
4. **Epic Event: Mobs—and not just convict mobs—descend on anyone hoarding the precious remaining food.** Will they be stopped? At what cost? Will they succeed, and if so, what will happen when the orgy of gluttony and violence finally subsides?
5. A terrible truth is revealed
6. Is that smoke?

TIED FIVES

1. Death, amid smug mendacity and vicious self-interest
2. Tell the truth long enough and it becomes a lie
3. Tell a lie long enough and it becomes truth
4. The cat is out of the bag
5. **Epic Event: Planet of doom.** We all knew the survey was faulty, but no one could have guessed they would *lie*. Do the natives reveal some new capability or resource that threatens the status quo? Does some deadly, cyclical event occur that threatens the colony?
6. They would kill to know it

TIED SIXES

1. Death, bittersweet freedom
2. Perhaps it is time to bolt
3. What could end this pain?
4. A simple mistake leads to riches
5. One signature is all you need
6. **Epic Event: Coup d'état.** Carefully planned events are set in motion to up-end the colonial hierarchy. Is it a prisoner's revolt? An "officer's plot" to remove the Governor—or the Dimber Damber? Mirror-maze political machinations at the highest level, intended to flush out traitors?

Don't even know this guy's name - he's quiet as a mouse, beaten all his life by people like me I suppose.

Very interested in his

tattoo - he didn't

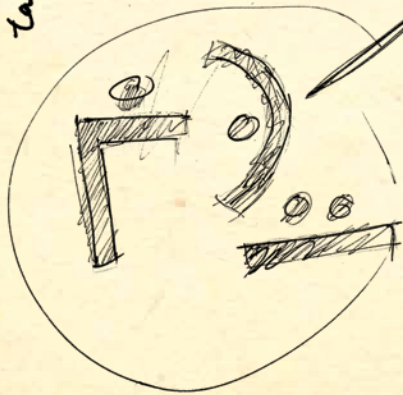
want to discuss it.

I asked Smickley,

and he said it's

Saggaran

- gang symbols -



Emancipist symbol.



Smickley said our mouse was a bad old man once upon a time as his neck reads "murderer, rapist, king of thieves." Guess the Dimber Damber can't read Saggaran.

THE FIRST FLEET AT PORT JACKSON, 1790



“This country is subject to very heavy storms of thunder and lightning, several trees having been set on fire, and some sheep and dogs killed in the camp since we landed. All the provisions we have to depend on until supplies arrive are in two wooden buildings which are thatched. I am sensible of the risk but have no remedy.”

—Governor Arthur Philip
to Undersecretary Evan Nepean,
July 9th, 1788.

Durance was inspired by the amazing and terrible odyssey of the first European colonists in Australia, who were English convicts and their minders. Not a lot was changed other than adding a thin science fiction gloss, so if you would like to play Durance in its historical context you should feel free. What follows has been slightly bent to serve the game and you, likewise, should feel no pressure to hew to reality. Craft your own reality instead.

THE VOYAGE

During the voyage to Australia there were 22 births, of whom nine were girls. 69 people embarking never made it, ending their voyage early through death or enterprise.

When the fleet arrived at Port Jackson, 1,373 souls disembarked. Among that number were 543 male and 189 female convicts, the 22 above-mentioned children, 245 marines and their 54 wives and dependents, 306 crewmen from the transports, and 14 additional “officials and passengers.”

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CONTINENTAL SURVEY

The fresh, unspoiled atmosphere in the antipodes is excellent. Sydney Cove could provide a safe anchorage for a thousand ships, and there are abundant freshwater streams. The landscape surrounding the port is level and arable. However, plant and animal life here is difficult and strange: trees harder than iron, venomous creatures in abundance, and nothing edible. The climate is hardly suitable, alternating between oppressive heat and violent thunderstorms. Finally, the natives are suspicious when not outright hostile and they throw their fire-hardened spears with astonishing force and accuracy.

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COLONIAL RECORD

Port Jackson is a poorly planned mess, with both ragged tents and a few pre-fabricated brick buildings that are already crumbling in the sun. Crops that don't immediately fail are poached by starving lags. The only gardening success consists of a cabbage patch on a guarded island. His Majesty's representatives themselves, sorely tempted by distance and necessity, have become corrupt in their own small ways. On the bright side, the lags work hard at their tasks as a general rule, and outstations have sprouted up, relieving cramped conditions and offering new opportunities further up the Paramatta River. And everywhere, the King's justice is a firm and occasionally Draconian constant.

Mapping Australia's aboriginal people to unknowable aliens in the main game is a little clumsy and insensitive, but on some level the lora Cadigal that met James Cook and, later, the First Fleet in some sense *were* unknowable. That contact with European civilization was a disaster is a given.

COLONIAL NOTABLES

The Governor

His Excellency Captain Arthur Phillip [Governor and Commander in Chief of the Territory of New South Wales, and of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels Employed on that Coast]

Functionaries

Major Robbie Ross [Commander of Marines and Lieutenant Governor],
Davy Collins [Judge Advocate]

Swells

Johnny White [surgeon], Dick Johnson [chaplain], Augustus Alt
[surveyor]

Planters

William Tunks [Farmer and former Marine] and Stephen Buckley

Marine Wives

Marie Kimberly Standfield, Ann Thomas

Marines

Sergeant Edward Champion, Corporal Daniel Standfield and Private
Samuel Thomas

Emancipists

David Densham

Dimber Damber

Mary "Mother Goose" Love

Captain Sharp

Benjamin Wager

Bolters

William Saltmarsh

Lags

Robert Scattergood, Albert Limpus and Edward Bearcroft Perrot

Sables

Mary Marshall, Mary Wickham and Ann Carey

Wreckers

Tom Dwyer and Jane Bonner

Crawlers

Joseph Owen and Elizabeth Beckford

RESOURCES

Internet

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_Fleet

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Australia

<http://firstfleet.uow.edu.au/download.html>

[Spreadsheet of First Fleet convicts, crimes and sentences]

Books

Boyce, James. *Van Diemen's Land*

Burgmann, Verity and Jenny Lee [eds]. *A Most Valuable Acquisition*

Clarke, Marcus. *For the Term of His Natural Life*

Connor, John. *The Australian Frontier Wars, 1788-1838*

Dixon, Miriam. *The Real Matilda*

Dyer, Colin. *The French Explorers and Sydney 1788-1831*

Flanagan, Richard. *Gould's Book of Fish: A Novel in Twelve Fish*

Flannery, Tim. *The Birth of Sydney*

Fletcher, Brian. *Colonial Australia Before 1850*

Grenville, Kate. *The Secret River*

Hughes, Robert. *The Fatal Shore*

Karskens, Grace. *The Colony: A History of Early Sydney*

Karskens, Grace. *The Rocks: Life in Early Sydney*

Keneally, Thomas. *The Playmaker*

Langker, Robert. *Flash in New South Wales, 1788-1850*

Presland, Gary. *First People: the Eastern Kulin of Melbourne, Port Phillip and Central Victoria*

Reynolds, Henry [ed]. *Dispossession: Black Australians and White Invaders*

Reynolds, Henry. *An Indelible Stain? The question of Genocide in Australia's History*

Reynolds, Henry. *Frontier: Aborigines, Settlers and Land*

Reynolds, Henry. *The Other Side of the Frontier*



I do not scruple to pronounce that in the whole world there is not a worse country than what we have yet seen of this. All that is contiguous to us is so very barren and forbidding that it may with truth be said, here Nature is reversed.

– Major Robert Ross



MARK SMITH



ABOUT THE ARTIST

Maret Brackley was born into a family of itinerant praise singers on Pinda in the year 301. She enlisted in the Colonial Marines in 319, reporting for infantry basic training that same year. In 320 Private Brackley was assigned to II Marine Expeditionary Force, Third Brigade, Landing Force Command Support Group [Penal]. She shipped out with the First Fleet aboard the contract merchant vessel *Rogan Amble*, being promoted on arrival for unspecified acts of valor during the 250-day voyage. Brackley's sketches offer colorful insight into life in the difficult early years of the colony, and serve as a reminder of the humanity of those first settlers—free and convict alike. Lance Corporal Brackley was killed by unknown assailants in 325.

ABOUT THE HISTORIAN

Joses Bonney is professor emeritus of history at Arpanyari-Friendship University on Saqqara. Dr. Bonney is the son of Governor Franter Bonney and was raised in the Winterset colony on Pratt's Folly, an experience that sparked a lifelong interest in Authority's misadventure across the Great Rift. His monograph *A Constellation of Lags* is considered a seminal work in the field.

OUR THANKS

“It being the intention of Authority to remove the inconvenience, grudgingly suffered, from the prisons being so exceedingly crowded with criminals, who had been by the laws condemned to transportation, this expedition was determined upon to form a settlement for this salutary purpose. These men and women, some brave, some craven, some free and some decidedly not, embarked upon this great journey. To them we, their descendants, owe thanks.”

WRECKERS

For their particularly generous crimes and colony-threatening behavior, the following convicts deserve special mention.

Brett Bozeman

Mike and Julianne Capps

LEADERS

His Excellency, The Governor

Claes Svensson

The Dimber Damber

Tewhill

MINIONS

Captain of Marines

Gregor Hutton

Judge Advocate

Paul Blair

The Abbot

Zachary T. Cross

Captain Sharp

Paul Tevis

SWELLS

Joshua J. Bear, Bootler, Chad J. Bowser, Mo Henry Bug, Dylan Clayton, Jamie Clements, Steve Dempsey, Steve Donohue, Ian Frazier, Matthew Gagan, Stephen Granade, Cory “LateNightHunter” Grant, Rob Hall, Kairam Ahmed Hamdan, Arwen Hubbard, Jonathan Chia Kangyu, Jody Kline, Justin Kowalski, John Lammers, Stephen Andrew Lewis, Zac Lunstrum, Eric Lytle, Nich Maragos, Flavio Mortarino, Chad “The Badger” Patterson, Jason Ramboz, Stuntlau Mario Perez Ramirez, Philip Reed, Josh Rensch, Nathan “noofy” Roberts, Nick Savage, David A. Schimpff, Zebulon Thobaben, Luis Velasco, C. Joshua Villines, D. Spencer Zier

RESUPPLY SHIPS

7th Dimension Games, Crazy Squirrel Game Store, Pablo Doba, Dragon's Lair Comics & Fantasy, EndGame, Sean Holland and Tyche's Games, Leisure Games, Eric Logan, Ezio Melega, Modern Myths, Inc., Myriad Games, Jason Pitre, Rainy Day Games, Tijn "Subcultures" Rams, Rogues Gallery Comics & Games, Sphärenmeisters Spiele, The Haunted Game Cafe

BOLTERS

8bitnerdy, Daniel Abernathy, Stras Acimovic, Matthew Allen, Simon Andrews, Paul Bachleda, Roi Barbichette, Alex Bareham, Edoardo Baruzzo, Dale and Jennifer Beach, Joe Beason, Ingo Beyer, Dave Borne, Trent Boyd, Paul Bradley, David Bresson, Jason Buisman, Phil Cahiwat, Daniel Gonzalez da Costa Campos, Paul A. Catalano, Jr., Tony Cheng, Lawrence "Saker" Collins, Bradford Cone, Brian Cooksey, Matthew Coverdale, Josh Crowe, Neal Dalton, Phil Davies, Mark "buzz" Delsing, Stephen Dewey, David Dorward, Adam Drew, Judge Advocate-in-waiting, François Drouin-Morin, Herman Duyker, Brett Easterbrook, Paul Echeverri, Randel N. Evans II, Adam Everman, Mathias Exner, Chris Farrell, Declan Feeney, Fel, Rob Ferguson, Ken Finlayson, Garrett Fitzgerald, Jeremy Friesen, Joe Greathead, Bryan Haakensen, Neal Haggard, MJ Harnish, John Harper, HeySteve, Seth Hoover, Chuck Hughes, Brian Isikoff, Tim Jensen and Willow Palecek, Dr. Sod Jones MD, Joel "Pika" Keeney, Frank W King, Matthew Klein, Jordan Klinefelter, Adam Koebel, Gregory Krakovich, michael amoureux-sauve, Saga LaTorra, Nate Lawrence, Jonathan Lee, Masaru Lee, Sean Leventhal, Daniele Lostia, Timothe Loya, Marc Majcher, Stephen T. Marbit, Paul May, Jonathan McCulley, John Mehrholz, Paul Messerly, Noah Miller, Slim Mittens, M. Sean Molley, Filthy Monkey, Steven Moy, Ryan Myers, Rick Neal, Sean Nittner, Nick Novitski, Stefan Ohrmann, Ryan "The Bastard" Percival, Yan Périard, Brian H Poe, Ryan, the Rainman, Martin Ralya, Robert Rees, Michael Reese, Epistolary Richard, Carl Rigney, Stewart Robertson, Grant Rodiek, John Rogers, Simon Rogers, Rolapin, Shervyn, Adrian Stein, William F Stephenson, Luke Stowell, Livia von Sucro, Thomas Taimre, Deadbolt "Andy K" Thrush, Troll T. Troll, uberman a.k.a. James, Brian Volk, Lester Ward, Simon Ward, Matthew Wasiak, watergoesred, Nick Wedig, Justin Wightbred, David William Wilt, Chris Yates, Dave Younce, Jeff Zitomer

MARINES

Rishi Agrawal, Matt Alexander, Giulia Barbano, Nat “woodelf” Barmore, Joshua Beale, Mark Bjorkman, Nathan Black, Michael D Blanchard, Peter Borah, Bryan Bornmueller, Anthony Austin Bouvette, Jon Bristow, Steve Burnett, Ben Buster, David Campbell, Dan Cetorelli, Morgan Childs, CK, Edouard Contesse, Justin Currie, James E. Deykes, Maddog Dickinson, Jonathan C. Dietrich, Bastian Dornauf, Scott Dorward, Clinton N. Dreisbach, Matthew C. Duda, Julia B. Ellingboe, Morgan Ellis, Evil Hat Productions, Vladimir Filipović, Frank Fiol, Jake E. Fitch, Alex Fradera, Dale Friesen, James Gabrielsen, David Gallo, James Galloway, Don Gardner, Brittany Gary, Jason Giardino, Michael Gibson, Jonathan A. Gillett, Chris Gomez, Jack Gulick, Andrew Hackard, Ville Halonen, Michael Harrison, Seth Hartley, Kevin Heckman, Adam Hegemier, N. Heilke, Sebastian Hickey, David Hines, Richard Hirsch, Steve Holder, Matthijs Holter, Jeffrey Hosmer, Will “Confusionest” Howard, Scott Huchton, Link Hughes, Pete Hurley, Zeiger Industries, Tim “Buzz” Isakson, Paul Johnson, Jeff Jones, Myshella Nemes Pentarl Kassad, Pat Kemp, René John Kerkdyk, Charles King, Jonathan Korman, Matt Landis, Jérôme “Brand” Larré, Larry, Melanie and Doug LaVigne, Marcus Leitzen, Russell S. Lenhares, Mark Levad, Lucaricci, Dan Luxenberg, Chad Maue, Ralph Mazza, Joe Mcdaldno, Sophie Melchior, Jerry L Meyer Jr CWT, Will Monte, Dom Mooney, David Moore, Carl Muckenhoupt, Matthew Munoz, William Nichols, Guillaume “Nocker”, Christian A. Nord, Anders Olsen, Oricalm, Lisa Padol, Justus Pang, Tom “palfrey” Parker, Andrew Peregrine, Brian Peters, Shane Phillips, Frank “Peach” Piechorowski, Adam “StealthBuda” Potts, Adam Rajski, Nick Reed, Konstantinos “Yo! Master” Rentas, Kent Rice, Jonas Richter, Brand Robins, Kat & Jason Romero, Greg Roy, Ryan S., Timothy Sanders, Michael Sands, Mendel Schmiedekamp, Kynnin Scott, Alosia Sellers, Calvin Shafer, Jennifer Skahen, David Stoneking III, Travis Stout, Bruce Stringer, Matthew Stuart, Cameron Suey, Matthew Sullivan-Barrett, Brennan Taylor, Lee Thomas, Owen Thompson, Trachalio, Turk, Scott Underwood, Kelley “Cabbage” Vanda, Jason VandenBerghe, Roland Volz, J. Forest Wallace, Jonathan Walton, Rachel E.S. Walton, Steven K. Watkins, Daniel Westheide, Whitt, Ryan Wiley, Victor Wyatt, Sam Zeitlin, Pedro Ziviani

LAGS

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PLANETARY SURVEY

UTS		
<i>Atmosphere is excellent.</i>	A B	<i>Climate is mild.</i>
<i>Geology is stable.</i>	C D	<i>Hydrology is favorable.</i>
<i>Biology is benign.</i>	E F	<i>Intelligent life is absent.</i>

COLONIAL RECORD

UCR		
<i>Planning is meticulous.</i>	U V	<i>Density is low.</i>
<i>Workforce is motivated.</i>	W X	<i>Prosperity is high.</i>
<i>Order is well-established.</i>	Y Z	<i>Justice is universal.</i>

WHAT DRIVES US IS...

CONTROL

HARMONY

STATUS

INDULGENCE

SAFETY

FREEDOM

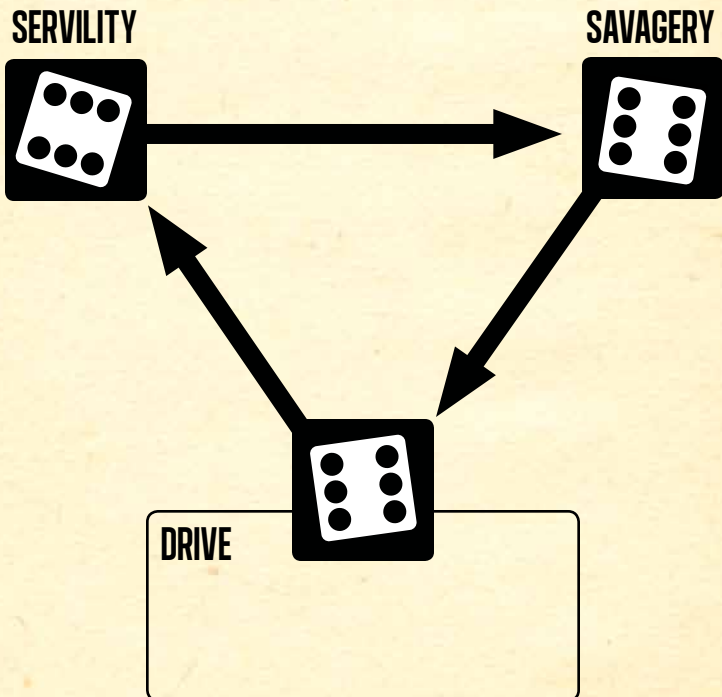
A NEW PLANET...

PLANET NAME

... OUR NEW HOME ...

COLONY NAME

AND UNCERTAINTY...



AUTHORITY NOTABLES



THE GOVERNOR

*Authority's highest-ranking official.
Name, Oath and player.*

FUNCTIONARIES: JUDGE ADVOCATE & CAPT. OF MARINES

*The Governor's enforcers.
Name, role, Oath and player.*

FREE COLONISTS: SWELLS, PLANTERS, & SPOUSES

*Nobody paid them to go to hell.
Name, role, Oath and player.*

MARINES

*Authority's big sticks.
Name, rank, Oath and player.*

EMANCIPISTS

*Former convicts, free but distrusted.
Name, Oath and player.*

CONVICT NOTABLES

THE DIMBER DAMBER

*Ruler of the criminal universe.
Name, number, Oath and player.*



MINIONS : THE ABBOT & CAPTAIN SHARP

*Lord of vice or god of war.
Name, number, role, Oath and player.*

BOLTERS

*Runaway gangsters, convict royalty.
Name, number, Oath and player.*

CONVICTS: LACS & SABLES

*Burglars, con artists, prostitutes, robbers, etc.
Name, number, role, Oath and player.*

OUTCASTS: WRECKERS & CRAWLERS

*Political prisoner or useless, ruined prisoner.
Name, number, Oath and player.*

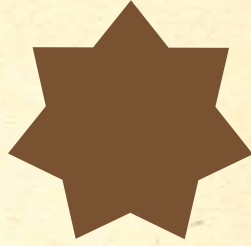


Debe Moss -
Sanctimonious
wrecker scum.

Sketched on the day
of her execution.

May she twist in hell
with all her kind.

DURANCE STEP BY STEP



PREPARING TO PLAY

STEP ONE: HOUSEKEEPING

Host: Have a copy of these rules on hand, and all necessary handouts printed and ready. Have some pencils as well as three six-sided dice in different colors. Put the Uncertainty Triangle sheet on the table where everyone can see it.

STEP TWO: PLANETARY SURVEY & COLONIAL RECORD

Host: Hand the Planetary Survey and Colonial Record worksheet to the player on your left.

Player to the left of the Host: Choose one of the six assessments to be favorable and circle it. Choose a different one to be false and cross it out. Pass the sheet to the player on your left.

Next two players in turn: Repeat the above step. After the third player chooses, the three letters associated with the favorable assessments, such as ABC or BDF, form your planet's Universal Terrestrial Survey [UTS].

Next three players in turn: Repeat this process with the Colonial Record. The letters that remain form your Universal Colonial Record [UCR].

Everyone: Look up your planet and colony [Planetary surveys begin on page 57 and Colonial Records begin on page 83]. Read the descriptions and details aloud. Write the names on the Uncertainty Triangle sheet. Take a moment to choose a few details that you like and collectively imagine what your colony and planet are like.

STEP THREE: DRIVES & UNCERTAINTY

Next player to the left: Take the Planetary Survey and Colonial Record worksheet and cross off the Drive option you like the least.

Next three players in turn: Cross off one Drive option each.

Next player: Cross off one Drive option. The only remaining option is your session's unique Drive. Write it on the Uncertainty Triangle sheet.

Everyone: Take a moment to imagine how the chosen Drive will be reflected within the colony and how it might motivate your characters.

STEP FOUR: NOTABLES

Host: Grab the Colonial Notables sheet from the table and use it to explain the concept of the Ladder, with notables split between Authority and Convict and the rungs of power.

Next player in rotation: Take the Notables sheet and choose a role that you're interested in and write down the name of a Notable (names are located on page 106). If the role has further options, such as the Minion or Functionary role, choose the specific descriptor now. If you are creating a Marine, choose a rank (private, lance corporal, corporal, sergeant or lieutenant).

Next players in turn: Continue rotating the Colonial Notables sheet, with each player choosing and naming a Notable as above. Build concrete relationships whenever you can.

After every player has written down one Notable: When everyone has written down one Notable, go through the rotation again with each player in turn naming a second notable. This one must be on the opposite side of the Ladder and on a different rung from their first.

After every player has written down two Notables: The player of the highest-ranking Notable on the Authority side (most likely the Governor) should describe how the convicts are controlled and assign each convict character a unique serial number and write it on the Notables sheet.

STEP FIVE: OATHS

Next player: Choose any notable. Consult the Oath List [see page 108] and choose the one thing they have sworn they will never do as long as they draw breath. Write the “I will never” Oath in their position on the Colonial Notables sheet.

Next players in turn: Continue rotating the Colonial Notables sheet, with each player writing down the Oath of a colonial notable. When every player’s two characters have oaths, hand the sheet back to the Host.

STEP SIX: WRAPPING UP

Host: Fill in names for any blank positions on the Colonial Notables sheet. These characters get nothing beyond names.

Everyone: Take a moment to collectively explore and describe the planet, the colony, and the relationships between the notables.

Host: Roll a die for each of Savagery, Servility, and the chosen unique Drive to establish starting values. The three dice should be rolled and placed in the middle of the table on the Uncertainty Triangle sheet, each in its corresponding box. This is the last step—you’re ready to play!

PLAYING DURANCE

GUIDING THE SCENE

Host: Starting with you and rotating clockwise, each player in turn is the Guide of a scene.

Guide: Shine the spotlight on some interesting notables and circumstances in the colony and ask a question about them.

PLAYING THE SCENE

Everyone except the Guide: Decide which notables are involved and build a scene that can answer the question posed by the Guide. Actively look for ways to threaten Oaths, possibly by putting them in conflict with your chosen Drive.

Guide: Watch as the other players explore the scene. If necessary, ask clarifying questions [“what does that look like?”]. Only play a character if invited into the scene.

Everyone: The outcome of the scene is up to you as a group. Be sure to answer the Guide’s question. If at some point you are uncertain about how the scene should end, go immediately to the dice for inspiration [see “If There is Uncertainty” below].

Guide: When the scene is winding down, help bring it to a conclusion and pass your responsibilities as Guide to the player on your left. If you are also the Host, assess whether the game is nearing its conclusion [see “Ending the Game” below]. If so, let everyone know.

IF THERE IS UNCERTAINTY

Guide: Choose two dice to roll from the Uncertainty Triangle, leaving one alone; the die value for that Drive does not change. roll the two dice to determine which Drive will color the resolution.

Everyone except the Guide: Compare the new die values. A Drive with a die value higher than the next die in clockwise order can be used to resolve the scene.

Guide: If there is more than one Drive option, choose which one to use. If there is any disagreement that cannot be resolved, delegate the decision to one player.

If there is a tie: If two dice tie, use the dominant Drive to resolve the scene, with the addition of a special event. If all three dice tie, the scene is interrupted by an epic event. See the Event List on page 110.

Everyone except the Guide: Interpret how the dominant Drive will guide the resolution and play out the end of the scene. Be sure to answer the Guide’s question.

The player to the left of the Guide: When the scene is finished, you are the new Guide. If there was an epic event, your scene should center around that event.

IF SOMEONE BREAKS AN OATH

Player of the oath-breaker: Choose one of the following options:

- A notable [not necessarily the oath-breaker] changes position on the Ladder
- A Planetary Survey or Colonial Record assessment changes, for better or worse
- The unique Drive for the game changes

Everyone: Determine what effect this change has on the story, and prepare to integrate it into your next scene. The oath-breaking character is no longer an important notable, and should now be considered part of the cast of minor characters.

IF SOMEONE CHANGES POSITION ON THE LADDER

Player of the transitioning Notable: Adjust your character's position to reflect the new colonial order. It is now acceptable to have both of your characters on the same side or rung of the Ladder. There can also be more than one character occupying the same position on the Ladder.

Everyone: Determine what effect this change in position will have on the story, and incorporate this into the following scenes.

IF A NOTABLE DIES

Everyone: It is entirely acceptable to kill any colonial notable [or non-notable] as part of a scene. It's also fine, with their player's approval, to use the death of a character as the background for a question.

Player of the dead character: Claim a named but un-authored position on the Colonial Notables sheet. If there are no open positions add a new notable on a rung you have not yet had a character occupy.

Player to the left of the dead character's player: Author an Oath for the new character.

ENDING THE GAME

Host: Every time you take a turn as Guide, assess whether your game is close to the end. When the combined number of broken oaths and dead, insane, or missing notables exceeds the number of players, your story is likely almost finished.

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