

Mystical THROWBACK Throne Entertainment Presents
MERCENARY BREED



MERCENARY BREED

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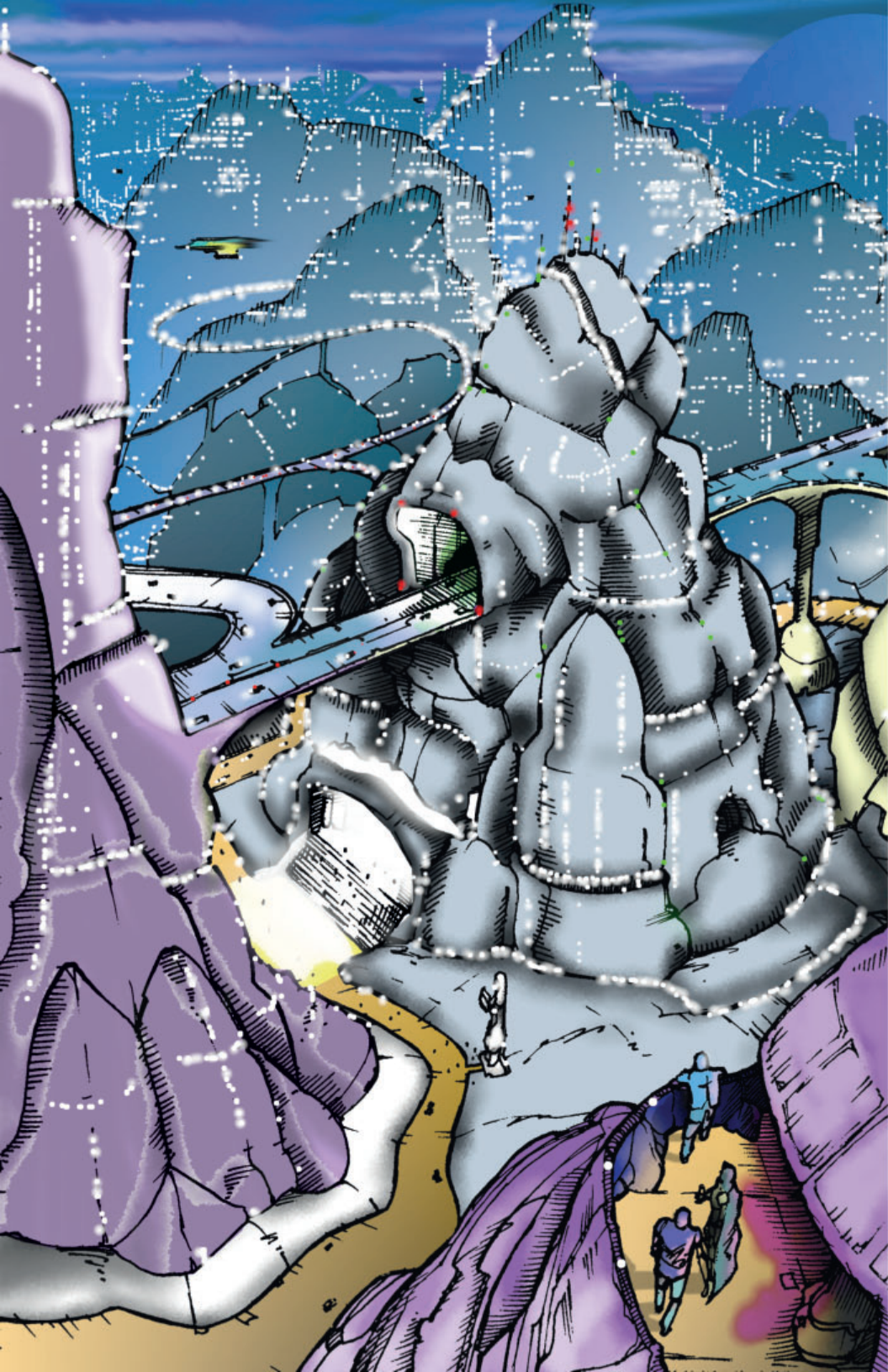
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Mercenary Breed [Core Setting Guide] 3rd Edition April 2012

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MERCENARY BREED

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MERCENARY BREED is a space opera set in a distant galaxy where inter-planetary corporations hire mercenaries to do their dirty work. It is a mini-setting for *Savage Worlds* with supplemental content available exclusively through *Savage Insider*. Players assume the roles of mercenaries hired by one of the many, inter-planetary mega-corporations seeking to protect their assets and resources at any cost. These mercenaries are commanded by a Master of the Mercenary Force, a role typically assumed by a noble or executive within the corporation.

Mercenaries spend much of their lives training with the hope that they, too, will someday work for one of the great corporations and earn Renown. When joining a mercenary force, the mercenaries spend their time on a starship completing various missions given them by their master. The better they perform the more respect they earn from the corporation and the quality of their lives increases. Let the corporation down and they're bound to find themselves conscripted to guard duty in a backwater strip mine located on a frigid planet.

MERCENARY BREED is set within the galaxy locally referred to as Argo. This galaxy houses a collection of life-sustaining planets with multiple alien races, including a human-like race known as Gemini. Each planet carries its own government, laws and military while appointing three senators to sit upon the House of the Alliance – a governing body for the entire galaxy. Many races raise their children for a life of action and adventure in the hopes of joining one of the mercenary forces across the galaxy. Their backgrounds are as diverse as the technology their race embraces.

Planets and races that wish to have friendly dealings with others join the Alliance. This allows them to participate in the general dealings of the other planets including merchant access, ease of immigration and general starport access. Generally, joining the Alliance benefits a planet socially, politically and monetarily. By opening their arms to the rest of the galaxy, they are inviting new opportunities to increase their wealth.

INTRODUCTION

The House sets laws and precedence that govern how the different planets and races interact with each other. This includes open trade, merchant laws, immigration and any agreement between multiple planets. However, the House is easily influenced by the myriad inter-planetary corporations that do business amongst multiple planets. The money these corporations offer often causes attentions to turn the other direction while various deeds are being performed. A corporation is only as powerful as its ability to control its own holdings; this is where the Mercenary Forces come in.

MINI-SETTING

MERCENARY BREED is a mini-setting for *Savage Worlds*. What makes it a mini-setting is that it lacks much of the core details of a defined setting; this is done purposefully. **MERCENARY BREED** is meant to be an experience in creativity as much as it is a role-playing game. Game Masters should encourage their players to design detailed characters, create their own races, and generate home worlds and communities. With a galaxy filled with many life-sustaining planets, anything is possible.

Players should be allowed to create any type of background imaginable without worrying about how well it fits with the setting. Design the adventure or campaign setting around the player characters instead of forcing the players to create characters within specific design constraints. Make this a collaborative effort where players feed off each other as well as bouncing ideas off the GM. This can create amazing characters from fantastic worlds with a variety of backgrounds.

There are numerous sentient races within the Argo galaxy. Most of these races are humanoid in nature and train willing and eager individuals to assume mercenary careers. Some of these races, such as the Gemini, and associated home worlds are detailed within this setting guide, while others will be introduced later.

One thing to keep in mind is that all races should be humanoid or at least carry human-like qualities. Otherwise GMs may find themselves creating a lot of new mechanics to accommodate races that can't carry standard weapons or operate standard equipment.

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When the player characters are created, the GM can begin the process of designing the setting and its inherent genre. For instance, your space opera may become a fantasy space opera or contain elements of steampunk or post-apocalyptic ideas. The key is to allow the players all the freedom they desire thus creating a space opera setting that utilizes the character types they designed. Space opera can easily contain elements of fantasy, horror, cyberpunk, pulp or even superhero. **MERCENARY BREED** provides the tools, framework and guidance while the GM and the players build the actual setting.

When everything is done, there may be some balancing to perform – this is very important. You don't want your sword-bearing mercenaries to square off against laser-carrying, power-armored warriors. However, try not to stifle creativity. Find new ways to balance your setting with weapon powers or even special abilities – be creative.

SETTING

The **MERCENARY BREED** setting is purposefully vague. This essentially creates a sandbox tool-kit rather than a defined setting. GMs and players create new races and the planets from which those races hail. Likewise, you should work together to create racial profiles presenting basic bonuses and penalties along with creating new Racial Edges. The framework of the setting should remain the same, considering the given mechanics, but feel free to create new weapons and armor to complement the characters being created. Two inter-planetary corporations are detailed and GMs are encouraged to create their own. This could range from corporations focused on building weapons to those supplying food. Do not feel limited by the type of corporation created.

Subsequent issues of *Savage Insider* will introduce new races, planets, weapons, armor, corporations, and a variety of content that can be used directly within your own games or as a reference for creating your own items. This will include new Standard Issue equipment with a higher Renown requirement giving the characters something to work toward. Standards of Living will also be introduced

allowing the characters to move out of their simple, starship rooms and into their own apartments or exquisite condos.

MERCENARY FORCES

Players need very little reason to be brought together as a fluid mercenary force. Each corporation hires their own mercenaries or conscripts them from a block of available candidates. Upon being hired by a corporation, each mercenary is then assigned to an applicable force.

Available positions within these mercenary forces do not appear often. They are typically a product of mercenary death, retirement, reassignment, or part of a newly created force. Mercenaries do not simply quit their job as they know too many corporate secrets and have knowledge of possible conspiracies. To avoid a public disaster, corporations reassign mercenaries that are becoming bored with their current force or desire a higher seat within the company. Those who become bothersome to the corporation are sent on extremely dangerous missions in the hope that they will not survive. Mercenary deaths are quite common.

Upon the creation of the now complete force, typically consisting of five to ten mercenaries, all members report directly to the Master of the Mercenary Force for immediate deployment. By the time one is assigned to a mercenary force, they have already finished all required training, thus deployment is immediate. If the force is lucky, they will be deployed planet-side and given room and board within a corporate apartment, townhouse, or condominium. If they are not as lucky, the team will spend their time on a capital ship, living in confined spaces and sharing all common areas with hundreds, sometimes thousands, of other people.

The core mechanics of **MERCENARY BREED** assume the mercenaries are being brought together for the first time within a newly created mercenary force. Expanding a previously created force would require the creation of NPCs to take the part of the remaining mercenaries.

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SPACE TRAVEL

Technology through the Argo galaxy has produced faster-than-light (FTL) travel. This speed is equivalent to one parsec or 3.26 light-years. Each FTL increment produces one parsec of travel per year.

EXAMPLE: *FTL1 equals one parsec traveled per year; FTL2 equals two parsecs traveled per year, and so on.*

Average spacecrafts can travel at FTL6 while higher technology spacecrafts can safely travel up to FTL12.

Each planet is contained within a solar system. These solar systems are all a part of the Argo galaxy. Most solar systems are one-half to two parsecs from their closest neighboring solar system. With the average distance being one parsec, the average spacecraft can thus travel between solar systems in eight weeks. Higher technology spacecraft, such as those built by the Festoon, can travel between these solar systems in only four weeks.

Space travel throughout the Argo galaxy uses Earth-based measurements for ease of mechanics and explanation.

Travel outside of the galaxy is possible, but would take hundreds if not thousands of years. Those who wish to travel to other galaxies should incorporate the use of wormholes that quickly transport a spacecraft from one section of the universe to another.

CHARACTER CREATION

CHARACTER CREATION

Characters come in all shapes and sizes and can vary greatly from an epic hero to a simple peasant and everything in-between. Players follow the standard character creation rules within the *Savage Worlds* core rulebook using the following notes, explanations, and changes. Races, home worlds, and backgrounds are discussed later in this book.

TRAITS

Every character is created using traits that fall into one of two categories. Attributes describe who a character is through Agility, Smarts, etc. Skills define what a character is capable of doing through Fighting, Knowledge, Guts, and more. Players are encouraged to create any type of character they want from those with high strength to those with a high level of intelligence.

ATTRIBUTES

Your character begins with a d4 in each of the standard attributes: Agility, Smarts, Spirit, Strength, and Vigor. Divide 5 points among these attributes using 1 point to raise a single attribute one die type. No single attribute may be raised above d12.

EXAMPLE: *Raising Smarts d4 to d6 would cost 1 point while raising Smarts d4 to d8 would cost 2 points.*

SKILLS

Each character has 15 points to divide amongst the list of allowed skills. Not all skills from the *Savage Worlds* core rulebook will be applicable to each setting and new skills have been added. Purchasing a skill costs 1 point and begins at a d4. Raising a skill costs 1 point per die type as long as it doesn't exceed the die type of the associated attribute. Raising a skill's die type above the associated attribute's die type costs 2 points.

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EXAMPLE: Purchasing Fighting costs 1 point. Raising it to d6 costs 1 more point. Raising Fighting to d8 while the associated attribute, Agility, is a d6 costs 2 points for a total of four points.

DERIVED STATISTICS

- Pace is 6", plus an additional d6" when running.
- Parry is equal to 2, plus half your Fighting skill and applicable bonuses from shields or weapons.
- Every character begins with a Charisma of +0 unless they have a Hindrance or an Edge that changes it.
- Toughness is equal to 2 plus half your Vigor attribute and applicable bonuses from armor.

CHARACTERISTICS

Setting your character apart from others is done by choosing Edges and Hindrances. Each character is allowed one Major Hindrance and two Minor Hindrances. Each Major Hindrance is worth 2 points and each Minor Hindrance is worth 1 point.

For 2 points you can raise an attribute one die type, before or after choosing skills, or choose an Edge. For 1 point you can gain another skill point or gain an additional 500 credits to your starting funds.

Before choosing Edges and Hindrances, all characters must choose a race as part of their character creation. Racial backgrounds carry associated bonuses and penalties that apply to further character creation.

EQUIPMENT

Purchasing equipment does not work the same way in **MERCENARY BREED** as it does in the *Savage Worlds* core rulebook. As noted in the **Equipment** chapter, mercenaries requisition their gear, even during character creation. As such, none of their 500 starting credits need to be spent on the standard equipment load-out.

SKILLS

To accommodate the space opera setting and technology, there are a few skill additions for **MERCENARY BREED**.

HACKING (SMARTS)

As a new skill, hacking encompasses all advanced computer use. This includes bypassing sophisticated security systems, finding files within secret archives and hacking into someone's computer system remotely. The need for this skill is to highlight the complications of advanced computer usage.

INVESTIGATION (SMARTS)

In addition to the current description, the Investigation skill encompasses all basic computer use. This is limited to standard use of any computer terminal to look up data, find files, or any other operation which does not need to be kept secret or require special skills.

NAVIGATING (SMARTS)

Due to the wide variety of planets within the Argo galaxy, only those with advanced navigational skills can easily find their way throughout an unfamiliar territory. This skill covers navigating by spaceship, boat, car, plane and any other planet-side vehicle. A Navigating roll should only be required while within unfamiliar territory. If you are attempting to drive through your own city, country or planet, a Navigating roll is not necessary.

ARCHETYPES

While *Savage Worlds* is a system with lots of flexibility and the lack of standard archetypes, some players may wish to skip parts of character creation and jump right into a game. To make this possible, here is a list of archetypes for quick play or creative reference.

BOUNTY HUNTER

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Charisma: -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

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Skills: Climbing d8, Fighting d6, Gambling d6, Lockpicking d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Tracking d6

Hindrances: One Major, two Minor

Edges: Alertness, Brawny

Race: Apply racial template, Gemini simply gain an extra Edge

DOCTOR

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Charisma: -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 4

Skills: Fighting d6, Healing d8, Investigation d8, Knowledge (Biology) d6, Persuasion d8, Survival d6

Hindrances: One Major, two Minor

Edges: Hard to Kill, Healer

Race: Apply racial template, Gemini simply gain an extra Edge

ENGINEER

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Charisma: -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Skills: Fighting d6, Hacking d8, Investigation d8, Lockpicking d6, Repair d8, Shooting d6

Hindrances: One Major, two Minor

Edges: Jack-of-All-Trades

Race: Apply racial template, Gemini simply gain an extra Edge

HUNTER

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d4, Vigor d8

Charisma: -; **Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d8, Survival d6, Tracking d6

Hindrances: One Major, two Minor

Edges: Alertness, Fleet-Footed

Race: Apply racial template, Gemini simply gain an extra Edge

INFILTRATOR

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d4, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Charisma: -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5

Skills: Fighting d8, Lockpicking d8, Stealth d8, Throwing d8, Tracking d8

Hindrances: One Major, two Minor

CHARACTER CREATION

Edges: Dodge, Extraction

Race: Apply racial template, Gemini simply gain an extra Edge

NAVIGATOR

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Charisma: -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 4

Skills: Fighting d6, Investigation d6, Navigating d8, Notice d6, Piloting d6, Repair d6, Shooting d6

Hindrances: One Major, two Minor

Edges: Alertness, Danger Sense

Race: Apply racial template, Gemini simply gain an extra Edge

OFFICER

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Charisma: 2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Skills: Fighting d6, Persuasion d6, Shooting d6, Streetwise d6, Survival d8, Taunt d8

Hindrances: One Major, two Minor

Edges: Attractive, Command

Race: Apply racial template, Gemini simply gain an extra Edge

PILOT

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d4

Charisma: -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 4

Skills: Driving d8, Fighting d6, Navigating d6, Notice d8, Piloting d8, Shooting d6

Hindrances: One Major, two Minor

Edges: Ace, Luck

Race: Apply racial template, Gemini simply gain an extra Edge

SHOCK TROOPER

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Charisma: -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

Skills: Driving d8, Fighting d8, Riding d8, Shooting d8, Throwing d8

Hindrances: One Major, two Minor

Edges: Fast Healer

Race: Apply racial template, Gemini simply gain an extra Edge

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EQUIPMENT

Working for a multi-trillion credit corporation has its definite benefits. Mercenaries quickly learn they do not purchase their equipment. It is received through standard issue. A corporation's pockets are very deep, but they are limited in the type of gear allowed according to Alliance laws.

Before reaching planet-side for a new mission, mercenaries take a trip to the armory and acquire their gear. Each mercenary is granted up to the following (actual gear availability is based upon their Renown):

- 3 Standard Issue weapons
- 2 Standard Issue explosive devices
- 1 Standard Issue armor (mix and match to create a desired armor set)
- 4 Standard Issue sets of ammo (weapon dependent)
- All necessary mundane items

Anyone seeking to use exotic weapons, armor, ammunition, or other devices must do so with their own money. The corporations will outfit their mercenaries as dictated by the House, but any unregulated gear must never be possessed by the corporation itself.

BENEFITS

Mercenary forces are always given the most basic housing. As one's Renown increases, they may be able to requisition better housing. When mercenaries first start, they are each given a small room to call home. These are on the starship captained by their master and include a bed, personal area, one large closet and a small attached bathroom.

In addition to housing, the mercenaries are all properly fed within the starship's cafeteria. During missions, the mercenaries are granted a number of credits suitable for meals for the entire party over the course of the maximum number of days necessary to carry out the mission. Housing is established by the corporation as long as it has holdings on that planet. If it is a planet where they do not, housing

must be arranged and paid through reimbursement. The mercenaries pay the allowable cost of housing and are reimbursed by the corporation upon completion of the mission.

Basic clothing is also given to the mercenaries. Anything else must be purchased by the mercenaries. This is not an activity the corporations reimburse for.

Mercenaries are paid for their services. Each one receives 100 credits per month of service in addition to the stated benefits. Mercenaries are free to spend their credits however they choose.

REOWN

Renown is a measurement of how well your character performs during each mercenary mission. It is gained during mercenary missions, but not side missions. Renown can also be earned for fantastic role-playing or extraordinary feats during game-play. However, do not throw around Renown as a free gift or treasure: it is designed to measure a character's strength, bravery, determination and overall success as a mercenary. Characters should earn Renown, not simply be gifted it.

Renown is an integral part of **MERCENARY BREED** as it determines a character's standard of living and level of equipment they can requisition. Due to the nature of working for a powerful corporation, the characters should be able to easily acquire the equipment necessary to complete a mission. Adding mechanics for Renown justifies a character's ability to acquire better weapons and armor along with sustaining a much higher standard of living.

Each character gains an amount of Renown upon completion of a mission, dependent upon how difficult the mission was.

- **Standard:** Standard missions are those which the characters are able to easily complete. They do not require much time, nor do they test a character's limits. Upon completion of a standard mission, each character is awarded 1 Renown.
- **Difficult:** Difficult missions are those that span two to three game sessions and consist of several character challenges. They require characters to properly use their skills and Edges

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to achieve success. Upon completion of a difficult mission, each character is awarded 3 Renown.

- **Brutal:** Brutal missions are extremely difficult and should span three or more game sessions filled with multiple character challenges. Failure is extremely possible. Near-death experiences should be common. Upon completion of a brutal mission, each character is awarded 5 Renown.

Remember, combat is not the only way to measure a mission's difficulty. Missions that consist of complex investigations are just as difficult as a particularly strong foe.

Renown is expressed as x RN within cost tables where x equals the amount of Renown required to requisition that item. Standard Issue equipment is requisitioned using Renown while Exotic equipment has to be purchased. A character's standard of living can also be increased when their Renown increases; this will be introduced in later releases.

Characters cannot requisition anything higher than their current Renown, but can requisition anything lower. However, they are still limited to the amount of equipment allowed during requisition and by how much weight they can carry (using standard encumbrance mechanics).

Higher quality equipment should be created within Renown brackets of five. Thus, new equipment would become available at 5 RN, 10 RN, 15 RN, etc. Don't feel obligated to offer complete packages at each Renown bracket – such as offering a new line of melee and ranged weapons along with ammo and armor sets. Higher quality equipment should be spread across to balance their stats with what a character should have access to.

A simple mechanic for deciding Renown ranks for new equipment is to compare the new equipment with the old equipment and how the strength of that equipment increases. Every 2 increases could be treated as a 5 RN bracket.

EXAMPLE: *A Survival Knife is Str+d4 while a Molecular Knife is Str+d4+2, AP 2. There are a total of 4 increases between the two knives: d4 to d4+2 = 2 increases; AP 0 to AP 2 = 2 increases. Thus, a Survival Knife is 0 RN while a Molecular Knife is 10 RN.*

If the equipment appears too easy to obtain, increase the Renown brackets to 5 RN per 1 increase. Using the above example, the Molecular Knife now becomes 20 RN instead of 10. Increases could consist of augmenting damage with a given number (such as +2) or increasing the AP. However, this is simply a guideline and GMs are free to create their own Renown brackets.

EQUIPMENT TABLES

Mundane equipment follows the standard items available from the Savage Worlds core rulebook along with what would be reasonable for a given mission. There are a number of changes to hand, ranged, and special weapons along with new charts for armor and ammunition. Those tables are contained herein with cost removed and Renown put in its place.

All equipment appearing on these tables with a given Renown cost are considered standard issue appropriate for a characters level of Renown. None of this equipment requires purchasing but still follows the standard load-out. Any equipment that does not conform to one of the given items may be considered exotic which is not considered standard issue. Exotic equipment must be purchased by the character, given as a reward for excellence during a mission, or recovered during the course of a mission.

All standard issue equipment is available across all racial members of the Alliance. Exotic equipment can only be recovered from races outside of the Alliance, exotic weapon collectors or dealers, or from pirates.

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Type	Range	Damage	RoF	RN	Weight	Shots	Min Str	Notes
Pistols								
Hand Pistol	12/24/48	2d6+1	1	0	4	17	-	AP 1, Semi-Auto
Needle Pistol	12/24/48	2d6	1	10	3	6	-	AP 5
Plasma Pistol	12/24/48	2d6+1	1	15	5	6	-	AP 4, SBT
Hand Revolver	12/24/48	2d6+1	1	0	3	6	-	AP 1, Revolver
Machine Gun								
Machine Gun	30/60/120	2d10	3	0	30	250	d8	AP 2, May not move
Submachine Gun	12/24/48	2d6	3	0	10	30	-	AP 1, Auto
Rifles								
Assassins Rifle	60/120/ 240	2d8+2	1	10	12	5	-	AP 4, Snapfire
Assault Rifle	24/48/96	2d8	3	5	10	30	d6	AP 2, Auto, 3RB
Coilgun	30/60/120	2d8+3	1	15	8	2	d6	AP 6, Snapfire
Electrothermal Rifle	24/48/-	2d8+1	1	15	6	-	-	AP 8
Hunting Rifle	50/100/ 200	2d8	1	0	12	5	d6	AP 2, Snapfire
Plasma Rifle	20/40/80	2d10	1	15	8	8	d6	AP 4, Snapfire, MBT

Type	Range	Damage	RoF	RN	Weight	Shots	Min Str	Notes
Railgun	50/100/ 200	2d8+3	1	20	10	2	d8	AP 8, Snapfire
Scram Rifle	60/120/ 240	2d8+3	1	25	8	2	d6	AP 8, Snapfire
Semi-Auto Rifle	24/48/96	2d8	1	0	10	8	d6	AP 2, Semi-Auto
Shotguns								
Double-Barrel	12/24/48	1-3d6	1-2	0	11	2	-	See core rulebook
Pump Action	12/24/48	1-3d6	1	0	8	6	-	See core rulebook
Special								
Flamethrower	Cone Template	2d10	1	15	6	-	d6	Ignores Armor
Grenade	5/10/20	3d6	-	0	2	-	-	MBT
Hand Flamer	Cone Template	2d6	1	10	3	-	-	Ignores Armor
Plasma Grenade	5/10/20	3d6	-	10	2	-	-	AP 4, MBT
Bows/Thrown								
Axe	3/6/12	Str+d6	1	0	4	-	d6	
Bow	12/24/48	2d6	1	0	3	-	d6	
Crossbow	15/30/60	2d6	1	5	10	-	d6	AP 2, 1 action to reload
Knife/Dagger	3/5/12	Str+d4	1	0	1	-	-	
Long Bow	15/30/60	2d6	1	0	5	-	d8	
Spear	3/6/12	Str+d4	1	0	5	-	-	

MERCENARY DRUM

Type	Damage	Weight	RN	Notes
Hand Weapons				
Axe	Str+d6	4	0	
Brass Knuckles	Str+d4	1	0	You are considered an Unarmed Attacker
Chain Axe	Str+d6+4	6	15	AP 2, a natural 1 on the Fighting die (regardless of the Wild die) hits the user instead
Chain Sword	Str+d8+4	10	15	AP 2, a natural 1 on the Fighting die (regardless of the Wild die) hits the user instead
Dagger	Str+d4	1	0	
Electrostick	3d6	2	5	Requires 1 action to reload, 50% chance of causing +1 level of Fatigue
Halberd	Str+d8	15	0	Reach 1, 2 hands
Hand-forged Axe	Str+d6	4	5	AP 2
Hand-forged Dagger	Str+d4	1	5	AP 2
Hand-forged Halberd	Str+d8	15	5	AP 2, Reach 1, 2 hands
Hand-forged Sword	Str+d8	8	5	AP 2
Katana	Str+d6+2	6	10	AP 2
Molecular Axe	Str+d6+2	4	10	AP 2
Molecular Halberd	Str+d8+2	15	15	AP 4, Reach 1, 2 hands
Molecular Knife	Str+d4+2	1	10	AP 2
Molecular Spear	Str+d4+2	5	10	AP 2, Parry +1, Reach 1, 2 hands
Molecular Sword	Str+d8+2	8	15	AP 4

Type	Damage	Weight	RN	Notes
Rapier	Str+d4	3	0	Parry +1
Shockstick	2d6	2	0	Requires 1 action to reload
Spear	Str+d4	5	0	Parry +1, Reach 1, 2 hands
Survival Knife	Str+d4	2	0	+1 to Survival rolls
Switchblade	Str+d4	1	0	-2 to be Noticed if hidden
Sword	Str+d8	8	0	
Vibro Halberd	Str+d8+4	15	30	AP 8, Reach 1, 2 hands
Vibro Knife	Str+d4+2	1	20	AP 6
Vibro Spear	Str+d4+4	5	25	AP 6, Parry +1, Reach 1, 2 hands
Vibro Sword	Str+d8+4	8	30	AP 8
Warhammer	Str+d6	8	0	AP 1 vs. rigid armor

MERCENARY DRUM

Type	Armor	Weight	RN	Notes
Personal				
Battle Suit	6	20	20	Covers all
Body Glove	4	10	15	Covers all
Clean Suit	2	15	0	Covers all, only used for missions on planets with toxic atmospheres, provides 5 hours of oxygen
Flak Jacket	2	12	0	Covers torso
Kevlar Vest	+2/+4	8	10	Covers torso, negates AP 4 from bullets
Kevlar Vest w/inserts	+4/+8	12	20	Covers torso, negates AP 4 from bullets
Leather Covering	2	10	5	Covers torso, arms, legs
Leather Jacket	1	10	0	Covers torso, arms, legs
Pressure Suit	2	20	0	Covers all, only used for missions under the water, provides 5 hours of oxygen and allows for deep sea diving
Space Suit	2	20	0	Covers all, only used for space exploration and moon missions, provides 5 hours of oxygen
Shields				
Blast Shield	-	20	10	+2 Parry, +2 Armor vs. ranged shots
Riot Shield	-	10	5	+1 Parry, +2 Armor vs. ranged shots

RACES

While everyone is encouraged to create their own race, the following tool-kit allows you to create one with less effort. Four ready-made races follow. See the *Making Races* section of the *Savage Worlds* core rulebook for further advice.

RANDOM RACE CREATION

When creating a new race, a list of positive and negative abilities is attributed to the characteristics of that race. Humans (Gemini) do not have a racial template and simply gain a new Edge. To keep the system and setting balanced, the net result of a racial template for any created race should be +2, the equivalent of a free Novice Edge. Use the positive and negative abilities ranging from -3 to +3 in any combination that produces a net result of +2. Further guidance is provided within the tables below.

To create a new race, use the standard deck of playing cards and deal out a total of 3 cards. Each card's suit and value define the different racial characteristics. Examples for creating the racial template are provided for guidance and are not meant as a decisive feature. Your net result should always be +2. If a Joker is dealt, place it back into the deck and deal a new card.

READING THE CARDS

Card number one's suit defines the type of race. Card number one's value then defines a prominent characteristic of that race.

Card number two's suit defines the overall physicality of the race. Card number two's value then defines a prominent characteristic associated with that type of physicality.

Card number three's suit defines a special trait exhibited by that race. Card number three's value further defines that trait including its in-game effect.

MERCENARY BREED

CARD NUMBER ONE

- Club** **Gemini:** The race is similar in structure to a Gemini in that they are humanoid with skin.
- Diamond** **Mammal:** The race is similar to that of a mammal with fur and animal instincts.
- Heart** **Avian:** The race is similar to that of a bird with wings, talons, and a beak.
- Spade** **Reptile:** The race is similar to that of a serpent or lizard with scales, claws, and a tail.

CARD VALUE

- 2** Short. (-2) Size becomes -1, imposing a -1 penalty to Toughness.
- 3** Tall. (+2) Size becomes +1, providing a +1 bonus to Toughness
- 4** Long arms. (+1) They gain +1 Reach.
- 5** Three arms. (+2) Gain one extra non-movement action per limb with no multi-action penalty.
- 6** Large hands. (+1) Gain a free d6 in Climbing.
- 7** Pointed ears. (+1) Gain a +2 to Notice for sound.
- 8** Large eyes. (+1) Gain a +2 to Notice for sight.
- 9** Thick skin. (+2) Gain +2 to Armor.
- 10** Strong hands. (+2) Gain the Brawler Edge.
- J** Increased brain capacity. (+2) Start with a d6 in Smarts.
- Q** Heat/Cold tolerance. (+1) +4 bonus to Vigor to resist the effects of the chosen tolerance.
- K** Resilient. (+1) Immune to either poison or disease.
- A** Flight. (+2) Gain the Flight ability.

CARD NUMBER TWO

- Club** **Agility:** The race is visibly more or less agile than the average Gemini.
- Diamond** **Strength:** The race is visibly stronger or weaker than the average Gemini.
- Heart** **Speed:** The race is visibly faster or slower than the average Gemini.

Spade **Dexterity:** The race visibly has better or worse motor skills than the average Gemini.

CARD VALUE (CLUBS)

- 2-3** Athletic. (+2) Start with a d6 in Agility.
- 4-5** Sluggish. (-3) Agility requires two points per step to raise during character generation and two Advances must be dedicated to raising Agility during game play.
- 6-7** Acrobatic. (+1) Gain a +1 bonus to Agility when making any type of acrobatic maneuver.
- 8-9** Clumsy. (-1) Receive a -1 penalty to Agility when making any type of acrobatic maneuver.
- 10-J** Quick hands. (+2) Gain the Quick Draw Edge.
- Q-K** Fumble. (-2) When dealt a 10 or higher in combat, discard and draw again until you get a card that is lower than 10.
- A** Great reflexes. (+2) Gain the Quick Edge.

CARD VALUE (DIAMONDS)

- 2-3** Strong. (+2) Start with a d6 in Strength.
- 4-5** Weak. (-3) Strength requires two points per step to raise during character generation and two Advances must be dedicated to raising Strength during game play.
- 6-7** Solid. (+2) Gain a +1 bonus to Toughness.
- 8-9** Frail. (-2) Receive a -1 penalty to Toughness.
- 10-J** Iron fists. (+2) Gain the Brawler Edge.
- Q-K** Delicate. (-1) Unarmed attacks impose a -1 penalty to damage.
- A** Firm grip. (+2) Gain the Steady Hands Edge.

CARD VALUE (HEARTS)

- 2-3** Fast. (+1) Start with a Pace of 8.
- 4-5** Slow. (-1) Start with a Pace of 5.
- 6-7** Quick. (+2) Gain a +1 bonus to Agility when evading an area effect attack.
- 8-9** Indolent. (-2) Receive a -1 penalty to Agility when evading an area effect attack.
- 10-J** Quick attack. (+2) Gain the First Strike Edge.
- Q-K** Slow attack. (-1) Gain the Pacifist (Minor) Hindrance.
- A** Fast feet. (+2) Gain the Fleet-Footed Edge.
-

MERCENARY BREED

CARD VALUE (SPADES)

- 2-3** Steady hands. (+1) Gain a +1 bonus to Driving or Piloting.
- 4-5** Shaky hands. (-2) Receive a -1 penalty to Fighting, Shooting, and Throwing.
- 6-7** Supple fingers. (+1) Gain a free d6 in Healing or Repair.
- 8-9** Big fingers. (-1) Receive a -1 penalty to Shooting.
- 10-J** Good balance. (+1) Reduce the Unstable Platform penalty to -1.
- Q-K** Poor balance. (-1) Unstable Platforms impose an additional -1 penalty.
- A** Coordinated. (+1) Gain a free d6 in Fighting or Throwing.

CARD NUMBER THREE

- Club** **Physical:** The race has a unique physical trait.
- Diamond** **Mental:** The race has a unique mental trait.
- Heart** **Spiritual:** The race has a unique spiritual trait.
- Spade** **Racial:** The race has a unique trait that is inherent to their races home world or ecology.

CARD VALUE (CLUBS)

- 2-3** Natural weapons. (+1) Gain a Str+d6 natural weapon.
- 4-5** Feral. (-3) Smarts requires two points per step to raise during character generation and two Advances must be dedicated to raising Smarts during game play.
- 6-7** Synthetic. (-3) Spirit requires two points per step to raise during character generation and two Advances must be dedicated to raising Spirit during game play.
- 8-9** Carnivore. (-2) Gain the Bloodthirsty Hindrance.
- 10-J** Canine. (+2) Gain the Alertness Edge.
- Q-K** Adaptive pigmentation. (+1) Gain a free d6 in Stealth.
- A** Natural armor. (+2) Gain a +2 bonus to Armor.

CARD VALUE (DIAMONDS)

- 2-3** Aggressive. (-1) Gain the Mean Hindrance.
- 4-5** Corrupt. (-2) Opponents receive a +2 bonus to Persuasion rolls.
- 6-7** Vast Memory. (+2) Gain a +2 bonus to all Knowledge rolls to recall information.
-

- 8-9** Foolish. (-2) Gain the Curious Hindrance.
10-J Naïve. (-1) Receive a -1 penalty to all Common Knowledge rolls.
Q-K Intelligent. (+2) Start with a d6 in Smarts.
A Perceptive. (+1) Gain a +2 bonus to Investigation.

CARD VALUE (HEARTS)

- 2-3** Devout. (+2) Start with a d6 in Spirit.
4-5 Empathetic. (+2) Gain a +2 bonus to Charisma.
6-7 Immoral. (-1) Gain the Delusional Hindrance.
8-9 Honest. (-1) Receive a -1 penalty to Streetwise.
10-J Dishonest. (-1) Receive a -2 penalty to Charisma.
Q-K Agnostic. (-3) Spirit requires two points per step to raise during character generation and two Advances must be dedicated to raising Spirit during game play.
A Aloof. (-1) Gain the Outsider Hindrance.

CARD VALUE (SPADES)

- 2-3** Aquatic. (+2) Cannot drown, gain a free d6 in Swimming, moves at full Swimming skill.
4-5 Jungle environment. (+1) Gain a free d6 in Tracking.
6-7 Toxic environment. (+2) Immune to poison and disease.
8-9 Spacefaring. (+1) gain a free d6 in Navigating.
10-J Underground environment. (+1) Gain low light vision.
Q-K Tribal. (+1) Gain a free d6 in Survival.
A Sand environment. (+1) Gain burrowing.

CALCULATE THE TOTAL

Using the table as-is can easily produce a racial template with a net result higher than +2. To remedy this, choose negative attributes that reduce the total to +2 or change the characteristic of that attribute to a negative ability instead of a positive one.

***EXAMPLE:** Large hands can give you the +1 attribute to gain a free d6 in Climbing. An alternative -1 attribute would be the loss of manual dexterity, gaining the All Thumbs Hindrance.*

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CHARACTERISTIC DESCRIPTIONS

Now that you have a list of characteristics for your new race, describe how they manifest themselves. This helps to define what the new race looks like and why they exhibit these differences compared to the average Gemini.

EXAMPLE: *The Primas race is physically strong and starts with a d6 in Strength (or +1 to die type.) This characteristic is manifested visually as large, bulging arms.*

GEMINI

Gemini are the dominate species in the Argo galaxy and formally named it as such. They are equivalent to slowly aging humans, resulting in a life expectancy of 120 years (150 years for those who can afford regular medical upkeep). Their average height is between 5 ft. 10 in. and 6 ft. 4 in. for males and 5 ft. 6 in. and 6 ft. for females. Skin color, hair color and eye color vary widely. For in-game purposes, treat a Gemini character the same as a human character. This means they gain the standard, extra Edge during character creation.

The Gemini are relatively peaceful and are not currently waging any major wars. Minor conflicts occur from time-to-time, but nothing of substantial purpose has happened for several centuries. They are responsible for forming the House of the Alliance and currently sit at its head, negotiating peace between all new alien races and themselves. Their central language is Argosian, in reference to the name they gave the galaxy, but dozens of dialects exist.

There is no single, central government, but there are central governments for each galactic region. Each planet is expected to properly govern itself under the watchful eye of the Alliance.

HISTORY

The Gemini's history started roughly ten millennia ago. Their birth home world, Coursian, sits in a rimward arm of the Argo galaxy. As with many races, they spent centuries growing and developing until reaching the stars 7,500 years later. They began exploring their solar system discovering an intelligent alien race, the Festoon, on a

neighboring planet. The two races quickly became friends, allies and trading partners.

The Festoons taught the Gemini to achieve faster-than-light travel while the Gemini taught the Festoons about diplomacy and democracy, upon which the Gemini culture is built. With their new technology, the Gemini expanded their presence throughout the Argo galaxy.

With each new discovery, the Gemini race sought only diplomacy and the opportunity to make new allies. After expanding to claim five planets in 500 years, the Gemini announced the formation of the House of the Alliance and the development of a central language – Argosian. From this they “renamed” the galaxy, in their own eyes, to Argo and sought to ally every alien race possible. For them, a grand democracy where everyone shares in the profit is the key to societal growth.

To this day, the Gemini race inhabits over 30 planets with an Alliance that covers around 100 alien races. Their trade routes are plentiful and profitable with inter-planetary corporations dominating proceedings. Antagonistic alien races have all been thwarted and most regions of the galaxy remain in peace; at least from the outside. Minor skirmishes between corporations often occur and many planets are unable to completely rid themselves of crime. For this, the House of the Alliance has deemed that all corporations may maintain a set of regulated mercenary forces to combat crime against and within their holdings.

GOVERNMENT

Coursian spent many millennia with tribal, feudal, and emperor-ruled societies. Upon the fall of the last emperor, the central powers teamed together to form a democratic society to rule the world fairly with equal representation given to all. While not everyone on Coursian conformed to these ideals, the majority agreed to this democracy. From that point forward, democracy kept the world thriving, except for those who opted not to comply, and eventually allowed the Gemini to form strong ties with alien races.

At present, inter-planetary dealings are handled by the House of the Alliance while planetary decisions are handled by local

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governments. However, the Alliance maintains a central navy for protection across the galaxy. Local governments are expected to guard their planets, but are not allowed to form military strengths to combat the masses (like antagonistic alien races). This responsibility falls onto the shoulders of the Allied Navy, a massive fleet of space-faring vessels, fighters and carriers.

The Gemini hold the highest seats in the Alliance including President, Vice-President and Galactic Defense Secretary. Other less powerful administrative positions are also held by Gemini. Local governments typically have similar seats to the House of the Alliance, and many tailor their positions to accommodate how the citizens vote.

MILITARY

Planetary defense is managed by the local guards. These military forces go by many names such as Planetary Defense Force, The World Army or Planetary Guard (the Coursian planetary defense led by the Commanding Guardian). They hold small fleets of fighters capable of near space flight while large batteries of surface-to-air cannons are scattered across the planet. The majority of these forces are equipped for planetary fighting including planet-side air fighters and tanks.

Space warfare, when necessary, is handled strictly by the Allied Navy with its large holdings of vessels, fighters and carriers. Each fleet is led by a commander. Regional command is dictated by a general. The Galactic Defense Secretary within the House of the Alliance holds the ultimate power over all sectors of the Allied Navy.

The Allied Navy has so many sector and regional fleets that calls for help are serviced within a day or two. A large network of satellites and inter-planetary communications means the Alliance sectors of the galaxy are monitored every second of every day. If any hostile alien races enter a sector, the Allied Navy is immediately called to action. It is quite rare for combat to actually reach planet-side, but precautions are necessary.

Mercenary forces are given the okay to work within the space commanded by the Allied Navy as long as they comply with regulations. This provides them with an easily accessed array of standard equipment and allies. Due to its size, the Allied Navy cannot police the corporations' holdings and thus rely upon the mercenary

forces to do the job. The Allied Navy may be able to stop an alien carrier, but they cannot stop a jewel thief.

SPACE TRAVEL

The Gemini race builds fairly standard space-faring vessels. Most are designed for transport, exploration and recreational use. While these ships are extremely expensive, they are available to common citizens. They must register their ships and pass a rigorous inspection of their personal and professional holdings. This reduces the chances of criminal activities. Unfortunately, a black market does exist and spaceships are available, unregulated, on non-Gemini planets. While the government recognizes this, they have not experienced enough problems to consider it a threat.

All space-faring vessels carry faster-than-light drives allowing them to travel from planet to planet, but to travel quickly throughout the galaxy requires more than citizen-class vessels. These are significantly more expensive and typically owned by the Allied Navy or inter-planetary corporations. Space lanes are setup for this type of travel. Government officials travel on navy vessels while mercenaries travel on corporate vessels. After gaining enough Renown, mercenaries have been known to purchase their own spacecraft.



ALIEN RELATIONS

Being a very diplomatic race, Gemini have neutral or good relations with all races within the House of the Alliance. While they may encounter a hostile alien race in the depths of space, none have returned to wage war. However, some have decided to join the Alliance instead of combat it.

While their diplomatic nature may create tension with other alien races, this has not led to military engagements. Rather, it leads to

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simple disagreements during committee discussions and votes and is considered to be a neutral relationship.

MODERN TIMES

Within the current time frame, the Gemini race holds the most power and influence throughout the sectors of the galaxy controlled by the House of the Alliance. They continue to expand their holdings while their population grows at exponential rates. With over 30 planets populated, they are still looking for additional, inhabitable planets to house their people. While this may seem noble, much of their desires are two-fold. Gemini are often motivated by money and resources.

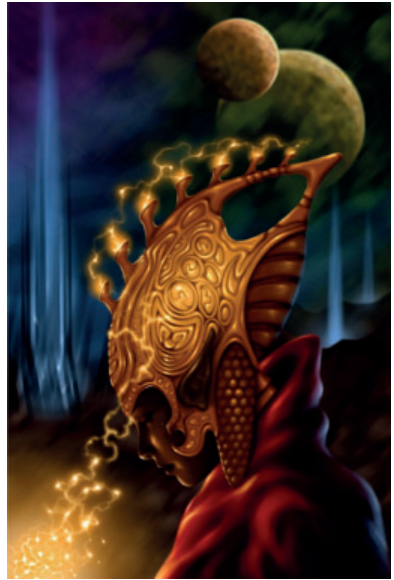
They seek new planets for food, precious metals, valuable gems, resources, trade avenues and possibly new customers to hawk their wares to. This has produced greedy inter-planetary corporations who try to persuade the Alliance to explore new regions and sectors. Not only do they need resources to sustain their ever-growing population, they also want to mine these planets for anything they can sell or use.

FESTOON

Festoons, as pronounced in the Argosian language as their native pronunciation is not feasible by other races, are the eldest known race in the Argo galaxy. They are humanoid but differ from their Gemini allies in many ways. Their bodies are tall and slender with a head that juts out at the back of the skull. They age significantly slower than Gemini and live considerably longer with an average life expectancy between 250 and 300 years. However, it is believed that some Festoons have mastered the art of near immortality. Rumors abound of those who are over 1,000 years old.

Their size varies little and their height averages between 7 ft. and 7 ft. 6 in. Even with this towering height their body mass is so low that their weight does not seem comparable. Although they are slender, Festoons are not fragile and have a very solid bone structure. Each one has eight long fingers, eight long toes and ears that come to a very slight point. Their skin tends to be dark with dark hair and vibrantly colored eyes.

The Festoon race loathes violence and always looks for the most diplomatic solution, which led to their immediate friendship with the Gemini race. Their central government contains many levels of administration. The main governing body consists of a group of appointed elders. Their language is called Bah'hala in the Argosian language and is often deemed as unpronounceable, or at least confusing, by many within the Gemini race. For this purpose, the Festoons use the Argosian language when interacting with other races.



HISTORY

The Festoon race dates back an estimated 100,000 years, although this is a best-guess estimate. Their history is one of turmoil, disaster and rebirth. It has been philosophized that the Festoons were responsible for the birth and advancement of the Gemini race. While this is plausible, it's only partially correct. The truth is much more tragic.

Around 4,000 years ago, the Festoon race was living in the far side of the galaxy, thousands and thousands of light-years from their current home world of Lak'husa. They lived a particularly fearful life as their docile nature made them targets for particularly hostile alien races. The elders spoke to the oracles and deemed that a possible solution lay on the other side of the galaxy. Plans were laid to move the race elsewhere and flee their degrading situation. They had the technology to get there, but keeping their assailants from following was a problem. So the elders laid out a plan.

The Festoons, small in numbers due to continued raids, loaded their entire population onto a dozen galactic vessels and planted the seeds for the apocalypse within their home planet. They lay in wait as the last devastating raid came crashing into the planet. The invaders

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found empty homes and abandoned buildings. By entering space on the opposite side of the planet and using their two moons to shield their escape, the Festoons were able to unleash a massive bio-weapon upon the entire planet and launch nuclear weapons toward the antagonist's docked vessels. The invading force was annihilated. Most of the planet was destroyed, but eventually the flora and fauna would find a way to rebuild.

Following the oracles' lead, they traveled across the galaxy to find a new, safe home world. The oracles had foretold a race of sentient beings in their youthful stages that may be key allies in the distant future. Contact was forbidden until the race reached the stars, so the Festoons made planet-fall on a neighboring planet they named Lak'husa. Life sustainability was low so terraforming occurred immediately and bio-tech was installed to allow them to survive. With a new home, the Festoons began life anew and watched their neighboring alien race.

After many centuries, the alien race sent satellites into the skies allowing the Festoons to tap into their communications. They learned the alien race referred to themselves as Gemini and focused heavily upon democracy. The Festoons began to learn and master the Gemini's language for hope of future diplomatic relations. When that day came, it was a joyous occasion.

The Gemini race was mysteriously drawn to the planet of Lak'husa and welcomed with open arms. The two races found common ground and a desire to help each other out. The Festoons desired the military safety the Gemini were willing to provide while in-turn they provided new technologies for further inter-planetary travel. The future of the House of the Alliance was born, rooted deeply in democracy.

GOVERNMENT

The Festoon race has an extremely convoluted government system. Their administrative groups have multiple levels of "management" with red-tape running deep. There seems to be no end to the amount of requests needed and sign-offs required just to get a simple requisition completed. Sitting atop everything is an appointed group of elders who make the most important decisions.

Decisions concerning the Festoon way of life and interaction with alien races are strictly performed by this group of elders. Appointed to the Elder Circle are the most powerful oracles and psions. They weigh these decisions heavily upon how they affect their race and the races around them before making a final decision. They do not concern themselves with day-to-day activities, leaving that to the administration. However, anything that affects the race as a whole must be first considered by the Elder Circle.

Festoon members of the House of the Alliance are part of the administration, but ultimately report to the Elder Circle. They are given a sense of freedom until the Festoon race is put in jeopardy. The elders are appointed by others within the Elder Circle and not by the general population.

MILITARY

Festoons loathe violence and do not possess an actual military. There are pockets of organized volunteers who can muster in a minute's notice, but they prefer stealth tactics and the use of bio-camouflage. Instead, the Festoon race relies upon the Allied Navy for planetary defense and only builds diplomatic, civilian and exploration space-faring vessels of their own. This is one reason why they stay very close to their Gemini allies and rarely populate planets on their own.

SPACE TRAVEL

Space travel has been an integral part of the Festoon life for many millennia. It is not known when they first reached the stars as much of their past has been destroyed, but their technology has been forever retained. Festoons build the most capable space-faring vessels including some of the best ships for long-distance, galactic travel.

In addition, the Festoons created and maintain the various space lanes throughout the galaxy with the help of the Allied Navy. It is said that without Festoon technology, the Gemini race would never have left the solar system. As such, the Festoon race is relied upon heavily for their technology, research and especially space travel. Their civilian designs are the most popular in the galaxy.

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ALIEN RELATIONS

Since the Festoons relegate any type of combat, they have made very few enemies. Enemies are more often formed due to an unwillingness to work together. Festoons have a difficult time understanding alien races that aren't interested in technology and diplomacy, rather looking for trade and resources. While the Gemini can assist and make new allies, the Festoons become confused and usually end regular discussions. While this is not meant to be an antagonistic move, it is sometimes viewed that way.

For this, the Festoons have made a few other races angry, but none have initiated combat. Besides, if they do, the weight of the Allied Navy would come bearing down upon them.

MODERN TIMES

The Festoon race has become an integral part of the House of the Alliance and all the alien races involved. They travel confidently between allied planets and even enjoy a sense of safety no matter where they go. As a race, they are welcomed as an intelligent species with the greatest technology. In addition, they are sought for their wisdom and teaching abilities. However, not all Festoons spend their time teaching and designing.

As integral members of the Alliance, the Festoons have learned to further harness and enhance their spiritual and psionic abilities. Mercenary forces seek them out for protection against supernatural creatures and many types of unknown species. They may not be apt to use guns, but their psionic powers carry some of the most deadly effects. Targets cannot see them, nor do they expect them. A Festoon's mental strength more than makes up for their lanky bodies and is as important as a projectile weapon.

In addition to psionic powers, there are Festoons who know how to harness the divine power of the cosmos. It is not truly known or understood how this is possible, but this mental connection can produce incredible effects. While psionic powers tend to be destructive, these spiritual powers tend toward defensive and protective.

RACIAL TEMPLATE

When choosing the Festoon race, characters do not gain the extra Edge but rather apply the following racial template:

- **Language:** Festoons are fluent in the Bah'hala and Argosian languages.
- **Feeble:** Festoons are thin creatures who spend more time concerning themselves with knowledge and inner-spirit. Mercenaries may never take the Brawny Edge.
- **Intelligent:** Festoons are known for their mental prowess and excel in all areas of knowledge and lore. Mercenaries gain +1 die type to Smarts and may never take the Clueless or Illiterate Hindrances.
- **Lore:** The festoon race has spent much time studying many areas of knowledge and lore. Gain a free d6 in a single Knowledge specialty.
- **Loyalty:** The festoon race is extremely loyal to everyone within their society, especially their elders. Gain the Loyal (Minor) hindrance.

L'NEL

L'Nels are an aggressive race living in large spaceships throughout the Argo galaxy. They are humanoid but lack any resemblance to the Gemini race. Their faces are more serpent-like and their skin has a leathery feel. Their bodies are tall and lean with long heads. Their bodies do not adapt well to environments outside of tropical areas and thus the average life-span is only 65 years. Those who spend their entire lives in tropical environments have been known to live for up to 100 years.

Their sizes vary significantly with the shortest L'Nels measuring 4 ½ ft., and the tallest 6 ½ ft. Shorter L'Nels rarely achieve high ranks and are typically used as expendable guards or assigned to perform the duties no one else will. They have 8 fingers with each one ending in long, sharp claws that are hard enough to be used in combat (Str+d6 damage). While they are not long enough to cause significant damage, their claws can provide protection in combat.

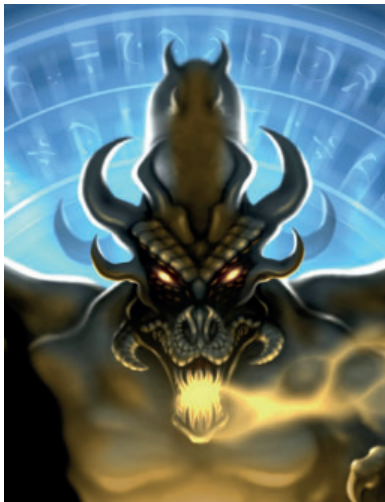
MERCENARY BREED

L'Nels are a fairly violent race and honor all military effort. This has created few allies within the Alliance outside of their strong partnership with the Gemini. Civilizations with no military are typically considered to be weak while those with strong militaries are seen as worthy allies or opponents. Although they are aggressive, the L'Nel honor code states they never attack a race lacking an organized military.

HISTORY

The history of the L'Nel race is mostly unknown as they have never bothered to track their time-line. For them, history is in the past and does not need to be of a concern. This has ultimately led their race to lack medical evolution, preventing them from living longer lives. Instead, they focus their efforts on building and maintaining a space fleet that sustains the entire race. Approximately 100 years ago the L'Nel emperor constructed a grand fleet and ordered the entire population to leave their dismal planet and live their lives out in the stars. The L'Nels no longer have a home world and only live within their fleet of spaceships.

Around 25 years ago, the L'Nel fleet came upon the Allied Navy. They quickly recognized the military-styled ships and initiated combat. Unfortunately for the L'Nels, the Allied Navy out-gunned and out-numbered their aggressors. Instead of destroying the entire fleet, as they came to realize it held the very essence of the race's population, the Allied Navy attempted a truce. Upon boarding the main ship and speaking to the L'Nel emperor, a bond of honor was formed and all aggressions were ended.



The L'Nels were given a choice to either flee all Gemini-held sectors or join the House of the Alliance and become an ally. The L'Nels had no interest in becoming a part of Gemini society and were thus

offered an alternative solution. The Allied Navy recognized the strength in the L'Nel fleet and instead asked them to be an ally of the Allied Navy, a very valuable arm of the House of the Alliance. The L'Nels quickly agreed and joined the allied ranks.

Throughout the past 25 years, the L'Nel fleet has been an integral part of the protection of the Alliance. They have found a method of channeling their aggression in a way that satisfies their urges and assists the entire Alliance. In addition, they have acquired new technology from the Allied Navy to increase the integrity of their ships and make them better in combat. However, the Allied Navy remains wary of L'Nel intentions and ensures the technology can be disabled should a rebellion occur. While the L'Nels are not aware of this, the Gemini understand it completely.

The L'Nel emperor does not plot rebellion nor does he feel the Gemini can be overcome by the L'Nel fleet. Rather, he enjoys the ability to continue their aggressive behavior and the luxuries received by working with the Allied Navy. Greed is becoming a part of the L'Nel culture as they acquire more and more Gemini luxuries and learn to survive amongst the stars. They still have not bothered to find a way to live longer.

GOVERNMENT

The L'Nel race recognizes a caste-like system led by a dictator-like emperor. Individuals' social ranks are based upon their strength, willpower and fortitude. The one with the greatest commanding presence gains the position of emperor until someone else comes along that can overwhelm the current emperor. Underneath the emperor is a large grouping of lords with no royal connections. Their title of "lord" is self-imposed and recognized as a title of honor, not purpose. Those of a social rank beneath the lords are required to show respect while ultimately taking orders from whomever their direct superior is (depending upon the job). While these lords do not necessarily hold any power, they are looked upon for guidance when the emperor needs to make important decisions.

Beneath the social rank of lord is everyone else in the L'Nel race. Within this level, there are assigned duties which have imposed ranks (such as worker and supervisor), but everyone is essentially treated

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as equal. The only exception is particularly short L'Nels who are treated as being beneath everyone. They are given duties that no one else wants or put on the frontlines during combat, only to be used as a shield for those behind them.

The end result of this caste-like system is that the L'Nels do not have a formal government. Their emperor makes all the race, society and general populace decisions while the lords make all the tedious and repetitive decisions. Everything outside of this is left to the House of the Alliance to manage such as interracial and public relations

MILITARY

L'Nels have a very strong and well-organized military, albeit somewhat small compared to other alien races. They are properly equipped for space combat and small land invasions, but lack the artillery for planet-side warfare. This is partially due to their hesitance to live within a planet's atmosphere and their inability to adapt to different climates.

The L'Nel race focuses their technological advancements on naval ships that are able to withstand bombardment and infiltration. While their largest drawback has always been diminutive fleet size, they are capable of standing toe-to-toe with larger naval fleets. L'Nel fleets contain very structured military ranks starting with an admiral and ending with grunts (who pilot the vulnerable fighters). Soldiers never disobey their superior officers and strive to become superiors someday.

SPACE TRAVEL

Space travel is all the L'Nel race truly understands. They do not know how to explore and colonize planets nor do they understand diplomacy. They are driven by aggression and honor and feel their survival is only possible by maintaining their naval strength.

They live and die amongst the stars and children know very little outside of their home vessel. While they may be educated on what a planet is, the purpose of that education is military oriented should one need to survive planet-side during combat.

ALIEN RELATIONS

Due to their aggressive nature, the L'Nel race is disliked by almost every race outside of the Gemini. While many races have come to rely upon the L'Nels for naval protection, they still loathe the methodology employed and their lack of diplomatic desires. However, everyone prefers to have the L'Nels as an ally rather than an enemy and thus the relationships remain calm with a friendly façade, even though it's primarily false.

Many believe that the allied relationship between the L'Nels and the Gemini is one of convenience. The belief is if the L'Nels were to leave, they would be obliterated by the Allied Navy. While this is plausible, it's simply not true. The L'Nel race is free to leave the Alliance at any time, assuming they do not attack an allied race. Should this happen, they would quickly be dispatched. As is the nature of the Gemini race, they do not wish this to happen and rather do what they can to keep things peaceful. As long as the L'Nels are contributing to the Alliance in some fashion, the Gemini are satisfied.

MODERN TIMES

The L'Nel race continues to be an integral part of the Allied Navy and a valuable piece of the House of the Alliance. While they do not get involved in political affairs, they always voice their opinion in military matters. They gladly protect the space lanes and provide escorts for powerful figures. Because their fleet is smaller and a bit faster, they are able to engage hostile enemies quicker than the Gemini naval fleets and thus enjoy the aphrodisiac they call combat.

Due to this lust for fighting, L'Nels are taught from a very young age the art of combat. The most promising students join the rank of the elite and perform boarding and infiltration missions. L'Nels are quite athletic and able to maneuver through an unknown vessel with great quickness.

Through advisement of other races, the L'Nels have started to properly document their history using their native, runic language. While this has only occurred throughout the past 15 years, they are making evolutionary progress by learning from their mistakes.

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RACIAL TEMPLATE

When choosing the L'Nel race, characters do not gain the extra Edge but rather apply the following racial template:

- **Language:** L'Nels are fluent in the L'Nel and Argosian languages.
- **Skilled:** The L'Nels have bread physical abilities into their race. Those who are strongest are offered the greatest positions of power. Gain +1 die type to Agility.
- **Combat Training:** From birth, the L'Nels train their children to be aggressive and understand the ins and outs of combat. Gain a free d6 in Fighting.
- **Aggression:** Due to their aggressive nature, L'Nels are viewed by most races to be callous and malicious. Gain the Mean (Minor) hindrance.

PRIMAS

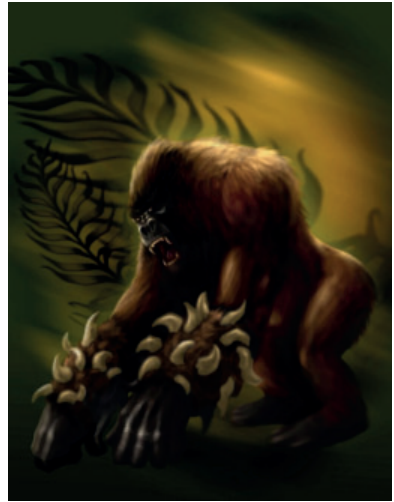
Primas are a relatively young race, discovered during Gemini deep-space exploration. They did not possess much technology, but had evolved enough to create a language and establish a thriving society. Upon meeting the Geminis, a peculiar bond formed and a peculiar kinship was born. This brought all sorts of new technology which the Primas promptly adapted.

Primas are evolved primates with typical primate bodies. Their arms are long with 5 long and thick fingers on each hand, resulting in poor dexterity. These thick hands can be used as clubs for quick melee attacks (Str+d6 damage). Their bodies are thick and strength flows freely throughout the race. They are covered in hair except for patches on their hands, feet, faces and chests. Their average height is 6 ft. with females averaging approximately 6 in. shorter than males. As they are a young race and still evolving, the average life span is only 80 years.

Primas are not particularly violent, but they sometimes struggle to control their rage. While their demeanor is docile, continued provocation can throw them into a frenzy-like state. The more civilized Primas attempt to control this rage through sheer will and meditation.

HISTORY

The Primas race is quite young and only dates back around 2,000 years. Prior evolutions of the race potentially date back an additional 8,000 years, but no one truly knows. Many archaeological studies are being performed to properly date the Primas race and document their history, but ongoing efforts are very slow. There is very little written about this history and translating stories has proven to be mostly ineffective.



Around 2,000 years ago the Primas race developed (after millennia of evolution) the ability to communicate and think in ways outside of a primal state. Over the course of the next century, they began building communities with structures for protection from the elements, creating weapons for hunting local game and developing an understanding of growing and harvesting crops. Small tribes grew into larger tribes and the knowledge was passed on from family to family, and generation to generation.

As these communities grew, in size and strength, they discovered new technologies and developed an advanced, written language. They formalized education and soon small towns with homes, businesses and farms became commonplace. At this point, according to Gemini scientists, the Primas race became truly civilized. Though the explanation is simple, the process was not. Decades of struggle were common and going from evolved to civilized is estimated to have taken 500 years.

From what the Geminis have learned, the Primas population started to grow significantly upon becoming “civilized”. Their small town grew into a city surrounded by small tribal gatherings similar to a rural setting. This helped to further enhance the discovery of technology and the continued formalization of education, but it

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neglected to address one major flaw within the Primas race – their rage.

After another 500 years of evolution and growth, the Primas race still could not find a way to control their own rage. When scuffles would occur, the end result would be a large brawl. When a single Primas becomes enraged, those around him or her often became enraged as well. Property damage was extremely common and considered a part of their society. The eldest of the tribes, often the chieftains, did not stop this from continuing. Those who knew the most about the outside world understood that rage is a weapon in the hands of the Primas.

Throughout the following 1,000 years, until meeting the Gemini race, the chieftains and elders taught the male Primas how to channel their rage, to develop warriors, which resulted in a small amount of control. When the Gemini race first encountered the Primas on their home world of Theta (named by the Geminis), they spent countless days studying from afar so as not to endanger themselves. Upon learning pieces of Priman, the Primas language, and gaining a small understanding of their culture, the Gemini explorers entered the main town with extreme caution.

They were set upon by large, intimidating guards. Their limited use of Priman confused and frightened the squad. After a simple request to speak to the chieftain, the explorers were escorted to the main lodge. Doing their best to speak in short, simple and completely friendly statements, they assured the chieftain they meant no harm and were there only to help. While the chieftain was skeptical, the technology produced by the explorers was awe-inspiring and an alliance was made. The explorers continued to learn Priman, while teaching the Argosian language, and the Primas race finally set sail for the stars.

GOVERNMENT

The Primas race does not have any real government. Those who live in separate communities retain their tribal ways, and are led by a single chieftain. Those who are a part of non-Primas communities leave the politics to more developed races.

Within each Primas tribe is a chieftain, appointed through some form of determined royalty. This royalty could stem from the bloodline of the original settling family (being the dominate male), determined by a brutal battle to the death (the survivor becomes the chieftain) or appointed in recognition of some honorable or heroic deed (such as saving the tribe). The chieftain is the only one who can make decisions although they often seek the knowledge of their closest compatriots.

Primas members of the House of the Alliance are typically appointed to military or guard duty. This actually suits their society well as it avoids forcing them to conform to a more civilized standard or unwanted evolution. Primas officers in Gemini squads are regarded highly by every tribe.

MILITARY

Primas do not have a military of their own. They have learned to protect their tribes, especially the women and children, through defensive measures, but this does not amount to any type of organized military. Instead they have opted to join the Gemini military and become an integral piece of the Allied Navy. The military teaches them how to avoid raging by teaching self-control. They also teach when raging is appropriate and can help turn the tide in a losing battle.

A Primas' strength is a major factor in their success within the Gemini military. They are able to carry heavy weapons, which most Gemini cannot, allowing the frontlines to advance instead of relegating the heavy weapons to a single post providing cover fire. Primas are thus a large portion of any planet-side force, but not one designed for space combat. The Primas do not find this to be a problem. They prefer to stay away from spaceships as much as possible.

SPACE TRAVEL

Primas have not developed their own spaceships nor do they desire to. They reluctantly travel with the Geminis and other friendly races and feel developing their own means of space travel is a waste of time and effort. While they are not afraid to fly, they attempt to avoid it. A Primas is most at home on the ground.

MERCENARY BREED

ALIEN RELATIONS

The Primas race does not interact with very many allied races outside of the Gemini race and those who are actively teaching their kin. Military relations are strictly between them and the Geminis, using a strict chain of command. Many allied races thus know very little about the Primas and opt to not form any biased opinions. The Geminis speak very highly of the Primas race and report to the Alliance that they continue to evolve and mature with each passing year.

MODERN TIMES

The Primas race has absorbed themselves into much of the Gemini culture. While they do not live in Gemini communities, they take residence very near them in tribal societies. They stay close to Gemini populated areas for food and building supplies along with the small bits of technology they keep. This is true across all Gemini populated planets.

As members of the Alliance and all arms of the Allied Navy, the Primas race continues to gain military strength and ability and train to become skilled fighters (including protectors of their own tribes). They look toward the Gemini race for further training and rely upon other intelligent races for teaching and guidance (including the evolution of their own language). Each member of the race tries to be as peaceful as possible with all other allied races, even if they are viewed as unsophisticated brutes. While Primas are not as evolved as other races, they are more than capable of ripping their enemies apart with simple weapons. Most races understand this and thus treat the Primas with respect.

The Primas have learned religion and the workings of modern society. While they still struggle with advanced technology, they have learned to use almost every military weapon available and are learning how to operate electronic equipment. The process is slow, but their teachers (such as the Festoons) are very patient.

RACIAL TEMPLATE

When choosing the Primas race, characters do not gain the extra Edge but rather apply the following racial template:

- **Language:** Primas are fluent in the Priman and Argosian languages.
- **Large Hands:** The primas race is known for having large hands and lack fine dexterity skills. These big hands, and thick fingers, get in the way when attempting to work with smaller devices, tools, and especially electronics. Gain the All Thumbs (Minor) hindrance. In addition, mercenaries may never take the Ace, Gadgeteer or McGyver Edges.
- **Large Arms:** While large hands give them a definite disadvantage, their large arms are a product of increased strength. Gain +1 die type to Strength.
- **Long Arms:** While their arms may be large and strong, they are also long and used for running, but not walking. Mercenaries may not perform any combat action (other than defensive) during a round in which they also ran.
- **Primate Nature:** The primas race is a primate race and accustomed to living in jungles and forests. Gain a free d6 in Climbing.

HOME WORLDS

Within the Argo galaxy, there are millions of inhabitable worlds and even more that are uninhabitable (without bio-technology). While everyone is encouraged to create their own home world, the following tool-kit allows you to create one with less effort.

RANDOM HOME WORLD CREATION

When creating a new home world, a number of factors should be considered to flesh out the details of the planet's composition and characteristics. This allows the mercenaries to better understand what the planet is like before landing and provides direction for what type of creatures and settlements could be found. If creating a home world for a player character race, make sure the planet matches the description of the race. You wouldn't want an aquatic race coming from a desert planet.

To create a new home world, use the standard deck of playing cards and deal out a total of 3 cards. Each card's suit and value define the different planetary characteristics. If a Joker is dealt, place it back into the deck and deal a new card.

READING THE CARDS

Card number one's suit defines the basic category of the planet. Card number one's value then defines the characteristic of that planet considering its categorization.

Card number two's suit defines the overall composition of the planet. Card number two's value then defines a prominent characteristic associated with that type of composition.

Card number three's suit defines the overall society of the planet. Card number three's value further defines the society including its general attitude towards its own people and outsiders.

CARD NUMBER ONE

- Club** **Moon:** The planet is actually a moon or the size of a moon. One day lasts 12-16 hours and one year lasts 250-300 days.
- Diamond** **Small:** The planet is smaller than Earth. One day lasts 16-20 hours and one year lasts 300-350 days.
- Heart** **Medium:** The planet is approximately the size of Earth. One day lasts 20-36 hours and one year lasts 350-425 days.
- Spade** **Large:** The planet is much larger than Earth. One day lasts 32-56 hours and one year lasts 400-625 days.

CARD VALUE (CLUBS)

- 2-3** Barren moon with deposits of minerals.
- 4-5** Barren moon with deposits of precious gems.
- 6-7** Barren moon with deposits of ore.
- 8-9** Barren planet with deposits of minerals.
- 10-J** Barren planet with deposits of precious gems.
- Q-K** Ice-capped planet with deposits of ore.
- A** Fertile planet with exotic animals.

CARD VALUE (DIAMONDS)

- 2-3** Fertile with agriculture and 1 moon.
- 4-5** Oceanic with deposits of ore and 1 moon.
- 6-7** Volcanic with deposits of precious gems and 1 moon.
- 8-9** Swamp with exotic animals and 1 moon.
- 10-J** Fertile with deposits of minerals and no moons.
- Q-K** Ice-Capped with deposits of ore and 1 moon.
- A** Tropical with exotic animals and 1 moon.

CARD VALUE (HEARTS)

- 2-3** Fertile with agriculture, minerals, and 1-2 moons.
- 4-5** Fertile with precious gems, ore, and 1 moon.
- 6-7** Oceanic with exotic animals and 2 moons.
- 8-9** Barren with minerals, ore, and 1-2 moons.
- 10-J** Ice-Capped with minerals, precious gems and 1 moon.
- Q-K** Volcanic with precious gems and 2 moons.
- A** Fertile with asteroid ring, exotic fibers, and 1 moon.
-

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CARD VALUE (SPADES)

- 2-3** Barren with minerals and 3-5 moons.
- 4-5** Fertile with agriculture, minerals, ore, and 3 moons.
- 6-7** Barren with nothing and 5 moons.
- 8-9** Tropical with exotic animals, ore, and 3-5 moons.
- 10-J** Ice-Capped with exotic animals and 4 moons.
- Q-K** Fertile with ore, exotic fibers, and 3-5 moons.
- A** Swamp with exotic animals and 3 moons.

CARD NUMBER TWO

- Club** **Thin:** The planet's composition is altered by a thin atmosphere.
- Diamond** **Standard:** The planet's composition thrives within a fairly standard atmosphere.
- Heart** **Dense:** The planet's composition is altered by a dense atmosphere.
- Spade** **Exotic:** The planet's composition is shaped due to an exotic atmosphere.

CARD VALUE (CLUBS)

- 2-3** Cold climate, normal gravity, 1-2 major landmasses.
- 4-5** Hot climate, normal gravity, 1-2 major landmasses.
- 6-7** Hot climate, normal gravity, 3-5 major landmasses.
- 8-9** Hot climate, normal gravity, no major landmasses, small islands only.
- 10-J** Temperate climate, low gravity, 1-2 major landmasses.
- Q-K** Hot climate, low gravity, 3-5 major landmasses.
- A** Cold climate, low gravity, 1-2 major landmasses.

CARD VALUE (DIAMONDS)

- 2-3** Temperate climate, normal gravity, 1-2 landmasses.
 - 4-5** Temperate climate, normal gravity, 3-5 landmasses.
 - 6-7** Temperate climate, normal gravity, 6-8 landmasses.
 - 8-9** Temperate climate, normal gravity, fractured islands.
 - 10-J** Hot climate, normal gravity, 1-2 landmasses.
 - Q-K** Cold climate, normal gravity, 1-2 landmasses.
 - A** Hot climate, normal gravity, 3-5 landmasses.
-

CARD VALUE (HEARTS)

- 2-3** Cold climate, normal gravity, 1-2 major landmasses.
- 4-5** Hot climate, normal gravity, 1-2 major landmasses.
- 6-7** Hot climate, normal gravity, 3-5 major landmasses.
- 8-9** Hot climate, normal gravity, no major landmasses, small islands only.
- 10-J** Temperate climate, high gravity, 1-2 major landmasses.
- Q-K** Hot climate, high gravity, 3-5 major landmasses.
- A** Cold climate, high gravity, 1-2 major landmasses.

CARD VALUE (SPADES)

- 2-3** Acidic atmosphere, temperate climate, normal gravity, 3-5 major landmasses.
- 4-5** Sulfuric atmosphere, temperate climate, normal gravity, 3-5 major landmasses.
- 6-7** Toxic atmosphere, temperate climate, normal gravity, 3-5 major landmasses.
- 8-9** Helium atmosphere, cold climate, low gravity, 6-8 major landmasses.
- 10-J** Tephra (volcanic ash) atmosphere, hot climate, normal gravity, fractured islands.
- Q-K** Explosive gas-filled atmosphere, cold climate, high gravity, 3-5 major landmasses
- A** Carbon dioxide atmosphere, low gravity, cold climate, 3-5 major landmasses.

CARD NUMBER THREE

- Club** **Low-tech:** The population primarily utilizes low technology devices.
- Diamond** **Mid-tech:** The population primarily utilizes basic technology devices common most everywhere.
- Heart** **High-tech:** The population utilizes a lot of uncommon, high technology devices.
- Spade** **Advanced-tech:** The population makes use of the most advanced technology.

MERCENARY BREED

CARD VALUE (CLUBS)

- 2-3** Population less than 10,000, a single primary race, and tribal society.
- 4-5** Population less than 10,000, a single primary race, and an autocracy.
- 6-7** Population less than 100,000, a single primary race, and theocracy.
- 8-9** Population less than 100,000, two primary races, and tribal societies.
- 10-J** Population less than 1 million, two primary races, and oligarchy.
- Q-K** Population less than 1 million, four primary races, and tribal societies.
- A** Population less than 10 million, five primary races, and theocracy.

CARD VALUE (DIAMONDS)

- 2-3** Population less than 10 million, four primary races, and democracy.
- 4-5** Population less than 10 million, six primary races, and capitalism.
- 6-7** Population less than 100 million, two primary races, and fascism.
- 8-9** Population less than 100 million, six primary races, and democracy.
- 10-J** Population less than 100 million, six primary races, and monarchy.
- Q-K** Population less than 1 billion, eight primary races, and theocracy.
- A** Population less than 1 billion, ten primary races, and libertarianism.

CARD VALUE (HEARTS)

- 2-3** Population less than 100 million, four primary races, and democracy.
 - 4-5** Population less than 500 million, six primary races, and capitalism.
-

HOME WORLDS

- 6-7** Population less than 500 million, six primary races, and monarchy.
- 8-9** Population less than 1 billion, eight primary races, and democracy.
- 10-J** Population less than 1 billion, eight primary races, and capitalism.
- Q-K** Population less than 5 billion, ten primary races, and capitalism.
- A** Population less than 5 billion, twelve primary races, and capitalism.

CARD VALUE (SPADES)

- 2-3** Population less than 1 billion, four primary races and theocracy.
- 4-5** Population less than 5 billion, six primary races and democracy.
- 6-7** Population less than 5 billion, eight primary races, and monarchy.
- 8-9** Population less than 10 billion, fourteen primary races, and capitalism.
- 10-J** Population less than 10 billion, fifteen primary races, and democracy.
- Q-K** Population greater than 10 billion, twenty primary races, and capitalism.
- A** Population greater than 10 billion, twenty primary races, and democracy.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Once the basic characteristics for the new planet have been defined, it is time together as a cohesive collection that properly defines enough aspects of the planet to send a landing party and know what to expect.

Once the planet has come together, there may be conflicting characteristics. One choice is to explain it away with terraforming, bio-engineering, or native evolution. Another choice is to redraw one of the cards and reconfigure the planet.

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Some combinations may seem odd, but are quite plausible. Planets with an acidic atmosphere could still contain populations in the billions as they have either adapted or evolved, live in protected cities, live underground away from the atmosphere, or are simply immune to its effects.

When considering atmosphere, and possibly other characteristics, it is pertinent to note that the description is in the eyes of the mercenaries and not the native species that live there. A toxic environment to the mercenaries may be non-toxic to native species. Maybe the native species breath methane or sulfuric gasses, maybe they poisons in the air do not affect them, or maybe they live in areas where the toxic gasses do not reach (such as under the water or under the ground.)

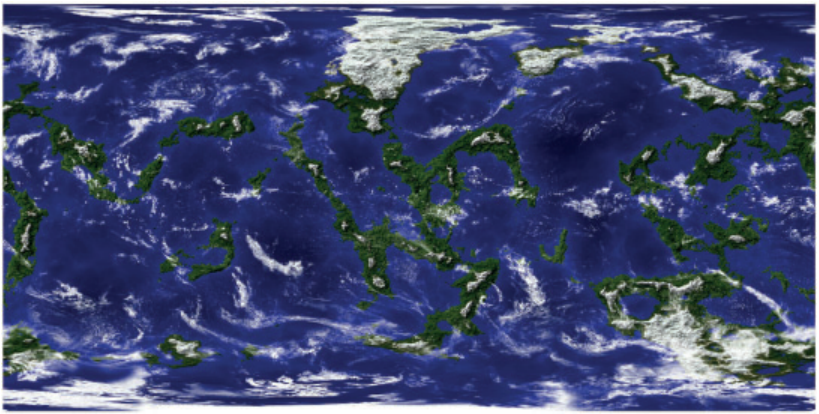
The random home world creation tool-kit can assist in creating a plausible planet, but it is still up to the Game Master and maybe the players to populate that planet with species that can tolerate and thrive within its environment.

COURSIAN

Coursian is the home world and birthplace of the Gemini race. It is here that the political power of the House of the Alliance is seated along with many of the inter-planetary corporations. Coursian is the fourth planet from the sun within the Joplin solar system, located rimward of the Argo galaxy.

Its entire timeline dates back millions of years. Coursian's civilized timeline is only about 7,500 years old. While it is believed the Gemini race evolved from primates common to Coursian, there are signs of species "seeding" by an advanced civilization scientifically dated back 8,000 years. This has led to the belief that the Gemini race actually landed here 8,000 years ago but failed to establish a thriving civilization. This would have resulted in a regression toward a barbaric or feudal society and a loss of technology and history. Ancient ruins have also been located to back this theory.

Environment: Coursian is a very fertile planet filled with resources and productive soil. Resources range from agriculture and herbs to precious gems and ore. While this has allowed the planet to be



completely self-sufficient, it is unable to supply resources to anyone else. The resources are spread too thin to accommodate off-planet export. Coursian's main export is politics and money.

70% of the planet is covered by water with 85% of the western hemisphere covered in water. It is dominated by the Gafry Ocean in the west, Zodiac Ocean in the north, and the Falta Ocean in the south. Its five major landmasses are covered by terrain which varies depending upon distance from the equator. Lands in the south are mostly tropical and sub-tropical while the north is primarily temperate. A large body of water, the Temperate Sea, resides in the center of the five landmasses. Hundreds of mostly volcanic islands make up the remaining areas of the planet.

Population: Coursian had previously been a single-race planet. Over the decades, more and more alien races have been moving there to become a part of the political scene, mainly the House of the Alliance, and come under the employ of one of the many inter-planetary corporations. While Gemini are the primary and dominate race, they have opened their arms to all allied alien races.

This blending of races has created a population of roughly 45 billion, which is significant considering the scarcity of inhabitable land. This population enjoys all matters of advanced technology along with a plethora of starports to reach destinations beyond the imagination.

Planetary Science: Coursian is considered a medium-sized planet with a full rotation every 26 hours and full revolution every 385 days. It rotates about its axis at a 35-degree angle. It has two moons,

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Thirgate and Seirgate, relatively close to each other. Both moons can be seen in the sky at the same time with Seirgate rising while Thirgate is at the meridian mark.

Atmosphere: Coursian has a very favorable atmosphere. In regards to the majority of alien planets, it is very standard including its gravity. Technology has grown at a relatively steady rate keeping this atmosphere mostly intact and the climate properly regulated. The Gemini race was using a lot of polluting technology when they met the Festoon race. These pollution-causing industries were quickly replaced by organic and renewable energy sources that drastically reduced the pollution. While some damage was already done to the atmosphere, it has not altered the planet in any significant way.

Culture: The Gemini race has a relatively conservative culture with a very well-developed law enforcement system. Major crimes are severely punished and criminals rarely get away. An extensive law and investigation network ensures the public's safety and captures 95% of all criminals. However, the Gemini people are generally not violent and the race is peaceful with all alien races of the Alliance.

The Gemini keep their peace dealings enforced with an extensive navy that prevents hostiles from reaching any allied planet. While this may seem very aggressive, their motive is diplomacy and their maneuvers are primarily defensive. The Gemini race do not initiate wars, but they will definitely do everything they can to stop them.

LAK'HUSA

Lak'husa is the current home world of the Festoon race. Due to their long lives and peaceful society, Festoons choose to control their population and only control a single home world. While many travel to allied worlds and live amongst their people, only one world will ever be called a Festoon home world. Lak'husa is the fifth planet from the sun within the Joplin solar system, located rimward of the Argo galaxy.

While the Festoon race dates back at least 100 millenia, their life on Lak'husa started 4,000 years ago. After fleeing hostile threats, they followed the words of their eldest oracles and landed on Lak'husa in hopes to ally with the neighboring Gemini race. While the planet was



not favorable, standard bio-technology allowed the Festoon race to survive. They watched the Gemini and learned their culture by tapping into satellite communications. Patiently, they waited until the Gemini reached outer space and landed upon Lak'husa ground. Diplomatic relations were initiated immediately with much enthusiasm.

Environment: Lak'husa is a living world, but lacks the soil for agriculture. Biotech centers for farming and raising animals were created to support the population. While the Festoons were able to sustain themselves for many centuries, their population growth was limited by food resources. However, the planet is rich in ore and metals which the Festoons were able to use for their multitude of technology, mechanical and electronic. This excess of ore and metal allows Lak'husa to thrive and trade for other resources.

Due to its location, much of Lak'husa is frozen and lacks vegetation. Half the planet is land, primarily frozen or ash, while the remainder consists of a combination of water and phosphates, giving it a green hue. The Festoons remove the phosphates from the water to sustain life.

The planet is dominated by ten land masses all connected together with sporadic seas sprinkled throughout. The Festoons rarely venture outside of their bio-domes and thus only two of the ten continents are populated. The largest is Thak'tula with a population located on Lint'lu. Thak'tula is located around the equator in the eastern hemisphere with Lint'lu located around the equator in the

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western hemisphere. Remaining continents are generally too cold to sustain life.

Population: Lak'husa is predominantly a single-race planet with a few Gemini living throughout (albeit on a temporary basis). The Festoon race prefers to interface with other alien races aboard space stations or within small groupings on that race's home world. This is due to their fear of being vulnerable to hostilities.

Festoons enjoy a long life and thus do not feel the need to create a large population. This is partially due to the lack of available resources and inhabitable lands, but mostly it is tradition. The population of Lak'husa is roughly 5 million. The elders encourage traditional views on a smaller population in order to avoid needing additional resources.

Planetary Science: Lak'husa is considered a medium-sized planet with a full rotation every 32 hours and a full revolution every 465 days. It rotates about its axis at a 40-degree angle. It has one moon, Stot'pha, which was converted into the race's main space station.

Atmosphere: Lak'husa has a fairly thin atmosphere outside of the bio-domes, breathing apparatuses are required, and a standard atmosphere inside the bio-domes. The Festoons have always used non-polluting industry so as not to further thin the atmosphere. Oxygen exists but most species find it difficult to breath outside of the bio-domes. Unprotected travel outside of the population centers is discouraged.

Culture: Contrary to their population growth, the Festoons of Lak'husa are very liberal. The elders believe in freedom of virtually everything outside of criminal behavior and feel the administrative personnel of the "government" should be pencil pushers and "middle management" rather than true governing bodies. This has resulted in a very convoluted administrative body, a lot of scientific research and a taste of pleasures that many would consider taboo. The elders only participate in governing decisions related to the race and society as a whole.

While this could lead to anarchy, the Festoons have learned that violence and crime is rarely a necessity. Rather, they spend their time on technology and personal happiness. This is the reason they lack a militant arm and rely upon the Geminis for protection.

CORPORATIONS

Within the Argo galaxy, there are thousands of inter-planetary corporations with various facilities all over the galaxy.). While GMs are encouraged to create their own corporations, the following tool-kit allows you to create one with less effort.

RANDOM CORPORATION CREATION

When creating a new corporation, a number of factors should be considered to flesh out the inner-workings and structure of the corporation. This allows the players to better understand how their mercenaries fit within the corporation and allows the Game Master to drive the storyline so that it fits within the scope of the corporation.

To create a new corporation, use the standard deck of playing cards and deal out a total of 3 cards. Each card's suit and value define the corporation's many characteristics. If a Joker is dealt, place it back into the deck and deal a new card.

READING THE CARDS

Card number one's suit defines the basic industry supported by the corporation. Card number one's value further defines that industry.

Card number two's suit defines the overall structure of the corporation. Card number two's value further details that structure.

Card number three's suit defines the social and political aspects of the corporation. Card number three's value further details those aspects.

CARD NUMBER ONE

Club **Consumer:** The corporation primarily deals with the consumer market.

Diamond **Commercial:** The corporation primarily deals with the commercial market.

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- Heart** **Industrial:** The corporation primarily deals with the industrial market.
- Spade** **Military:** The corporation primarily deals with the military market.

CARD VALUE

- 2** Spacecraft
- 3** Land Vehicles
- 4** Air Vehicles
- 5** Entertainment
- 6** Communications
- 7** Consumables
- 8** Accessories
- 9** Construction
- 10** Medical
- J** Technology
- Q** Mining/Agriculture/Components
- K** Weapons
- A** Gear/Equipment/Luxury Items

CARD NUMBER TWO

- Club** **Tens:** The corporation has corporate facilities numbering in the teens.
- Diamond** **Hundreds:** The corporation has corporate facilities numbering in the hundreds.
- Heart** **Thousands:** The corporation has corporate facilities numbering in the thousands.
- Spade** **Ten Thousands:** The corporation has corporate facilities numbering in the tens of thousands.

CARD VALUE (CLUBS)

- 2-3** No child companies, 5 executive officers, 1 planetary presence, dozens of product lines, less than 1,000 employees, and over 250 million credits in revenue.
- 4-5** No child companies, 5 executive officers, 2 planetary presences, less than 2,000 employees, and over 500 million credits in revenue.

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- 6-7** 1 child company, 10 executive officers, 1 planetary presence, less than 3,000 employees and over 750 million credits in revenue.
- 8-9** 1 child company, 10 executive officers, 2 planetary presences, less than 4,000 employees, and over 900 million credits in revenue.
- 10-J** 1 child company, 10 executive officers, 3 planetary presences, less than 4,000 employees, and over one billion credits in revenue.
- Q-K** 1 child company, 10 executive officers, 3 planetary presences, less than 5,000 employees, and over one billion credits in revenue.
- A** 1 child company, 10 executive officers, 4 planetary presences, less than 5,000 employees, and over five billion credits in revenue.

CARD VALUE (DIAMONDS)

- 2-3** 1 child company, 10 executive officers, 2 planetary presences, less than 25,000 employees, and over 100 billion credits in revenue.
- 4-5** 1 child company, 10 executive officers, 4 planetary presences, less than 50,000 employees, and over 150 billion credits in revenue.
- 6-7** 2 child companies, 15 executive officers, 5 planetary presences, less than 75,000 employees, and over 200 billion credits in revenue.
- 8-9** 2 child companies, 15 executive officers, 8 planetary presences, less than 100,000 employees, and over 250 billion credits in revenue.
- 10-J** 2 child companies, 15 executive officers, 10 planetary presences, less than 100,000 employees, and over 500 billion credits in revenue.
- Q-K** 3 child companies, 20 executive officers, 10 planetary presences, less than 100,000 employees, and over 1 trillion credits in revenue.
- A** 3 child companies, 20 executive officers, 15 planetary presences, less than 250,000 employees, and over 6 trillion credits in revenue.
-

MERCENARY BREED

CARD VALUE (HEARTS)

- 2-3** 2 child companies, 15 executive officers, 10 planetary presences, less than 20 million employees, and over 2 trillion credits in revenue.
- 4-5** 2 child companies, 15 executive officers, 15 planetary presences, less than 25 million employees, and over 5 trillion credits in revenue.
- 6-7** 3 child companies, 20 executive officers, 16 planetary presences, less than 25 million employees, and over 25 trillion credits in revenue.
- 8-9** 3 child companies, 20 executive officers, 18 planetary presences, less than 50 million employees, and over 10 trillion credits in revenue.
- 10-J** 3 child companies, 20 executive officers, 20 planetary presences, less than 50 million employees, and over 15 trillion credits in revenue.
- Q-K** 4 child companies, 25 executive officers, 15 planetary presences, less than 50 million employees, and over 25 trillion credits in revenue.
- A** 4 child companies, 25 executive officers, 20 planetary presences, less than 100 million employees, and over 30 trillion credits in revenue.

CARD VALUE (SPADES)

- 2-3** 3 child companies, 20 executive officers, 15 planetary presences, less than 10 million employees, and over 20 trillion credits in revenue.
 - 4-5** 3 child companies, 25 executive officers, 15 planetary presences, less than 50 million employees, and over 25 trillion credits in revenue.
 - 6-7** 4 child companies, 25 executive officers, 20 planetary presences, less than 50 million employees, and over 50 trillion credits in revenue.
 - 8-9** 4 child companies, 30 executive officers, 20 planetary presences, less than 100 million employees, and over 25 trillion credits in revenue.
-

CORPORATIONS

- 10-J** 5 child companies, 30 executive officers, 20 planetary presences, less than 100 million employees, and over 50 trillion credits in revenue.
- Q-K** 5 child companies, 35 executive officers, 25 planetary presences, less than 100 million employees, and over 100 trillion credits in revenue.
- A** 6 child companies, 40 executive officers, 25 planetary presences, millions of product lines, less than one billion employees, and over 100 trillion credits in revenue.

CARD NUMBER THREE

- Club** **Good Relations:** The corporation is seen as good through the eyes of society.
- Diamond** **Average Relations:** The corporation is seen as average through the eyes of society.
- Heart** **Poor Relations:** The corporation is seen as poor through the eyes of society.
- Spade** **Corruption:** The corporation has known corruption running through its offices.

CARD VALUE (CLUBS)

- 2-3** No conspiracies, employee and customer satisfaction is very high
- 4-5** No conspiracies, employee satisfaction is high, and customer satisfaction is very high.
- 6-7** No conspiracies, employee and customer satisfaction is high.
- 8-9** One conspiracy, employee and customer satisfaction is very high.
- 10-J** One conspiracy, employee satisfaction is high, and customer satisfaction is very high.
- Q-K** One conspiracy, employee and customer satisfaction is high.
- A** No conspiracies, employee satisfaction is average, and customer satisfaction is high.

MERCENARY BREED

CARD VALUE (DIAMONDS)

- 2-3** One conspiracy, employee satisfaction is average, and customer satisfaction is high.
- 4-5** One conspiracy, employee and customer satisfaction is average.
- 6-7** One conspiracy, employee satisfaction is average and customer satisfaction is low.
- 8-9** Two conspiracies, employee and customer satisfaction is average.
- 10-J** Two conspiracies, employee satisfaction is low, and customer satisfaction is average.
- Q-K** Two conspiracies, employee and customer satisfaction is low.
- A** Three conspiracies, employee and customer satisfaction is average.

CARD VALUE (HEARTS)

- 2-3** Two conspiracies, employee and customer satisfaction is low.
- 4-5** Two conspiracies, employee satisfaction is very low, and customer satisfaction is low.
- 6-7** Three conspiracies, employee and customer satisfaction is low.
- 8-9** Three conspiracies, employee and customer satisfaction is very low.
- 10-J** Three conspiracies, employee satisfaction is very low, and customer satisfaction is low.
- Q-K** Four conspiracies, employee and customer satisfaction is low.
- A** Four conspiracies, employee and customer satisfaction is very low.

CARD VALUE (SPADES)

- 2-3** Four conspiracies, employees feel like they are working for a dictator and customers have been bribed.
 - 4-5** Four conspiracies, employee and customer satisfaction is very low.
 - 6-7** Corporation is actually a front for illegal activities, employee and customer satisfaction is high.
-

CORPORATIONS

- 8-9** Corporation is involved in political scandals, employee satisfaction is average, and customer satisfaction is high due to bribes.
- 10-J** Five conspiracies, employee and customer satisfaction is low.
- Q-K** Six conspiracies, employee and customer satisfaction is very low.
- A** Employees are given frequent bonuses with no explanation, employee and customer satisfaction is very high.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Now that you have the basic elements and details of the corporation, a number of things need to be further fleshed out. These items are best chosen according to the adventure or campaign being run rather than through random generation:

1. What race is running or owns the corporation?
2. Where is their galactic headquarters located?
3. What aspect of the industry do they support (manufacturing, distribution, sales, shipping, etc)?
4. Where applicable, who is the Master of the Mercenary Force?
5. What additional benefits do they offer their mercenaries?

GENESIS HOLDINGS

Genesis Holdings is the parent company of Gleaming Jewels, Precious Stones and Delphi Mining. Gleaming Jewels is an exotic jewelry retailer and Precious Stones is a commercial jewelry retailer. Both are located throughout the galaxy. Delphi Mining is the gem mining company that supplies them.

With Galactic Headquarters located on Coursian, Genesis Holdings is the galaxy's most popular jewelry corporation. Their retail locations are well-known and cater to all levels of wealth. Gleaming Jewels focuses on the more exotic gems and lavish jewelry enjoyed by the wealthy while Precious Stones sells lower priced jewelry with the same level of quality. Both retail chains acquire their gems directly from Delphi Mining, keeping the corporation's profits very high.

MERCENARY BREED

Genesis Holdings uses these high profits to build eccentric corporate facilities – such as their extremely phallic Galactic Headquarters, within the heart of Gemini society, on Coursian. These profits are also used to fund new mining activities that keep their jewelry market under their own control. Direct mining and shipping has allowed Genesis Holdings to become one of the most profitable corporations in the Argo galaxy with executive paychecks that show it.

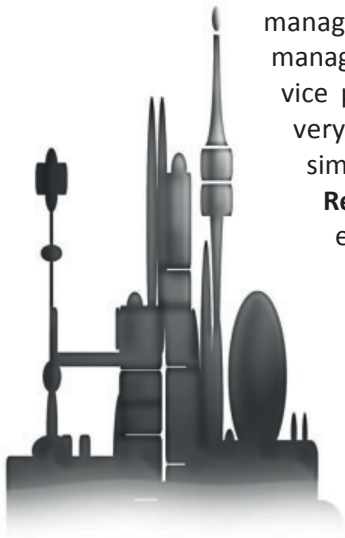
Statistics: Genesis Holdings has yearly revenue around 5 Trillion credits. While this is low compared to many corporations, their profit margin is the highest around. They achieved success due to their ability to control costs and cut-out any distributors or third parties.

In addition to retail and mining facilities, Genesis Holdings maintains its own logistics and shipping. This results in Genesis Holdings mining, shipping, designing, crafting, and selling their jewelry. They have retail facilities located on ten planets with managing corporate facilities on each planet. The close distance of executive management to retail outlets allows Genesis Holdings to react quicker to changes in the market and problems that arise. They have mining facilities on fifteen planets that not only supply their own retail outlets, but also sell lower quality gems to other retail companies.

Each division utilizes four levels of management: general manager, district manager, regional director, and worldwide vice president. The corporate structure is very common and attempts to remain simple to avoid excessive overhead costs.

Relations: Genesis Holdings employees enjoy a healthy, yearly profit sharing bonus. This not only keeps employee satisfaction very high but also keeps a certain corporate façade in the eyes of the public. This results in very high customer satisfaction and good public relations.

Mercenary Forces: Due to their healthy profits, Genesis Holdings



CORPORATIONS

employs multiple mercenary forces. Those who serve through retirement often enjoy salaries that rival executives and bonuses in the six-digit range. There are four cells of mercenary forces with a fifth one in development, due to continuing expansion. Each force is assigned specific planets and shipping lanes and expected to keep them safe.

Mercenary forces are expected to focus on the three different areas of the corporation: mining, shipping and retail. This produces a number of possible adventure seeds.

Mining: Mercenary forces are used during exploration of new planets to establish new mining facilities. Forces may encounter hostile creatures or unknown alien species. On colonized planets, rebels or general antagonists may appear. Sabotage could occur within new or existing mining facilities along with attacks from various aggressive forces.

Shipping: Shipping lanes are often under attack from pirates or unfriendly alien races. Spaceships with valuable cargo are a target for anyone looking to plunder the contents. Sometimes these ships are found floating, intact, outside of the normal shipping lane with no crew aboard.

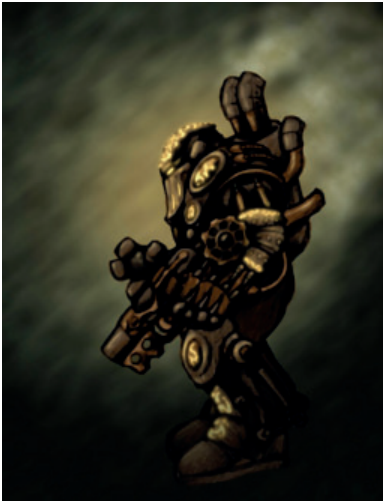
Retail: Mercenary forces are also employed to investigate theft or stand against any rioting or looting caused by external confrontations. Mercenary forces dealing with retail problems are less common.

MILITANT MARINES

Militant Marines is the foremost producer of military weapons and armor throughout the Allied planets. Militant Marines custom designs their weapons and armor to each alien race's physique and preferred technology. They do not sell directly, but supply to a very large number of military equipment distributors. This allows the corporation to maintain steady production lines feeding every participating alien race without being bogged down by the more tedious sales management.

Militant Marines is strictly held by Geminis and resides primarily within Coursian. The House of the Alliance finds discretion extremely

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important and disallows Militant Marines to share their designs with potentially hostile alien races. This also gives the Allied Navy an insight into all race's equipment should conflicts arise.

Supply lines for material are numerous but manufacturing facilities are few in number, primarily consuming a large state-sized facility in a remote area on Coursian. Manufacturing is extremely secretive and facilities are built mostly underground, protected from bombing. These

safety measures have made Militant Marines the favored military weapons and armor developer for most allied races. This has led to large levels of revenue even though profit margins are not high.

Statistics: Militant Marines holds a single corporate facility outside the densely populated areas of Coursian. This highly secured facility contains all ten of their executive members along with the majority of their design group. The incorporation of the design group into the facility requires maximum security with strong defensive batteries.

While profit margins are low, yearly revenue tops 60 Trillion. Most of this is funneled into security and safety including a large mercenary force, ready to deploy at any signs of danger. Militant Marines is not allowed to carry their own military division, so they use their mercenary forces as their security outlet. In addition, high-ranking mercenaries become part of the weapons and armor development group, testing prototypes in real-world situations. This goes as far as using them in combat to validate the integrity and abilities of the new equipment.

Militant Marines has one extremely large manufacturing facility kept from the eyes of the general public along with several smaller ones whose locations are properly known. Smaller facilities can be

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used as diversions for hostile forces or actual production facilities for early technology.

Outside of the corporate facility, which employs roughly 10,000, actual employment figures are unknown. The Alliance requires a non-disclosure agreement from all employees and prohibits published statistics.

Relations: Militant Marines' employees are paid well for their work, but only slightly higher than industry standards. Satisfaction is average and public interactions are not very common. Customer satisfaction is extremely high, bringing new customers looking for better weapons and armor.

Mercenary Forces: Militant Marines maintains a very strong mercenary force for their own safety. At least 100 mercenaries are employed at a single time to ensure any hostilities are thwarted immediately. Given the nature of their products and the sensitivity of their designs, hostilities are quite common.

Adventure Seeds: Militant Marines requires their mercenaries to ensure the safety of their corporate facility, which includes design and development, and all manufacturing facilities – especially their largest complex. While large-scale attacks are extremely rare, hackers and thieves are quite common.

Simply referred to as hackers, these are the groups and individuals who attempt to steal designs and development information. Mercenary forces are required to not only root out the hackers, but also destroy any information they acquired, quietly disposing of all individuals involved and breaking apart any groups leading these efforts.

Thieves are those who attempt to steal weapons and armor from any location, including the manufacturing facilities. Militant Marines dispatches mercenaries to these break-ins and aids their customers when thieves attack their vessels during shipping or simple transit.

MERCENARY BREED

ADVERSARIES

Due to the nature of **MERCENARY BREED** and the endless possibilities for race and home world design, adversaries are completely subjective. Creatures in your adventures or campaigns can come in any shape and size depending upon what type of game-play your party desires. As the GM, you can incorporate bestiaries from many published systems and construct a world, or at least a background, that supports them. This could range from large dinosaur-like creatures on an uncivilized world to orc-like hostile aliens with a pirate appetite. The key to making this possible is to keep the game session balanced.

Many of the creatures listed in the *Savage Worlds* core rulebook are valid but your encounters may involve races and creatures created similar to PCs. GMs are encouraged to use published material as a launching point and consider how the players design their characters' home worlds.

During character creation, Game Masters should do some type of bestiary creation according to the home world ideas generated by the players. What type of wild creatures would be found on each PC's home world? What type of antagonists can you develop using the PC's race and background? As with the rest of **MERCENARY BREED**, a bestiary will develop throughout regular issues of *Savage Insider*.

A handful of creatures are introduced here for quick insertion into an encounter or to be used as a launch pad for creativity. When developing new creatures, be sure to match the creatures' technology levels to the encounter location along with the "genre type" that they mimic and how that location was designed.

EXAMPLE: *A planet filled with golems and living constructs powered by clockwork mechanics or other technology could have steam-powered sentinels or other beings. A prehistoric planet that is just being explored could have any number of fantasy-styled creatures incorporating arcane magic or powerful, ancient beings.*

Keep these creatures balanced with the abilities of the PCs, ensuring the encounter is challenging without becoming

ADVERSARIES

overwhelming. If the characters are equipped with high-powered laser rifles and devastating artillery, a small horde of lizardfolk don't stand a chance. If the characters are equipped with spears and swords, they don't stand a chance against robot sentries carrying large explosives.

GEMINI

The Gemini race is the most prevalent throughout the known galaxy. They dominate the most populace areas and exhibit a society that ranges from the criminal downtrodden to the wealthy executive and everything in-between.



MERCENARY BREED

DREDGE

Gemini that live in abandoned facilities or empty underground railways are known as dredges.

Abilities: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5; **Language:** Argosian

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d8, Stealth d10, Survival d8, Throwing d6, Tracking d8

Armor: None

Weapons: Knife (Str+d4)

Special Abilities:

- **Alertness:** Dredges are paranoid and always on the look-out for what may be nearby. They gain a +2 bonus to Notice rolls to hearing and sight.
- **Improvisational Fighter:** Dredges are used to scavenging what they can for a fight and ignores the penalties to attack and Parry when wielding an improvised weapon.

INVESTIGATOR

Throughout their travails, the mercenaries may come across a Gemini investigator looking into their affairs.

Abilities: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7 (2); **Language:** Argosian

Skills: Fighting d6, Investigation d10, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Streetwise d8, Tracking d6

Armor: Kevlar Vest (Torso 2/4)

Weapons: Hand Pistol (12/24/48, 2d6+1, RoF: 1, Shots: 17, AP 1, Semi-Auto)

Special Abilities:

- **Investigator:** Investigators receive a +2 bonus to all Investigation, Streetwise, and Notice rolls made to search through evidence.

ADVERSARIES



MASTER ASSASSIN

Master assassins are elite warriors who stop at nothing to defeat the mercenary forces.

Abilities: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 10 (4); **Language:** Argosian, +1 more

Skills: Fighting d10, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d10, Throwing d6, Tracking d8

Armor: Body Glove (All 4)

Weapons: Molecular Knife (Str+d4+2, AP 2), Hand-forged Dagger (Str+d4, AP 2), Hand Pistol (12/24/48, 2d6+1, RoF: 1, Shots: 17, AP 1, Semi-Auto), Assassins Rifle (60/12/240, 2d8+2, RoF: 1, Shots: 5, AP 4, Snapfire)

Special Abilities:

- **Ambidextrous:** Ignore -2 off-hand penalty.
- **Dodge:** +1 Agility vs. area effects, attackers -1 Shooting and Throwing when targeting assassin.
- **Marksman:** +2 Shooting if assassin does not move.
- **Shadow Walker:** +4 Stealth while hiding in shadows.

THIEF

Thieves are trained Gemini criminals with armor-piercing weapons.

Abilities: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7 (2); **Language:** Argosian

Skills: Climb d6, Fighting d6, Lockpick d6, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d8, Tracking d6

Armor: Leather (All 2, except head)

Weapons: Long Bow [piercing arrows] (15/30/60, 2d6, AP 4), Dagger (Str+d4), Hand Pistol (12/24/48, 2d6+1, RoF: 1, Shots: 17, AP 1, Semi-Auto)

Special Abilities:

- **Marksman:** +2 Shooting if thief does not move.
- **Thief:** +2 Climb, Lockpick and Stealth. Bonus to Stealth lost outside urban areas.

MERCENARY BREED

KRIXTU

The Krixtu species is a hostile alien race found across the galaxy. No one quite understands how, or if, they travel from planet to planet, but their powerful shamans are believed to be the source of their great migrations.

Krixtus typically live in or near wooded or mountainous regions. They are semi-nomadic, travelling from place to place depending upon the season, but always returning after one or two years. They claim a territory and will fight to keep all intruders away. As they are semi-nomadic, encroaching upon Krixtu territory is common while they are residing in another one of their territories.

Even though a Krixtu may claim five or six territories, they rarely mark them in any way to ward off intruders. The result is a hostile confrontation when the tribe returns to the territory only to find it occupied by another species or tribe.



GUARDS

Krixtu guards are the basic warriors of the race.

Abilities: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d4

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6 (2); **Language:** Krixtan

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Throwing d6

Armor: Scale (All 2 except head)

Weapons: Piercing Spear (Str+d4, AP 4, Parry +1, Reach 1, 2 hands), Claws (Str+d6)

Special Abilities:

- **Fleet-Footed:** Krixtu guards roll d10s instead of d6s when running.

SERGEANTS

Krixtu sergeants lead the guards.

Abilities: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7 (2); **Language:** Krixtan

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Throwing d6

Armor: Scale (All 2 except head)

Weapons: Long Bow [piercing arrows] (15/30/60, 2d6, AP 4), Claws (Str+d6)

Special Abilities:

- **Fleet-Footed:** Krixtu sergeants roll d10s instead of d6s when running.
- **Marksman:** +2 Shooting if Krixtu sergeant does not move.

MERCENARY BREED



SHAMAN

Krixtu shamans are the strongest and most destructive beings within the Krixtu species.

Abilities: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8 (2); **Language:** Krixtan

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Arcana) d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Spellcasting d8

Armor: Scale (All 2 except head)

Weapons: Staff (Str+d4-1, Parry +1, Reach 1, 2 hands), Claws (Str+d6)

Special Abilities:

- **Shaman:** Each raise on a Spellcasting roll reduces the cost of a spell by 1 Power Point.
- **Spells:** Krixtu shaman have 20 Power Points and know the following spells: *armor* (mystical aura trapping), *bolt* (light trapping), *boost/lower trait* (mystical aura trapping), *entangle* (light trapping), and *stun* (light trapping).

SKIRMISHERS

Krixtu skirmishers are the elite warriors of the race.

Abilities: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8 (2); **Language:** Krixtan

Skills: Fighting d10, Notice d8, Shooting d10, Taunt d8, Throwing d8

Armor: Scale (All 2 except head)

Weapons: Long Bow [piercing arrows] (15/30/60, 2d6, AP 4), Piercing Spear (Str+d4, AP 4, Parry +1, Reach 1, 2 hands), Claws (Str+d6)

Special Abilities:

- **Fleet-Footed:** Krixtu guards roll d10s instead of d6s when running.

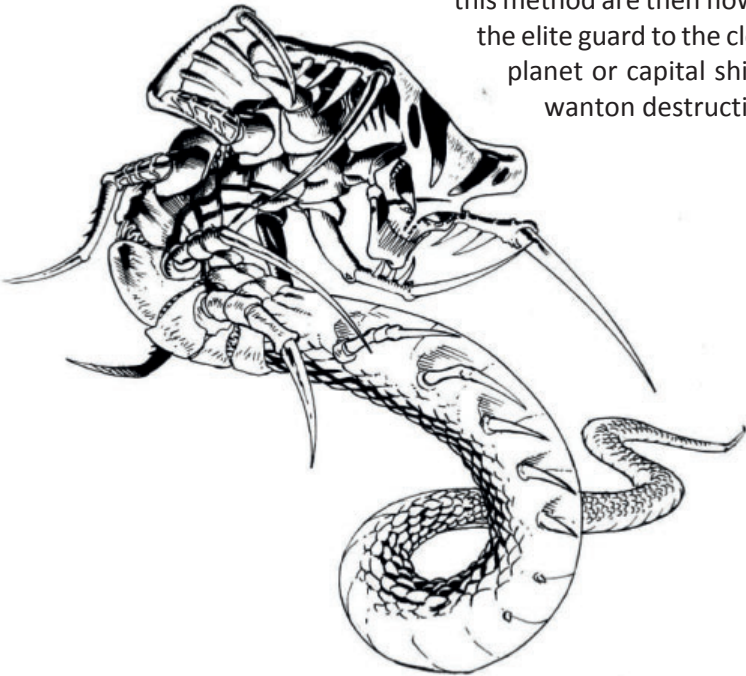
P'TARIAN

The P'Tarians are an extremely violent race of bug-like creatures who seek nothing more than destruction. They often infiltrate lone space vessels, eliminate everyone aboard, completely clear a single, large room and begin the process of reproduction. P'Tarians start as small, bug-like swarms before growing into large killing beasts.

P'Tarians do not like any other race. They have no known allies and often quarrel amongst their own clans. Their sole purpose is to proliferate across the galaxy and destroy everyone and everything that gets in their way. However, they do not have the technology to fly massive swarms across the cosmos.

P'Tarians instead use a breach and clear method where the large elite guards, who are also the egg layers, fly their small craft into the side of another ship, breaching its hull. The large beast emerges and kills everyone inside, using their corpses as food for their hatchlings.

The swarms they produce with this method are then flown by the elite guard to the closest planet or capital ship for wanton destruction.



MERCENARY BREED



ELITE (EGG LAYERS)

P'Tarian elite are guards and hunters within the horde whose appendages are razor sharp, natural weapons.

Abilities: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Pace: 7; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 10 (2); **Language:** Indistinguishable

Skills: Climb d6, Fighting d8, Notice d8, Tracking d8

Armor: Thick skin (All 2), Reinforced Exoskeleton (Back 8)

Weapons: Razor-sharp appendages (Str+d6+2, AP 2), Bite (Str+d8)

Special Abilities:

- **Fear -2:** The elite P'Tarians are huge, disgusting creatures.
- **Improved Frenzy:** May make two attacks per round.
- **Size +3:** The P'Tarian elite have long bodies and stand over 8' tall when attacking.
- **Trip:** P'Tarian elite may attempt to trip anyone within range 2. This is an opposed roll using the P'Tarian's Fighting vs. the target's Agility.

SWARM, LARGE

If they survive, P'Tarian swarms comprise larger versions of the small creatures.

Abilities: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 6 (1); **Language:** Indistinguishable

Skills: Climb d8, Notice d8, Tracking d6

Armor: Thick skin (All 1)

Weapons: Bite (Str+d6, bypasses armor)

Special Abilities:

- **Bite:** A large P'Tarian swarm is composed of many mid-sized bug-like creatures, hitting automatically and causing damage to everyone inside a Medium Burst Template.
- **Swarm:** Parry +2; Because the swarm is composed of many P'Tarian creatures, they are only affected by Area-effect weapons or by stepping on them inflicting an amount of damage equal to Strength each round.

SWARM, SMALL

Most P'Tarian swarms are filled with the smallest of the creatures.

Abilities: Agility d10, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Pace: 9; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 4; **Language:** Indistinguishable

Skills: Climb d10, Notice d6, Tracking d4

Armor: None

Weapons: Bite (Str+d6, bypasses armor)

Special Abilities:

- **Bite:** A small P'Tarian swarm is composed of many small bug-like creatures, hitting automatically and causing damage to everyone inside a Small Burst Template.
- **Swarm:** Parry +2; Because the swarm is composed of many P'Tarian creatures, they are only affected by Area-effect weapons or by stepping on them inflicting an amount of damage equal to Strength each round.

WARRIORS

P'Tarian warriors are the race's basic fighters before they reach the Elite stage.

Abilities: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Pace: 10; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6 (1); **Language:** Indistinguishable

Skills: Climb d8, Fighting d8, Notice d6, Tracking d6

Armor: Thick Skin (All 1), Reinforced Exoskeleton (Back 4)

Weapons: Razor-sharp appendages (Str+d6+1, AP 1), Bite (Str+d8)

Special Abilities:

- **Fear:** The P'Tarian warriors are vicious, blood-thirsty creatures.
- **Fleet-Footed:** P'Tarian warriors are fast and roll d10s instead of d6s when running.

MERCENARY BREED

RELDON

The Reldon are a highly-advanced species known for their high intelligence and master craftsmanship. They spend much of their time designing and developing steam and clockwork-powered constructs to protect their society. While they shy away from personal confrontations, the Reldon have no qualms about sending in a force of constructs.

The Reldon classify their constructs by purpose. The sentry constructs guard their technology facilities. The sentinel constructs watch for intruders and act as snipers. The titan constructs are foot soldiers, designed for frontline combat.

Although their constructs are military-focused, the Reldon people prefer to concentrate on designing new technology. Their constructs are mechanically-based to avoid degradation of electronics due to the environment and because mechanical constructs are cheaper and easier to fix. They avoid building a force of electronic robots as they are too susceptible to failure from moisture.



SENTINEL

Reldon sentinels are smaller than sentries and built for ranged attacks.

Abilities: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Pace: 5; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 10 (4); **Language:** Reldine

Skills: Climb d8, Fighting d6, Notice d10, Shooting d10, Tracking d8

Armor: Solid Metal (All 4)

Weapons: Plasma Pistol (12/24/48, 2d6+1, RoF: 1, Shots: 6, AP 4, Small Burst Template), Large Warhammer (Str+d8, AP 1 vs. rigid armor, Reach 1), Coilgun (30/60/120, 2d8+3, RoF: 1, Shots: 2, AP 6, Snapfire)

Special Abilities:

- **Ambidextrous:** Ignore -2 offhand penalty.
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken. Called shots do no extra damage. Do not suffer from disease or poison.
- **Built-in Defense:** Anyone who misses a melee attack against a Reldon Sentinel must make an Agility roll or be attacked by a built-in defense mechanism which deals 2d6 damage.
- **Fearless:** Immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Stable:** Reldon Sentinels ignore Snapfire penalties.

SENTRY

Reldon sentries are large and built for defense.

Abilities: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d8, Vigor d10

Pace: 5; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 12 (4); **Language:** Reldine

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d10, Tracking d8

Armor: Solid Metal (All 4)

Weapons: Molecular Halberd (Str+d8+2, AP 4, Reach 1, 2 hands)

Special Abilities:

- **Ambidextrous:** Ignore -2 offhand penalty.
 - **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken. Called shots do no extra damage. Do not suffer from disease or poison.
 - **Built-in Defense:** Anyone who misses a melee attack against a Reldon Sentry must make an Agility roll or be attacked by a built-in defense mechanism which deals 2d6 damage.
 - **Fearless:** Immune to Fear and Intimidation.
 - **Size +1:** Reldon Sentries are around 8 ft. tall.
-

MERCENARY BREED

TITAN

Reldon titans are very large and built for combat.

Abilities: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Pace: 5; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 12 (4); **Language:** Reldine

Skills: Fighting d10, Notice d8, Tracking d8

Armor: Solid Metal (All 4)

Weapons: Molecular Sword (Str+d8+2, AP 4), Molecular Axe (Str+d6+2, AP 2)

Special Abilities:

- **Ambidextrous:** Ignore -2 offhand penalty.
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken. Called shots do no extra damage. Do not suffer from disease or poison.
- **Built-in Defense:** Anyone who misses a melee attack against a Reldon Sentry must make an Agility roll or be attacked by a built-in defense mechanism which deals 2d6 damage.
- **Fearless:** Immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Size +2:** Reldon Titans are around 10 ft. tall.

CREATE YOUR OWN

Instead of using the bestiary of another published setting or the core rulebook, you may want to quickly insert a new creature into your adventure. To make this process of bestiary creation easier, here's a tool-kit that allows you to create one with less effort.

RANDOM CREATURE CREATION

When creating a new creature, a handful of defined characteristics help to further flesh out the details of the creature. Most of these characteristics have actual in-game effects while others are simply there to better visualize the creature. Combine these in unique ways to construct what the actual creature looks like.

To create a new creature, use the standard deck of playing cards and deal out a total of 3 cards. Each card's suit and value define the creature's many characteristics. If a Joker is dealt, place it back into the deck and deal a new card.

READING THE CARDS

Card number one's suit defines the size of the creature. Card number one's value defines what type of creature it is.

Card number two's suit defines the armor of the creature. Card number two's value defines what type of weapon the creature utilizes.

Card number three's suit defines what type of special ability is attributed to the creature. Card number three's is the actual special ability.

CARD NUMBER ONE

Club	Size -1: The creature is smaller than the average Gemini.
Diamond	Size 0: The creature is about the size of the average Gemini.
Heart	Size +1: The creature is larger than the average Gemini.
Spade	Size +2: The creature is significantly larger than the average Gemini.

MERCENARY BREED

CARD VALUE		8	Arachnid
2	Humanoid	9	Humanoid
3	Insect	10	Cephalopod
4	Reptilian	J	Demon
5	Mechanical	Q	Beastman
6	Amphibian	K	Feline
7	Mammal	A	Canine

CARD NUMBER TWO

- Club** **Armor +1:** The creature has thick skin or light armor.
- Diamond** **Armor +2:** The creature has tough skin or medium armor.
- Heart** **Armor +3:** The creature has hard skin or thick armor.
- Spade** **Armor +4:** The creature has solid skin or heavy armor.

CARD VALUE		8	Medium Burst Template
2	Short Ranged	9	Large Burst Template
3	Long Ranged	10	Cone Template
4	Stabbing (Spear-like)	J	Teeth
5	Cutting (Sword-like)	Q	Claws
6	Chopping (Axe-like)	K	Improvised Weapons
7	Small Burst Template	A	Scavenged Weapons

CARD NUMBER THREE

- Club** **Agility:** The creature's special ability is associated with Agility.
- Diamond** **Strength:** The creature's special ability is associated with Strength.
- Heart** **Unique:** The creature's special ability is unique.
- Spade** **Spirit:** The creature's special ability is associated with Spirit.

ADVERSARIES

CARD VALUE (CLUBS)

2	Flight
3	Pace 8
4	Fleet-Footed
5	Pace 5
6	Aquatic
7	Pace 10
8	Wall Walker
9	Burrowing
10	Counterattack
J	Dodge
Q	Frenzy
K	Martial Artist
A	Two-Fisted

CARD VALUE (DIAMONDS)

2	Brawler
3	Strength d10
4	Rock and Roll
5	Strength d12
6	Brawny
7	Strength d8
8	Bruiser
9	Strength d12+1
10	Immunity (Cold)
J	Strength d12+2
Q	Immunity (Heat)
K	Strength d12+3
A	Immunity (Magic)

CARD VALUE (HEARTS)

2	Low Light Vision
3	Infravision
4	Poison
5	Paralysis
6	Regeneration
7	Stun
8	Infection
9	Ethereal
10	Command
J	Nerves of Steel
Q	Fast Regeneration
K	Florentine
A	Hard to Kill

CARD VALUE (SPADES)

2	Undead
3	Demonic
4	Fear
5	Terror
6	Fearless
7	Hardy
8	Elemental
9	Fear -2
10	Spells
J	Arcane Resistance
Q	Natural Leader
K	Common Bond
A	Beast Master

MERCENARY BREED

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Card number three only defines a single special ability for the new creature. If additional special abilities are desired, draw additional cards, treating them the same as card number three.

Once you have the basic characteristics of the new creature, wrap everything around card number one's flavor to create a visualization of what the creature looks like.

***EXAMPLE:** After drawing the cards, the resulting creature has the following characteristics: size +2, arachnid, armor +2, medium burst template, agility, and wall walker. You decide that the creature looks like a giant scorpion with a natural shell and a tail that shoots a poisonous concoction that causes damage.*

Remember to scale the difficulty of your new creature according to what level the characters are at. Use the **Combat Ratings** mechanics from the core rulebook as a guide. Include scaling the encounter by considering things such as:

1. **Lighting** – creatures with low light vision would have an advantage.
2. **Wild Cards** – define how many creatures, if any, are Wild Cards and how many are Extras.
3. **Environment** – creatures with Immunity (Heat) fighting at noon in the desert don't gain levels of Fatigue.
4. **Stealth** – creatures with a high Stealth die could gain The Drop on the characters, swinging combat in their direction early on.
5. **Terrain** – creatures with a higher pace can travel across difficult terrain faster than the characters, thus engaging them in melee first and striking the first blow.

MISSION GENERATOR

A number of missions are possible depending upon the type of corporation the mercenaries are working for. This can also vary from planet to planet and from race to race. To make this process of mission creation easier, here's a tool-kit that allows you to create one with less effort.

RANDOM MISSION CREATION

When creating a new mission, a number of parameters help to define the mission's purpose and framework. These parameters can be combined in many unique ways to create thousands of different missions spanning the entire galaxy.

To create a new mission, use the standard deck of playing cards and deal out a total of 4 cards. Each card's values define different aspects of the mission. If a Joker is dealt, place it back into the deck and deal a new card.

READING THE CARDS

Card number one's value defines the purpose of the mission.

Card number two's value defines the location of the mission.

Card number three's value defines the societal characteristics surrounding the mission.

Card number four's value defines a unique element of the mission to add flavor.

MERCENARY BREED

CARD NUMBER ONE

2	Exploration
3	Defensive
4	Theft
5	Espionage
6	Security
7	Recovery
8	Search & Rescue
9	Salvage
10	Kidnapping
J	Termination
Q	Investigation
K	Warfare
A	Infiltration

CARD NUMBER TWO

2	Mountains
3	Underwater
4	Island
5	Urban
6	Rural
7	Desert
8	Moon
9	Space/Spaceship
10	Plains
J	Corporate Facility
Q	New Settlement
K	Mine/Tomb
A	Forest/Jungle

CARD NUMBER THREE

2	Riotous
3	Ignorant
4	Protesting
5	Hostile
6	Docile
7	Frightened
8	Panicked
9	Rebellious
10	Enslaved
J	Inquisitive
Q	Abandoned
K	Unpopulated
A	Unknown

CARD NUMBER FOUR

2	Witchcraft
3	Ancient
4	Guerilla
5	Secret
6	Alien
7	Alliance
8	Non-Alliance
9	Native
10	Haunted
J	Cosmic
Q	Occult
K	Government
A	Criminal

MISSION GENERATOR

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Card number four is a means to provide additional flavor and focus to the mission rather than providing a definite aspect. It should be used to give the mercenaries a sense of who is involved in the mission.

There are four types of races that can be encountered within the galaxy and are defined as such:

1. **Alien** – Any race that travels to a location other than their home world or country and are unknown to the House of the Alliance.
2. **Alliance** – Any race that is a part of the Alliance.
3. **Non-Alliance** – Any race that is known by the House of the Alliance but is not part of the Alliance.
4. **Native** – Any race that reside within the mission's location and are unknown to the House of the Alliance.

Once you have the basic elements of the mission, it is time to put them together and add applicable flavor detail.

***EXAMPLE:** After drawing the cards, the resulting mission has the following elements: salvage, moon, docile, and ancient. You decide that the mercenaries' next mission will be to salvage a spaceship that has crashed into a moon inhabited by an ancient race. The creatures of the race are docile, but worship ancient spirits that lash out at the invading mercenaries.*

MERCENARY BREED

SAVAGE TALES

The following adventures include three common themes within space opera: exploration, investigation and recovery. Each one is designed for 4 - 6 Novice mercenaries and may be played in a single gaming session. As is the design of **MERCENARY BREED**, missions do not have to be directly linked to form an overarching campaign.

INFESTATION

Infestation is a basic recovery mission pitting the mercenaries against a P'Tarian that has taken over a transport ship. A large amount of raw materials were inside the transport on its way to making a delivery. The ship lost contact approximately one week ago and immediate recovery is necessary.

Where: Outside of any non-regularly travelled space lane.

Who: Any corporation that deals in raw materials.

OVERVIEW

During a standard delivery, the transport ship RX-89 was moving raw material along a less-than-frequently traveled space lane. This particular space lane, known locally as the Quartz Lane, does not see much traffic but allows more efficient deliveries between planets due to its lack of debris and extremely rare occasions of pirate activity. Thus it is preferred by logistics companies looking to keep their cargoes safe, although very few deliveries are made in this region.

Unfortunately, RX-89 came into contact with a lone vessel, covered in non-Alliance markings. The crew did not wish to engage the ship and instead attempted to maneuver around. They were not successful. The lone ship flew quickly to the larger transport, crashed into the hull and bled its organic contents inside. Only one thing came out of that ship: a large P'Tarian warrior.

The P'Tarian quickly slew the entire ship's crew and most likely ate them or used them to feed its offspring. After clearing the ship, the P'Tarian found an out-of-the-way section of the ship using the

TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE

Infestation is a time-sensitive adventure (game time, not real time). The longer it takes the PCs to locate the P'Tarian warrior, the more hatchlings (small swarms) they will encounter. This represents the incubation period for the hatchlings. Track the number of hours (again game time) as certain encounters only occur if the PCs have surpassed a specific time threshold. If time is not indicated, do not count it.

maintenance tunnels and began the process of reproducing. Hundreds, if not thousands, of eggs were laid only to await hatching and eventual deployment to a nearby planet.

Upon impact of the foreign vessel, the crew transmitted a signal for help. One of the corporations whose products are inside was listening to the space lane channels. Upon receiving the distress signal, they called their Master of the Mercenary Force, several days away, to muster the team immediately. Time is of the essence, although no one actually knows what hit the vessel and what may happen to their cargo. The only thing they know, and care about, is that their delivery is now floating in space. Recovery and delivery are necessary.

BRIEFING

Role-playing Encounter

The Master of the Mercenary Force may either address the team directly in a conference room or remotely across a video phone. Read or paraphrase the following:

“Good morning team. I trust your stay on the LT48 capital ship has been pleasant so far. I have immediate departure orders for a cargo recovery. The transport ship RX-89 was making a standard run through the Quartz Lane to deliver our raw materials when something happened. We intercepted a distress signal that lacks details. It simply states that a non-Alliance vessel has breached their hull and they need immediate help.

“You are to travel to the Quartz Lane, locate RX-89 and ensure delivery of our cargo. Report back to me when you’re done.”

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The Master of the Mercenary Force immediately leaves the room or disconnects the call, leaving the team to their duties. If this is their first mission, allow the team time to introduce themselves and visit the armory. Much of the combat will involve P'Tarian swarms and area-effect weapons are encouraged. If the mercenaries do not choose any area-effect weapons or possess any area-effect spells, suggest they try out a new flamethrower prototype or something similar. Otherwise they may find it quite difficult to battle the swarms.

From here, the mercenaries may take any type of ship desired or dictated by the Game Master to perform the mission. It is merely there to bring them to RX-89, possibly transport the cargo, and get back to the LT48 capital ship.

THE SEARCH

Investigation Encounter

Even though the RX-89 transport ship is located near a space lane, it has drifted far enough that the team must spend time searching. Anyone trained in Navigating can locate the ship after 30 minutes. Otherwise mercenaries may make an untrained Navigating check. Success means the ship is located after 1 hour while a raise means it only takes 30 minutes. Failure means they spend 2 hours searching for the lost ship.

Upon locating RX-89, the team must find a way of getting inside. Successful Notice checks produce the following information:

- The door to the cargo hold is intact and appears that it will still be functional.
- The small, unknown vessel breached the hull about 10 feet away from the cargo door.
- The small unknown vessel seems to have a growth about it that is sealing the breach in the hull.

If the mercenaries have a good reason for teleporting into the ship, allow them to do so as it can be believable. If you do not wish this to be so easy, have them go through the cargo door. A successful Hacking check allows the team to find the cargo door override code (to open it remotely) within minutes. A successful Investigation check (for simple computer use) allows the team to find the cargo door

HAVING THE RIGHT SKILLS

There are many skill checks throughout this adventure. During the course of investigation and exploration, skills are very important. However, often times if one is simply trained in a certain skill, a roll is not required. Additionally, you may choose that because one is so well trained in a skill, they are able to find the information within minutes, not adding significant time to the counter.

override code after 30 minutes. A failure to either roll means the team spent 1 hour finding the override code before proceeding.

Depending upon how large they decided their ship is, the team could potentially fly into the cargo hold (for a simple civilian-sized ship). Otherwise they can take a short distance spacecraft from their ship into the cargo hold. Upon entering with a ship, the team sends the same remote code to close the cargo door.

FIRST LANDING

Investigation Encounter

The team is now inside the landing bay where signs of the first strike are visible. Read or paraphrase the following:

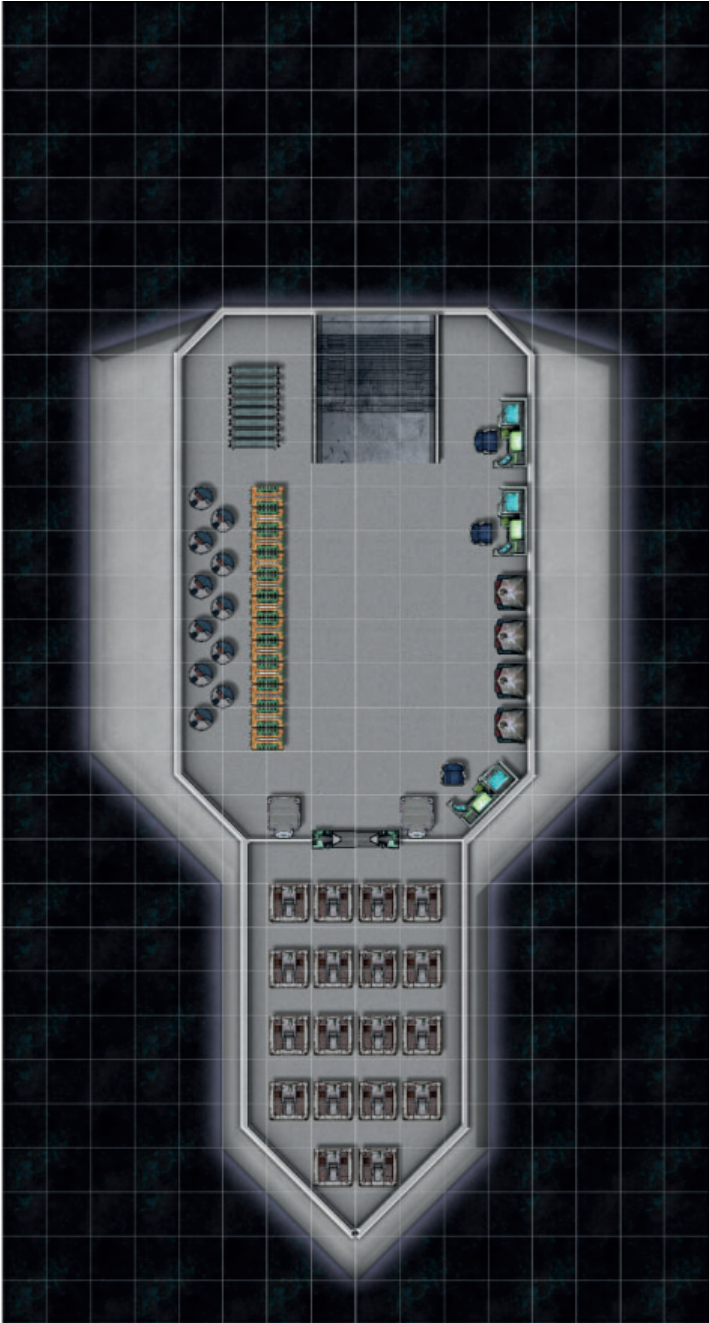
The landing bay is mostly dark except for the sporadic emergency lights around the perimeter. Signs of the breach in the hull are obvious as the nose of the non-Alliance ship protrudes into the bay. Upon closer inspection, you find a bio-organic substance that has formed around the breach to seal the opening.

Within the entry, the air is still and everything is quiet. There are no crew members about nor do you see any signs of alien species. However, stations within the cargo hold are mostly overturned, showing an amount of chaos that must have occurred.

Allow the mercenaries time to search the landing bay to collect information about what may have occurred. Successful Notice checks produce the following information with the given difficulty modifiers:

- 0: The room is primarily empty except for the standard crew stations.
- -1: There are no weapons or spent ammo anywhere.

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- -2: Small splotches of blood are apparent.

There is very little to be found in the landing bay. Ahead of the entry, on the other side of a very large door, is the actual hold where all the cargo is stored during transportation. The door is not locked and anyone can easily find the button to open and close it. Upon moving into the hold, there are no signs of life or signs that a struggle occurred. In fact, the doors to the hold were closed when the P'Tarian struck and the hold was completely ignored. All cargo is properly intact and the company's raw materials can easily be located.

If the mercenaries find the cargo and desire to transfer it to their own ship and leave immediately, move on to one of the first encounters. Otherwise, allow them to continue their investigation through the ship.

WHERE'S THE CREW?

Investigation Encounter

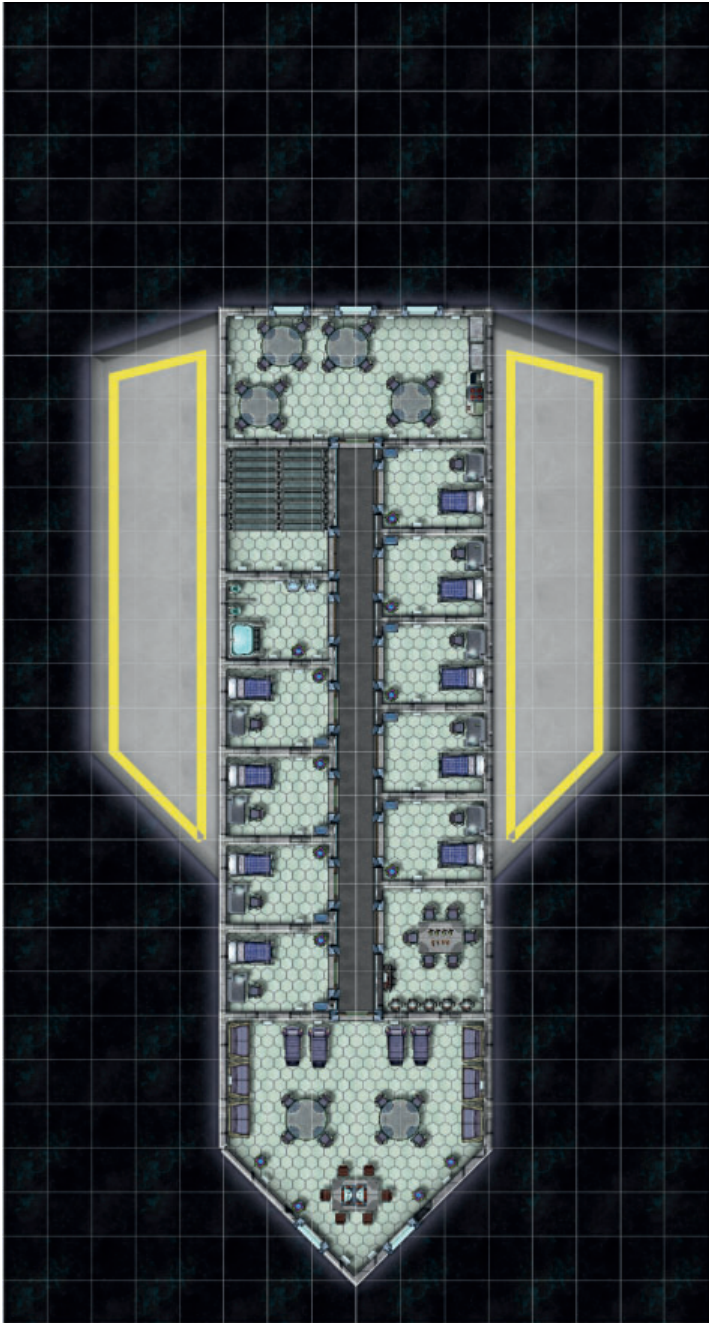
There are no signs of the crew within the cargo hold area including hallways immediately leading to and from the landing bay. Successful Notice checks produce the following information:

- Distant sounds of thousands of tiny feet walking along metal surfaces can barely be heard.
- Tiny droplets of blood form a trail out of the landing bay and through the nearest hallway.

Following the sound or the droplets of blood leads the team to the main stairwell leading to and from the landing bay. This stairwell is 6-foot wide and goes up approximately 20 feet to the second deck (which is above the cargo hold). The current deck is obviously the main crew deck of the ship. From this hallway you can reach the crew cabins, cafeteria, bathroom and general lounge area. The lights are on as normal, but no crew can be found.

Continuing to search this deck produces very little information. There are no signs of struggle nor is there any damage to any of the rooms. Rather, it appears that whatever crew may have been on this deck all hurried to the landing bay to defend the ship against its intruder. This is obvious with the signs of items being dropped (such

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PROPER WEAPONS

If the mercenaries did not choose to equip themselves with any area-effect weapons or have a spellcaster with area-effect spells, this combat can be approached differently: throttle down the difficulty due to how hard it becomes to kill the swarms or allow the team to regroup and return to their ship to gather different weapons. The momentum should not stop with this first combat encounter.

as a toothbrush), food left sitting out, games that were in-process or clothes that have been strewn about.

The sounds of tiny feet continue to get louder, especially near the cafeteria. If the mercenaries spend time investigating this deck, run the next encounter. Otherwise wait until they travel to another deck.

HUNGRY BUGS

Combat Encounter

The team runs into its first encounter with the ship's intruders. These bugs are primarily looking for food. If the mercenaries are getting overwhelmed, have the bugs retreat and allow the team to regroup. Read or paraphrase the following:

The sound of thousands of feet begins to amplify. As you search the deck and find bits of food lying out, you find that you are not alone. Hundreds of small bugs begin to flood out of the ventilation and onto the floor.

What you see in front of you are small swarms of eight-legged, bug-like creatures. Each one has a vicious maw filled with dozens of razor-sharp teeth. While they may be small, they form up in swarms and attack.

➤ **Small P'Tarian Swarm:** Two per mercenary

The small P'Tarian bugs are looking for food and see the mercenaries as a tasty meal. They crawl onto the nearest character and continually bite until the victim no longer has "meat" that can be eaten, the bug is killed or it loses interest. They are small and weak, but relentless. They do not normally retreat, but if the mercenaries

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are losing ground, have the bugs get tired of the attack and look for an easier meal. If the mercenaries decide to further investigate this deck, there is no more to be found. The swarm can be tracked to the ventilation grates, but no farther.

COMMAND DECK

Investigation Encounter

As the mercenaries wander the crew deck, they find another set of stairs that travels up another 20 ft., two decks up, to the command deck. The command deck has some engineering rooms along with standard navigational equipment and a doorway into the Bridge. There is nothing to be found within the engineering rooms outside of the standard equipment. If the team enters the Bridge, they may use the computers to further their investigation.

A successful Hacking check produces the following information within minutes. A successful Investigation check produces the same information after 1 hour. A failure for either check produces the same information after two hours. All this information is found within the ship's log, captain's personal log and various other sources.

- Visual contact of a non-Alliance vessel was made approximately 180 hours ago.
- 2 hours later a course was plotted around the foreign vessel to avoid engagement.
- 30 minutes later the foreign vessel changed course and started approaching the RX-89 transport ship.
- 30 minutes later the foreign vessel breached the hull near the landing bay.
- Crews were cleared from the landing bay and security was sent to investigate.
- 30 minutes later security entered the landing bay after it was confirmed that the breach was sealed and normal oxygen levels returned.
- 10 minutes later security called for emergency back-up.
- All able crew were sent to the landing bay to investigate.
- 10 minutes later security failed to respond.

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- 10 minutes later all subsequent crew members failed to respond.
- 10 minutes later the distress signal was transmitted.
- No logs appear after the distress signal was sent.
- The computers appear to have been untouched for many days.

The P'Tarian bugs are well-aware of the mercenaries' presence and have been searching for their current location. No Notice check is needed to hear the sound of small feet along the metal of the ventilation.

BIGGER BUGS

Combat Encounter

The P'Tarians are not happy about losing their young hatchlings and have sent more mature bugs hunting for the mercenaries. These bugs are larger than the previous ones and are looking specifically for the mercenaries. Read or paraphrase the following:

The sound of small feet on metal is more pronounced than before. It sounds like there are fewer of them, but they are definitely louder and moving quickly. As you peer through the doorway, a swarm of larger bug-like creatures greets you with open maws and dangerous teeth. They are obviously looking for you, and now they group together to strike.

- **Large P'Tarian Swarm:** One per mercenary

The large P'Tarian bugs are obviously hunting the intruders. They move with a definite purpose and stop at nothing to rid themselves of the team. They fight to the death and pursue should the mercenaries decide to run. If the mercenaries were not wise enough to ensure they had the right weapons after the first encounter, they should not be given a second chance. After the first encounter, the bugs are fully aware of the mercenary team's presence and attempt to remove them.



MERCENARY BREED

MOVING ON

Investigation Encounter

If the mercenaries have not made a decision for where or how to proceed, allow them time to check the computers for any anomalies being reported. A successful Hacking or Investigation roll produces the following information within minutes. A failure produces the same information after 30 minutes.

- Sensors indicate unexpected fluctuations in temperature throughout the ventilation shafts.
- Sensors also indicate that a maintenance deck has unrepaired damage.
- In addition, the computer indicates that an unknown power leak is occurring within one of the maintenance decks.

Any PC trained in Piloting or possessing some type of spacecraft knowledge can locate the hatch for the ladder leading down to the first maintenance deck without a check. Otherwise a successful Notice check allows them to find the hatch within minutes. A failure means the team spends 30 minutes searching for the hatch. The hatch blends in with the floor and is not marked. This maintenance hatch is only meant to be traversed by trained technicians and engineers.

The ladder leading through the hatch leads 10 ft. down to the next lower deck, only accessible through this hatch. While the opening is large enough for a normally sized Gemini, a particularly large race or overweight Gemini may struggle to get down the ladder. Allow a bit of role-playing to illustrate this when applicable.

FIRST MAINTENANCE DECK

Combat Encounter

If the mercenaries have spent less than three hours throughout the course of this mission, the first maintenance deck is empty. If they have spent three hours or more, a group of small P'Tarians is on their way to the upper deck. This is a group of recent hatchlings following up the attack of their elder siblings.

- **Small P'Tarian Swarm:** One per mercenary



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This group of P'Tarians is not meant to stop the team but rather act as an annoyance. They do not have strength in numbers, but will attempt to slow the team down. After a couple rounds of combat, or sooner if the swarms are quickly taken care of, a small group of larger P'Tarians arrives.

➤ **Large P'Tarian Swarm:** Two

It should become apparent that the P'Tarians are quickly increasing in number and size the longer the team spends on the mission.

TOO MUCH TIME

Combat Encounter

If the mercenaries have spent five hours or more throughout the course of this mission, then upon reaching the end of the first maintenance deck, swathes of small P'Tarians burst from the hatch leading to the second maintenance deck.

➤ **Small P'Tarian Swarm:** Two per mercenary

If the mercenaries easily dispatch these swarms, then more of them should burst from the hatch. There should never be enough to kill any one mercenary, but they should definitely cause enough interference to teach them a lesson for taking too long.

SECOND MAINTENANCE DECK

Exploration Encounter

At the end of the first maintenance deck, there is another hatch in the floor leading to the second maintenance deck. There is no need to roll to notice this as it looks the exact same as the first. This is the only path to the second maintenance deck

Again the ladder through the hatch goes straight down, but this time for 20 ft. down two decks (there is no way out onto the deck directly below). The size of the opening is the same as the previous opening and a comical scene may ensue as larger mercenaries descend. This hatch angles part-way and comes out along the wall of the lower deck. The temperature within the opening increases the closer one is to the second maintenance deck. The P'Tarians have

blocked much of the cooling from the ventilation to allow the breeding area to reach a favorable temperature.

Upon reaching the second maintenance deck, the power leak is obvious as some of the temperature control systems on this deck have been damaged or destroyed. Searching around this maintenance deck, there are only utilities, cables, ventilation and a large closed door on the opposite end. The mercenaries should feel the temperature continue to increase as they reach the door.

The door is not locked or even sealed. In fact, upon closer inspection, bio-organic substances can be seen oozing out from the cracks. Simply pressing the open button allows the mercenaries to enter.

UTILITY ROOM

Combat Encounter

The door leads into the main utility room. The light is not as bright as it should be, but there's still enough to see. If desired, dark shadows may appear along the walls, especially within the corners. The room is 24 ft. x 16 ft., although Game Masters may adjust this size as needed. The P'Tarian warrior is guarding a plethora of eggs, waiting for all the hatchlings to mature. It immediately notices the team and aims to protect the eggs. Unfortunately for the mercenaries, there are hatchlings and more mature P'Tarian around the room as well.

Along the opposite wall lies the large nest of P'Tarian eggs. The warrior is guarding this nest with groups of small hatchlings directly in front. More mature hatchlings are along the side walls, feeding on bodies that were hauled into the room.

- **Small P'Tarian Swarm:** One per mercenary
- **Large P'Tarian Swarm:** Two
- **P'Tarian Elite**

Upon defeating the P'Tarian and hopefully disposing of the eggs (although they will not hatch should the temperature be reduced to 75°F or lower), the mercenaries should return to the landing bay and contact the Master of the Mercenary Force. From here they can either instruct him to send another transport, fly the ship to a nearby port

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or transfer the cargo if they have room. They should then return to the capital ship.

TROUBLESHOOTING

Overly cautious mercenaries may decide that further investigation into the depths of the spaceship is unwise. Remind them that their mission is to recover the cargo and ensure its delivery. If they do not kill the P'Tarian Elite, the ship will become overrun by swarms of P'Tarian that continue to grow in size. Once there is a horde of Elites, they will use or consume the cargo and launch an attack on the nearest planet (after repairing the ship.)

If they continue their hesitation of further investigation, have the swarms launch an attack in the cargo bay either before or while the mercenaries are attempting to flee. It should become quite obvious to the mercenaries that the ship is infested with a deadly bug-like alien race that is extremely hostile.

MINING RIGHTS

Mining Rights is a basic exploration mission placing the mercenaries in the forefront of a new mining encampment protecting those within from unknown dangers lurking in the surrounding forest.

Where: Any frontier or recently settled planet.

Who: Any corporation that deals with mining.

OVERVIEW

A large deposit of iron ore (or similar raw material) has been discovered near a young settlement on the third planet of the Rastor sector (the planet has yet to be properly named). Land rights have been purchased as the surrounding area has been found to be devoid of civilization during precursory exploration.

Because the initial exploration was done in a hurried fashion to determine if any civilizations were obvious, the settlers and corporations have determined that land rights can now be safely purchased and no native races are being compromised. Or so they thought.

The truth is that the area is regularly traveled by the nomadic, hostile Krixtu. The Krixtus had not returned to this area in some years and now find a foreign group invading their precious land. While they have turned a blind-eye to the random settlements, destruction of their precious hills is too much to handle. Even though they have not resided within this territory for several years, they find it their right to be considered the actual owners.

So far the Krixtus have remained out of sight, using stealth techniques to place traps or assassinate random, lone workers. Continued searches of the area have turned up no traces of life other than odd markings in the soil. Lengthy searches have yet to be performed as the workers residing at the encampment are not equipped to handle hostile creatures or alien races.

For fear of their safety and the integrity of the operation, supervisors at the encampment have ordered most workers to stay at the nearby settlement and only those who are critical to the mission's success and are allowed to stay onsite. In addition, these individuals are required to stay within the mines or the machinery digging the mines and building the support facilities. This has slowed the initial setup of the encampment but now allows everyone to remain safe.

BRIEFING

Role-playing Encounter

The Master of the Mercenary Force may either address the team directly in a conference room or remotely across a video phone. Read or paraphrase the following:

"We have recently begun establishing a new mining facility within the Rastor sector, on the third planet. The current settlements have been free of abuse until the encampment began construction. Since then, mysterious explosions have occurred and lone workers are disappearing or turning up dead. The local supervisors believe there are deadly creatures within the nearby woods emerging to strike at night.

"You are to go to this encampment, flush out whatever is causing this nuisance and ensure the safety of those building the facility. Until a proper perimeter can be established and guards

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UNMAPPED TERRITORY

As the planet is a frontier planet and only recently settled, it has not been fully mapped and navigating will be difficult. The locals recommend proceeding by foot, otherwise the hostile creatures may never be located.

put in place, the entire mining area is under your protection. Do everything you can to get these workers back to their positions so that full activities can resume."

The Master of the Mercenary Force immediately leaves the room or disconnects the call, leaving the team to their duties. If this is their first mission, allow the team time to introduce themselves and visit the armory. There is no specific set of weapons considered advantageous to complete this mission. However, proper tracking may be required and the players should be encouraged to outfit their mercenaries with gear designed for exploration.

From here, the mercenaries may take any type of ship desired or dictated by the Game Master to perform the mission. The capital ship may travel to the area or the team can commission a small ship to travel back and forth. Either way, once they reach the planet, they need a small ship to land on the surface. There are no spaceports nor are there landing platforms as they have yet to be installed.

NAVIGATING

Exploration Encounter

While the team is given specific coordinates as to the location of the Rastor sector and its third planet, finding the encampment properly is another issue. Any character with the Navigating skill can locate the encampment using the given coordinates without a dice roll. Otherwise, allow creative ways to find the encampment properly and decide the best skill to use. Navigating is the most proper, but Knowledge based skills may also be of use. Success should place them at the encampment while failure may put them at the nearby settlement instead.

If the team is not able to find the encampment upon landing, describe the delay caused by their miscalculation, and the



encampment supervisor's subsequent anger, or allow them to role-play the trip from the settlement to the encampment. The mission is not time-sensitive; the amount of time required to reach the encampment should only cause annoyance to the local workers and not any adverse side-effects.

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A FRIENDLY GREETING

Role-playing and Investigation Encounter

Upon arriving at the encampment, the team is immediately met by Director Michel Alstead, the current lead for the mining facility. Read or paraphrase the following:

“Judging by your equipment, I will assume that you are the mercenary force sent to keep this fine establishment safe. (If the party’s landing was delayed, insert several terse comments here.) I am Director Michel Alstead, head of this facility.”

Allow the party to introduce themselves and speak to Director Alstead. Anyone who makes a successful Notice check, should they be looking, notices Director Alstead is wearing armor underneath his clothing. Director Alstead knows the following:

- Workers began disappearing approximately 10 days ago.
- A total of eight workers have been reported missing or found dead while another six are assumed to be, but are unconfirmed.
- Small, unplanned explosions have occurred throughout the mines, although no one has been severely wounded.
- All non-critical workers have been sent to the settlement until this threat has been neutralized.
- There have been no equipment malfunctions.
- Work on the perimeter fencing has ceased until the workers return.
- The large tents inside the mine have remained undisturbed, although we have active workers during all hours of the day.

Director Alstead knows little more than this and is determined to continue working on getting the mining facility activated without worrying about the perimeter fence. However, he visibly carries a weapon and proceeds with caution.

INVESTIGATE

Investigation Encounter

The mercenaries may either investigate outside of the mining grounds or speak to what few workers are still around. By either asking the

right questions or making successful Streetwise checks, the team may learn the following:

- Workers only disappear at night.
- “Only those who were alone disappeared or wound up dead. Thus, we don’t really know who’s missing and who has returned to the nearby settlement.”
- Small traps continue to appear throughout the mine. They are always small but cause blindness or severe burns. Everyone has recovered so far.
- The fear being created by these attacks is driving men to flee to the settlement without proper leave notice. At least that’s what we think.
- “We see random, natural creatures during the day, but rarely is anything seen at night.”
- “Some say they have heard rustling from the trees, but I think it’s just the wind.”
- “Most of us think an angry ex-employee has been causing this ruckus and all the missing workers are simply back at the settlement.”

This last statement is completely untrue, but most of the workers believe the problems are either natural or made-up – in the essence that no one is disappearing, they are simply running away.

The mercenaries may also investigate the grounds around the mining site and find the following (depending upon what side of the site they are searching – the main entrance is on the south side):

SOUTH

- There are no signs of footprints aside from what appears to be from the workers.

NOCTURNAL

The Krixtus are nocturnal and are never encountered during the daytime. No matter how much the mercenaries search, they will not find a Krixtu during the day and finding their home should be virtually impossible. They live in caves deep within the mountains and hills and block the entryways during the daytime.

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- Most of the ground has been disturbed by the large machinery going into the mine along with those building the facility.
- Everyone near the entrance lacks the appearance of fear. This could be due to the ever-watchful eye of Director Alstead.

EAST

- The only sign of activity is the smoking area.
- Trails lead from the East side to the settlement nearby.
- Machinery has avoided this area, so far.
- The perimeter wall construction has no activity in this area.

NORTH

- The north side of the mine blends into the mountains and hills.

WEST

- There are visible signs of heavy foot traffic in this area.
- The perimeter wall has been started, beginning at the northwest corner.
- Small, unnatural holes appear along the outer areas of the mine and areas along the perimeter wall.
- Successful Notice checks show that the area appears to have been smoothed haphazardly, similar to hiding ones' footprints.
- Additional Notice checks show that pock marks appear randomly throughout the area.
- Successful Tracking checks show that the pock marks lead into the nearby forest.
- Additional Tracking checks show that larger groupings of pock marks appear near the forest's edge.

If the mercenaries haven't picked up on the obvious signs, they should follow the pock marks leading into the forest. If it is still daytime, allow the mercenaries to follow the footprints. If it is nighttime, allow the mercenaries to plot their next actions. The following four sections may occur in a different order depending upon what time of the day it is and what the mercenaries decide to do.

ISOLATE AND OVERWHELM

Krixtus have a very solid combat tactic. They understand that a frontal assault is basically suicide and that taking on a single foe is the safest bet. They will attempt to isolate lone enemies and overwhelm them. Otherwise they attempt to keep their distance.

LOW LIGHT VISION

This particular tribe of Krixtus has low light vision, due to being nocturnal. They ignore penalties for Dim and Dark lighting, such as the moon light.

FOLLOW THOSE TRACKS

Investigation Encounter

Should the mercenaries decide to follow the pock marks at the edge of the forest, they must use skills to continue.

At least one character must make a successful Tracking check to follow the pock marks into the forest. These are much harder to detect as the undergrowth and fallen branches and leaves hide some of the trail. Upon making the first successful Tracking check, the team is able to locate a single set of footprints that start at the forest's edge. These are no longer simply pock marks but actual footprints.

A second successful Tracking check must be made to continue following the footprints through the forest. If the mercenaries fail the Tracking check, they may recover by subsequently making a successful Notice check at (-1) to relocate the footprints. From here the undergrowth continues to get thicker.

A third successful Tracking check at (-1) must be made to follow the footprints deeper into the forest. If the mercenaries fail the Tracking check, they may recover by subsequently making a successful Notice check at (-2) to relocate the footprints. The undergrowth has now become so thick that losing the footprints again results in the mercenaries losing the trail.

As the mercenaries follow the footprints, they come across a small clearing where the footprints break off and lead in three separate directions. Further Tracking checks are not required as these

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footprints are quite obvious, almost as if they were deliberately placed. If it is still daytime, these three sets of footprints all lead to dead ends, double-back upon themselves or come back around to the same clearing. However, if the sun has set, the forest is crawling with tree-perched creatures.

ALL ALONE

Combat Encounter

If the mercenary team decides to split up and follow the tracks separately as night falls or they enter the forest at night without following the tracks, the Krixtus are ready to ambush a single or pair of mercenaries. However, they will not attack should any one group number three or more. Being that the Krixtu guards are hiding quietly in the trees, they are able to get The Drop on the mercenaries unless a successful Notice check at (-2) can be made.

➤ **Krixtu Guard:** Four

The Krixtu guards prefer to hurl their spears at their enemies and then charge and attack with their claws. When the Krixtus are ready to attack, read or paraphrase the following:

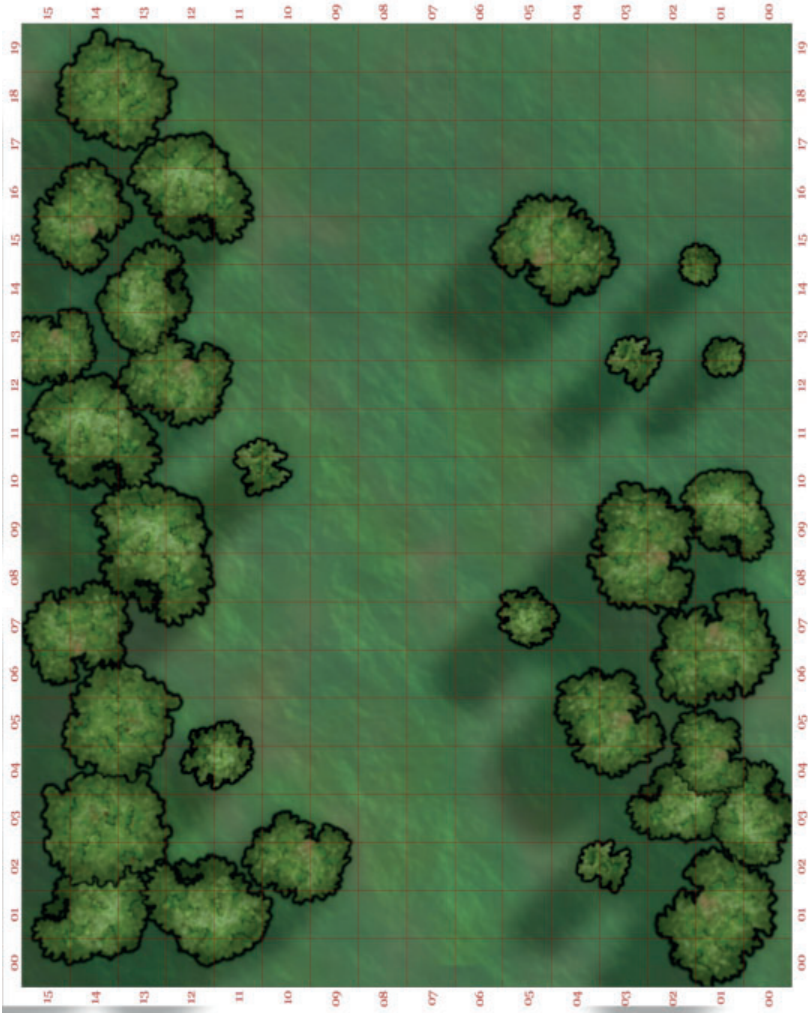
The leaves appear to rustle without the wind and the sound of snarls can barely be heard. Amongst the trees you see several pairs of small glowing orbs. Quickly the orbs disappear and then reappear, as if they had moved. Before you comprehend what's happening, large bodies jump down from the trees.

Alone or in very small groups, Krixtu guards are no match for a team of mercenaries. The mercenaries' technology is foreign to the Krixtu, but they only see the team as more humanoid enemies. They fight to the death, but if the one or two mercenaries become overwhelmed, the other mercenaries should arrive swiftly.

STICK TOGETHER

Combat Encounter

Should the mercenaries opt to enter the forest at night or stay together and only follow a single path of prints, a small force of Krixtus is waiting. These Krixtus have heard the oncoming mercenaries and grouped together, ready to strike. They are all hiding in bushes or the



trees and will get The Drop on the mercenaries unless a successful Notice check at (-2) can be made.

- **Krixtu Guard:** Two per mercenary
- **Krixtu Sergeant**

The Krixtus attempt to isolate any one mercenary and overwhelm him or her with multiple guards. Should they be successful, the Krixtu

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sergeant, if available, will focus upon the lone mercenary. Otherwise the Krixtus will fight to the death and attempt to protect the forest.

This combat encounter would still occur even if the mercenaries encounter the small band of four guards first. They stalk the forest at night and listen attentively for anyone who enters. They watch to see if they are foe, ally or simply a non-threat and act accordingly. Anyone humanoid is treated as a foe due to their encounters with the mining group.

REST

Role-playing Encounter

The previous encounters occur shortly after night falls while the remaining hours are quiet. Should the mercenaries decide not to enter the forest at night, at least one Krixtu enters the encampment, or at least very close to the encampment, makes some noise, and hopefully is chased into the forest leading to an ambush. While the Krixtus are not aware of the mercenaries' presence outside of these combat encounters, they are easily frightened at the size of their weapons and nearby equipment.

The next day is quiet and the mercenaries may continue their investigation if they haven't discovered all the information desired. Director Alstead is of little help as he ensures the workers keep working.

MAKING A STAND

Combat Encounter

Now that the Krixtus are aware of the mercenaries and have seen their weapons, they speak to their shaman leader and devise a plan for attack. That coming night, they plan to make a stand against these new humanoids and show them what Krixtu magic is about.

The Krixtus take to the trees and make noises, often howling noises, to entice the mercenaries into the forest. Because the mercenaries are aware of this presence and have seen the glowing orbs of the Krixtu's eyes, no ambush is possible. However, the Krixtus remain in the trees until the mercenaries are close enough to attack. The Krixtu shaman tries to remain in the trees unless forced to the ground.

The encounter should occur in a forest clearing with thick undergrowth and fallen tree limbs nearby. It should become obvious

that escape through the forest will be hampered by this undergrowth and attacks will most likely come down from the trees.

Upon seeing the shaman for the first time or witnessing his spiritual magic, read or paraphrase the following:

The largest creature appears to be giving commands to all the warriors, although it carries no weapon. Instead, it carries a thick staff with a head that glows a stark blue and white. Flashes of light appear from the head of the staff with beams of light that shoot off in the desired direction. You hear howling from amongst the treetops.

If the mercenaries have not come into contact with spiritual magic before, this should be something of awe. This could be role-played or cause detrimental effects, depending upon how simple the encounter appears to be for the mercenaries.

- **Krixtu Guard:** Two per mercenary
- **Krixtu Sergeant**
- **Krixtu Shaman**

If the combat appears to be too easy for the mercenaries, continue bringing in additional guards. If the combat is overwhelming the mercenaries, have the guards fall back, afraid of the weapon technology. Another option is to have the entire group flee if the shaman falls.

After combat ends and the shaman has fallen, hundreds of Krixtus appear from amongst the forest. Their leader has fallen and they no longer desire to combat the intruders. Read or paraphrase the following:

Around you, hundreds of the creatures begin to emerge. The animosity has left their eyes, replaced with sorrow and defeat. A couple of the stronger ones bark some orders as the large one with the staff is surrounded and lifted into the air. As the felled warrior is carried off into the dark forest, a single figure emerges and approaches. He speaks a few words in an unknown language and looks into your eyes. (This is an apprentice shaman who has cast a speak language spell.)

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His words are as your own. "It is apparent we fight for the same land. Our tribe is nomadic and will travel elsewhere. Your kind is strong and willing to defend against all manner of creatures. We are a nomadic tribe and will continue our trek elsewhere; staying far from this thing you are building.

"I only ask that you preserve the forest and the creatures who call it home. Should you mean no harm, we will remain hidden. Should you threaten the wildlife, we will protect them. For now, you have prevailed."

The creature bows his head and quickly disappears from sight. You hear no sounds and see no shadows. The forest is quiet.

REPORT

Role-playing Encounter

The mercenary team may now make a report to Director Alstead giving him the all-clear to continue work at full-capacity. In addition, they may wish to explain the wishes of the Krixtu shaman apprentice. Upon arriving back at their capital ship, the Master of the Mercenary Force records and store the description of the creatures encountered.

TROUBLESHOOTING

Mercenaries that either do not follow the tracks into the woods or are unsuccessful in following the tracks should either be lured again the following day or approached by the Krixtu at night.

If the mercenaries carry ranged weapons that overwhelm the Krixtu, use a hit-and-run style of combat, making use of the surrounding woods for cover and surprise attacks. When incorporating this type of combat, give the Krixtu Stealth d8. The Krixtu are an extremely low-technology race and rely heavily upon their use of the woods to overcome their deficit.

STOLEN JEWELS

Stolen Jewels is a basic investigation mission as the mercenaries hunt down clues and follow the trail of a criminal ring who continues to threaten the jewelry industry.

Where: Coursian

Who: Genesis Holdings

OVERVIEW

Genesis Holdings has been the victim of recent thefts throughout Coursian. They seem to be the only target as expensive jewelry is stolen from the stores along with deliveries being intercepted.

These thefts have been occurring almost daily over the course of the past two weeks and the local authorities have given up on their searches, claiming other priorities have gotten in the way. To date, millions in jewelry and gems have been stolen and recovery is absolutely necessary.

A particularly young ring of criminals is responsible for these thefts. They are composed of Gemini, and possibly other accomplices, and are expecting to fence the jewelry in the upcoming weeks. Due to their lack of knowledge, they are finding it difficult to contact the right people and networks to sell the jewelry before being caught. Greed and the thrill of theft are starting to overcome them.

While they originally planned to break into only a couple of stores and possibly intercept a single shipment, the group's lust for wealth continued to flourish with each successful theft and activities continued. Four thefts were planned but a total of ten have been completed and only one additional attempt has been thwarted. The mercenaries must follow the clues and hunt down this group while watching their backs. The closer they get, the more aware the criminal ring becomes and assassins are nearby.

BRIEFING

Role-playing Encounter

The Master of the Mercenary Force may either address the team directly in a conference room or remotely across a video phone. Read or paraphrase the following:

"Greetings mercenaries. Genesis Holdings has been the victim of a series of thefts lately, amounting to millions lost. Jewelry and gems have been taken from stores and shipments and we have no solid leads. The local authorities have given up their searches due to a high amount of homicide investigations. While this annoys us, it does not truly matter."

MERCENARY BREED

“You are to travel to Coursian, investigate these thefts, bring down the criminals and return everything stolen. Or at least everything that is still available. While it would be better to hand over the assailants to the authorities, you are hereby granted the use of other means.”

The Master of the Mercenary Force immediately leaves the room or disconnects the call, leaving the team to their duties. If this is their first mission, allow the team time to introduce themselves and visit the armory. There is no specific set of weapons considered advantageous to complete this mission. However, being that Coursian is a highly populated area, close combat and near-ranged weapons would be ideal. With so many innocents around, there could be casualties.

From here, the mercenaries may take any type of ship desired or dictated by the Game Master to perform the mission. The capital ship may travel to the area or the team can commission a small ship to travel back and forth. Either way, once they reach the planet, they need a smaller ship to dock at the local landing pads.

HOUSING

Role-playing Encounter

Due to the possible length of the mission, the Master of the Mercenary Force gives the team access to a safe house in Falthrid where the highest number of thefts has occurred. This safe house is located in a high-rise condominium complex on the 34th floor. It is lavishly decorated with six bedrooms, four bathrooms, plenty of personal space and a hot tub.

BRAINS OVER BRAWN

While combat skills will easily win the day when that time comes, proper investigation allows the team to follow the clues to where the thieves are hiding. Encourage the mercenaries to pay more attention to their skills, either during character creation or advancement. While there's no need to spoil the adventure, mention that this type of mission may require the proper investigation equipment rather than lots of big guns.

The house is fully setup with wireless computer network access. Library or newspaper research can be done within the safe house or onsite (each is approximately one mile away). A luxury car and surveillance van are included with the safe house. From here, the mercenaries are free to choose the direction of their investigation. A number of options will be presented, but no order is required.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Investigation Encounter

The mercenaries may travel to the local authorities to learn the information already gathered. While the main precinct is not difficult to locate, those unfamiliar with Coursian and more importantly Falthrid may require directions coupled with some comical role-playing and unnecessary dice rolls.

Upon arriving at the main precinct, the mercenaries should speak to Captain Alfred Drogar. By asking the right questions or making the correct dice rolls (using applicable skills), they learn:

- The first break-in occurred twelve days ago at the Gleaming Jewels store on the north side.
- Within Falthrid, a total of eight thefts have occurred.
- Six Gleaming Jewels stores have been broken into.
- Two deliveries were intercepted.
- At least one store on the east, south and west sides have been broken into.
- A total of three stores have been broken into on the north side.
- “We only have jurisdiction over the north side break-ins.”
- “We did not find any evidence at the break-in sites.”
- Neighbors apparently did not see or hear anything.
- “We have been pulled from the investigations to deal with the recent increase in homicides.”
- “Genesis Holdings assured us they would assign a mercenary force to address the issue.”
- No other precincts have been able to investigate.

Captain Drogar knows little more and spends most of his time as a pencil pusher. His detectives are all out on assignment and

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unavailable for questioning. If the mercenaries travel to additional precincts, they are told investigations have not started and the issue was handed over to Genesis Holdings' mercenary forces.

LIBRARY OR NEWSPAPER Investigation Encounter

The team may search the local library or newspaper news archives. This will require successful Investigation or Hacking rolls to find all the appropriate information. The news archives show the following:

- Twelve days ago a break-in occurred at Gleaming Jewels (store # 049) in the Main Street District.
- The thieves disabled the entire security system.
- The thieves also disabled the cameras within the store, although it is debatable whether they were working properly or not.
- The thieves only took the most valuable jewelry and loose gems, apparently those most desired on the black market.
- No evidence was left behind.
- Instead of smashing into the glass displays, the locks were disabled and everything was removed without damage to those displays.
- Rumors of an "inside job" abound.
- No one in the neighborhood heard the break-in, although regular vehicle activity on the streets was heard.
- Subsequent break-ins have occurred throughout town including Gleaming Jewels store #056 also in the Main Street District.
- A delivery was intercepted in the Main Street district while en route to Gleaming Jewels store #072 in the Warehouse District on the East side.
- Main Street District is one of the wealthiest areas of Falthrid.

There is little else of value in the news archives. However, break-ins at the other stores can be found, but they are largely irrelevant to the location of the thieves. These break-ins will be similar in form to the one at store #049.

SECURITY SYSTEM

Investigation Encounter

Particularly crafty mercenaries may want to hack into the security company's monitoring network and dig through the archives. While this can be achieved using the wireless connection at the safe house, the player must make a successful Hacking check to continue. The security company's archives show the following:

- Gleaming Jewels Store #049 – Alarm armed 10:00 PM.
- Gleaming Jewels Store #049 – Alarm unknown anomaly reported by system 12:01 AM.
- Gleaming Jewels Store #049 – Alarm unknown anomaly cleared by system 12:02 AM.
- Gleaming Jewels Store #049 – Alarm disabled 8:00 AM.

From this information, the mercenaries should discern that the security system was not deactivated but rather hacked into and bypassed. The reported anomaly was ignored as it only occurred for one minute and written off as a system failure. The truth is this is when the thieves hacked into the security system and took control. They were able to manipulate everything without the monitoring company knowing what was occurring.

NEIGHBORS

Investigation Encounter

The team may travel to Gleaming Jewels store #049 and speak to the neighbors. If they speak to neighbors of the other stores, they may find similar information, but nothing points directly to the group of thieves. With successful Streetwise checks, the mercenaries may learn the following:

- No one the mercenaries speak to actually spoke with the detectives. It is believed the detectives did not actually speak to any neighbors to gather information.
- The employees of Gleaming Jewels have always been trustworthy and are all still working there.
- No one saw any suspicious vehicles the night of the break-in.

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- Traffic on the streets that night was normal, but there were definitely plenty of cars the thieves could have arrived in.
- No cars stopped in front of the store.
- None of the neighbors can see the rear of the store from their vantage points.
- There is an empty office above the Gleaming Jewels store.
- The detectives spent very little time searching the store after the break-in.

Make sure to inform the mercenaries of the empty office above the store as it is a key piece of information.

EMPLOYEES

Investigation Encounter

The mercenaries are free to speak to the employees, but none of them have much information to share. They can reiterate much of what can be found in the newspaper or library, but nothing else. They also refute the rumor of the break-ins being an “inside job”. Background checks from successful Investigation or Hacking checks show that all employees are clear. Gleaming Jewels only hires those with clear records. The employees may also know of the empty office directly above their store.

EMPTY OFFICE

Investigation Encounter

The empty office above the store is the key to the break-ins and more. If the mercenaries enter the office, they find it largely empty except for a cable running out of a side wall. The cable is a standard network cable and can only be connected to by a portable computing device. A successful Hacking check, Investigation checks will not work, produces an interesting scene. Read or paraphrase the following:

Upon successfully connecting to whatever portal this network cable leads to, the entire Gleaming Jewels system is displayed before your eyes. From here you can navigate into their security system with full control. In addition, you can see receipt and delivery dates for the entire city of Falthrid.

If the mercenaries look for similar connections into the Gleaming Jewels computer system near all other stores, they find nothing. This

empty office is the only access point into their system. If the mercenaries search the office, they note that the dust has been disturbed, other than their own presence. Continued searches of the Gleaming Jewels system shows schedules with only two weeks' worth of deliveries and receipts.

If the mercenaries do not leave the office, the thieves will know of their presence and abandon the use of the office. If the mercenaries setup surveillance outside the office, the thieves return one or two days later to connect to the computer system. Upon seeing two Gemini males enter the office, the mercenaries should enter and capture them. If they choose to kill the thieves, then skip the interrogation.

INTERROGATION

Investigation Encounter

Now that two thieves have been captured, the mercenaries need to make successful Intimidation checks to make them talk. Allow the mercenaries to come up with creative ways to use skills other than Intimidation, such as Persuasion, to perform the interrogation. These thieves are not particularly strong-willed and answer all questions that accompany a successful skill check. The thieves know the following:

- The group only wanted to break into three or four stores.
- The thrill of these acts drove them to break into additional stores and intercept deliveries.
- This connection gives them full access to the Gleaming Jewels computer system throughout Falthrid.
- Connection to the system is only required periodically to update their own personal computing device with security instructions and override codes.
- All actual work can be done remotely once you have the correct security instructions and override codes.
- Their base of operations is located in the Warehouse District only 1 mile to the east.

There is little else to discern from the thieves, but feel free to improvise. If the mercenaries allow the thieves to flee, they

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immediately travel to their base and warn the others. If they are handed over to the authorities, the others know and are warned of impending trouble. If they are killed outright, the others remain unprepared.

Upon leaving the office and interrogating the thieves, two arrows come flying down at the mercenaries. There are two piercing arrows (2d6, AP 4) with a simple roll of d8 versus two mercenaries. Unless they have a reason to be looking upwards, the mercenaries are caught unaware and unable to avoid the attack. An assassin (or two) stalks the rooftops, although he cannot be seen, and mistakes the mercenaries for detectives (the assassin has been surveying the office).

If the captured thieves emerge from the office, the assassin then immediately travels to the thieves' base of operations. If the thieves never appear, because they are dead, he instead flees for good.

BASE OF OPERATIONS

Investigation Encounter

Upon arriving into the warehouse district, it becomes apparent that the captured thieves were not fully truthful about the location of their base of operations. After they arrive at the given location, the team finds an empty warehouse. Should the thieves still be with the team, they feign confusion and attempt to flee.

Finding the actual base of operations should not be an easy task unless proper investigation has been performed. There are numerous options for how the team finds the actual base and should be allowed to come up with creative means outside of those listed below. Here is a selection of methods to use for locating the actual base of operations:

- If the thieves were interrogated and shared the information about being able to work remotely, a successful Hacking check allows the mercenaries to follow the wireless signal connecting the thieves to the Gleaming Jewels computer system. While this will take them to the correct area, it shouldn't point them directly to the actual base of operations.
 - If the mercenaries learned of the delivery that was intercepted, they may search the Warehouse District for the delivery truck, and find it just outside of the base of operations.
-

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- If the mercenaries learned of the traffic gracing the Main Street District that night, they may search for a luxury vehicle and find it just outside the base of operations. This vehicle should resemble the style of those found in the Main Street District.
- If they search long enough, the mercenaries find out-of-place individuals loitering around a certain area, either smoking or walking between vehicles.

Optionally, the mercenaries must search through a couple warehouses before finding the right one. Upon finding the right one, voices are heard in the distance as the thieves are several hundred feet from the door.

GUNFIGHT

Combat Encounter

The only way the thieves are not aware of the oncoming attack, or rather that an attack is imminent, is if the captured thieves were killed and the assassin fled. Otherwise, the assassin traveled directly to the base of operations and warned of a possible strike. While they are aware of some type of attack, the thieves and the assassin do not know when it will happen. If the mercenaries all make successful Stealth checks, they get The Drop on the thieves and the assassin. Otherwise they find the group standing around with weapons nearby, wary of a possible attack.

- **Gemini Thief:** Two per mercenary
- **Gemini Thief Elite:** One (Wild Card)
- **Master Assassin**

If the thieves were not aware of the strike, remove the Master Assassin and replace with two more Gemini Thieves. If the mercenaries are getting overwhelmed, have the Assassin flee as he desires to live another day. If the encounter seems too easy, add additional Gemini Thieves as reinforcements arrive from outside.

CLEAN-UP

Investigation Encounter

After the thieves have been dispatched, the mercenaries can search the warehouse looking for the stolen jewels. They will not only find the stolen jewels and gems but also plenty of computer and surveillance equipment along with weapons and some armor. Luckily, the thieves were unsuccessful in fencing the stolen goods and all stolen items are present.

The team is required to return the stolen goods to Genesis Holdings and notify the local authorities of the remaining items, such as the equipment and weapons. They are welcome to take the equipment, but stealing weapons is frowned upon by the authorities and Genesis Holdings. Weapons involved in crimes are to be dealt with by the authorities, but the equipment is of little use. This is due to the precincts inability to deal with the equipment and the desire to simply hand it over to the corporations for further investigation. The mercenaries may as well skip the middle-man and take the equipment themselves.

REWARD

As a secondary reward for the mercenaries, the Master of the Mercenary Force allows them to use the Falthrid safe house for personal needs should they be on leave on Coursian.

GAME MASTER'S NOTES

As this adventure is designed to be primarily skill-based, not all gaming groups will enjoy the idea of investigation. This can easily be augmented with additional combat opportunities by adding a couple small skirmishes with Gemini Thieves at key points as the mercenaries get closer and closer to finding the empty office and the base of operations.

In addition, if the mercenaries decide to chase the Master Assassin on top of the building, then add a second Master Assassin as just one against the mercenaries will be quickly overwhelmed. This could also turn into a chase across the rooftops of nearby buildings, through the alleys or spanning the entire district as the mercenaries chase down

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the assassin. If this occurs, the Master Assassin would use many stealth techniques to strike from the shadows and then duck away into cover.

To make the investigation more difficult or time consuming, have the mercenaries roll appropriate skill checks to obtain any information and track the amount of game time that passes. If the team takes too long, another break-in could occur elsewhere in town after the thieves successfully hacked into the Gleaming Jewels computer system before the mercenaries discover the empty office.

TROUBLESHOOTING

If the mercenaries are not ones for lengthy investigations, they could track down the thieves to their hideout where a grand shoot-out will ensue.

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