

STRANGERS ON A STRANGE SHORE

THE CHARACTERS



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ABOUT THE CHARACTERS

As I mentioned in the foreword section of the story, I put a lot of effort in to defining my characters up front, and I feel the result paid off in the story and characterisation. It gave me something to build on - their voice, their tone, their choices. After a while, the characters almost had a life of their own.

For those that don't know, the Traveller's lifepath character generation, it's fun and involved. You don't start by saying "I want to play an Imperial Marine". You roll your stats, physical and mental, your home world, chose some pre-career skills, and then you TRY to get into your chosen profession. And if you don't, you can either get drafted into one of the forces or become a drifter. Each term of 4 years you have to try and stay in your chosen service, or try for something else. And all along the way you gain skills and events relevant to that career,

My characters Xander and Paddy ended up more or less how I intended – at least they joined the right career and didn't end up drifting. Cali, however, took a complete left turn, and ended up more fun and layered and a richer character because of it.

I then fleshed out and expanded upon those backgrounds. A lot!
The initial investment paid off, both in roleplaying and in storytelling.

You get out what you put in.




For the other players' characters, I built on what backstory their players had written, (some more than others). I added character connections with mine, and expanded from there. I have left their character background in this document as it is on their character sheets. For my characters I have given the full expanded back story.

Now follows the characters, The Cast, in order of appearance.

Note: There are no story spoilers in these Character Biographies.

ALEKSANDER “XANDER” ZARKOV

**Brigadier Sir Aleksandr (Xander) “Stonewall” Zarkov. KSI,
Imperial Marines – Support Corp.**

STATS: Strength: 12 Dexterity: 3 Endurance: 11 Intelligence: 8 Education: 10 Social Standing: 10	Home World: New Moscow Race: Human Age: 42 Played by: Toby
SKILLS Animals: 0 Athletics: 0 Athletics – Dexterity: 1 Carouse: 0 Electronics: 0 Electronics – Comms: 1 Electronics – Computers: 2 Engineer: 0 Flyer: 0 Gun Combat: 0 Gun Combat – Slug: 2 Heavy Weapons: 0 Heavy Weapons – Man-portable: 2 Language: 0 Leadership: 2 Medic: 1 Melee: 0 Melee – Blade: 1 Stealth: 0 Streetwise: 0 Tactics: 0 Tactics – Military: 1 Vacc Suit: 1	 <p>(Note, many other images were work in progress and this character image was likely to change to something like one of these:</p> <div></div>

Background

Early Life: Aleksandr Zarkov was born on New Moscow, a rich agricultural frontier world on the edge of the Tobia Sector in the Trojan Reaches. Raised on a cattle farm, he spent any free time hanging around the starport, fascinated by off-worlders, starships, and military personnel. He often took jobs running errands for merchants, ship crews, and local fixers.

Term 1: Imperial Military Academy

Zarkov qualified for the Imperial Military Academy, eager to serve in the Marines. During training, a harmless prank went wrong. Strong and tough but not agile, he struggled with physical training under Instructor Cody Anderson, who taunted him and mockingly called him "Shit House." Seeking revenge, Zarkov rigged it so that when Anderson flushed the toilet, he was deluged in waste collected from the entire training group. Who was the shit house now?! Cody was furious, and to make matters worse caught dysentery and was hospitalised. Zarkov was found out, and all through training and even afterwards Cody held a grudge and became a bitter enemy. The name "Shit House" still sends a shiver down Zarkov's spine. Though Zarkov was disciplined, his exceptional skills and determination ensured he graduated with honours and secured a commission as a Lieutenant in the Marine Support Corps.

Term 2: Marine Support Corps – Assault on Batav Fortress

As a young logistics officer, Zarkov was embedded with the second wave of Marines in the legendary "Assault on Batav Fortress." The first wave of Marines breached the fortress, only to be met by a brutal enemy counterattack. When the counterattack struck, Zarkov corralled the supply trucks into a defensive circle, set up heavy weapons positions between them, and rallied and tended to the scattered forces in the centre. When reinforcements arrived, he worked tirelessly and under fire to ensure ammunition, rations, and medical supplies reached the front lines. He even used supply drones to drop grenades and fresh ammunition directly to the front line. His ability to maintain supply chains under extreme pressure earned him a promotion to Captain, and the troops nicknamed him "Stonewall" for his unwavering presence amid the chaos and stalwart defensive position.

Term 3: Marine Support Corps – Space Station Chandler

Promoted to Chief Engineer on Space Station Chandler, Zarkov oversaw critical maintenance and defence systems. What was meant to be a routine tour turned into a crisis when a pirate fleet attempted to hijack an Imperial cruiser undergoing repairs. Zarkov acted fast, sealing bulkheads, rerouting power to defensive turrets, and sabotaging pirate docking mechanisms to delay boarding parties. Under heavy attack, he coordinated emergency repairs to the station's shields, ensuring its survival. For his actions, he was promoted to Force Commander.

Term 4: Marine Support Corps – Planetary Assault of Esperanza

The Imperium sought control of Esperanza, deep in the Reft. As Force Commander and lead quartermaster, Zarkov was responsible for coordinating supplies, ammunition, and reinforcements during the planetary assault. When the first wave was decimated by an unexpected orbital bombardment, his logistics network ensured that the second wave landed fully stocked and combat-ready under heavy fire. Despite constant attacks, he orchestrated supply drops, repurposed abandoned enemy stockpiles, and kept the Marines fighting. His technical expertise proved critical when he breached enemy communication networks, disrupting their command structure. With the defenders in disarray, the Imperium secured

victory with minimal civilian losses. For his role in stabilizing the operation, Zarkov was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel

Term 5: Marine Support Corps – Training the Next Generation

Now a seasoned officer, Zarkov was tasked with training the Supply Corps. His doctrine, the “A to Z of Aleksandr Zarkov,” became a recognised solid tactic for battlefield logistics, combat engineering, and frontline medical care. His signature tactic, the “Stonewall Defence,” focused on reinforcing weak points and maintaining supply lines under extreme conditions. His success led to promotion to full Colonel. With this promotion he was knighted and awarded the Knight’s Star of the Imperium (KSI) for services to the Imperial Military.

Term 6: Marine Support Corps – The Desk Job

A decorated war hero, a veteran of countless campaigns, a farmer’s son who rose through the ranks, Zarkov was great PR for the Marines. He was promoted to Brigadier and given a desk job overseeing logistics planning, lecturing fresh recruits and attending ceremonial functions. He hated the endless meetings and speeches. Zarkov often jokes that he should have quit the day they made him a Sir. Bored and restless, he turned to drinking and gambling, but a run of bad luck meant he lost much of his wealth. His health declined, and he realised it was time for a change. At the end of his term, he retired from the Marine Corps.

Now:

Aleksandr Zarkov, retired Marine General, is often found lounging in the officer’s bar at the Travellers Aid Society (TAS). With a vodka in hand, he regales young officers with tales of war, especially if they keep his glass topped up!

He remains an imposing figure—tall, strong, broad-shouldered, with short hair and a neatly trimmed beard. He walks with a silver-topped cane due to an old riding accident, though no one really noticed his limp before. His round spectacles hint at his failing eyesight, but he never needed great accuracy—his role was to keep others in the fight. Besides, when he wore sunglasses, his troops thought he looked cool.

He misses leading his men, but he taught them well. Now, it is time for something different. A new challenge awaits.


Short Version:

Sir Aleksandr "Xander" "Stonewall" Zarkov, KSI. Brigadier (Ret.),

Brigadier Sir Aleksandr "Stonewall" Zarkov, is a decorated Imperial Marine Support officer, renowned for his logistical expertise and battlefield ingenuity. Raised on a farm on New Moscow, he then qualified with honours from the Military Academy and joined the Imperial Marine Support Corps. From turning supply depots into makeshift hospitals at Batav Fortress to orchestrating emergency resupply chains during the brutal Esperanza Campaign, his ability to keep an operation running earned him multiple commendations. Later promoted to Brigadier, he was sidelined into bureaucratic roles, leading to a restless retirement filled with war stories, vodka, and a longing for the thrill of real problem-solving. Now, he's looking for a new challenge—something worth fixing.

CHARLES HUEBERT CUTTER

Charles Huebert-Cutter. 23rd Baron de Grey

STATS: Strength: 9 Dexterity: 9 Endurance: 8 Intelligence: 11 Education: 10 Social Standing: 13	Home World: Caraz Race: Human Age: 38 Augmentation: Shriekerbox, Improved Played by: Adrian
SKILLS Admin: 1 Advocate: 1 Astrogation: 1 Carouse: 1 Deception: 1 Diplomat: 1 Drive: 0 Gun Combat: 0 Investigate: 1 Language: 0 Medic: 0 Melee: 0 Persuade: 0 Pilot: 0 Pilot – Spacecraft: 1 Profession – Journalist: 0 Stealth: 0 Streetwise: 1 Vacc Suit: 0	

Background

LIFEPATH	AGE	CAREER	ASSIGNMENT	RANK	EVENT
Early Life	10-18				Born into the De Grey family on Caraz. I was sent to study on Caladblog where I had relatives but dropped out of university to begin a career as a travel reporter for a regional broadcaster.
Term 1	18-22	Pre-Career	University	Non-graduate	travel, move to a new world
Term 2	22-26	Entertainer	Jouranlist	Freelancer	sector tour, 2 contacts. promoted
Term 3	26-30	Diplomat	Diplomat	3rd secretary	streetwise. promoted
Term 4	30-34	Diplomat	Diplomat	2nd secretary	inherit a gift. muster out yacht (75% mortgage, damaged thrusters -1, heavily tainted cargo hold). 50k credits. promoted
Term 5	34-38	Agent	Intelligence	Agent	betrayal, 1 contact becomes enemy or rival. muster out cybernetic implant worth 75k credits, tech level 12. promoted

ALLIES, CONTACTS, ENEMIES, RIVALS

Ally. Ronnie Ransom, underground fixer and go between to resolve corsair kidnappings.

Enemy. Lothar, a occasional corsair who I befriended at a somewhat seedy social engagement and became my go to man for narcotics and such. Later in life I was working with Lothar to work my way into the Banshees of the Void, who had been a thorn in our governments side for many years. A bounty was offered to weed out the mole who had infiltrated the gang. Lothar betrayed me and blew my cover. Though the mission was partly successful, I had to flee for my life. After years of loyalty to Lothar and countless favours at the embassy, being betrayed for mere cash is unforgivable.


Stan Kolinski

A character from the game 'The Division' is shown from the chest up. He has a beard and a mohawk hairstyle. He is wearing a dark, heavy scarf and a tactical vest with red glowing elements. The background is a plain, light gray.

LIFEPATH	AGE	CAREER	ASSIGNMENT	RANK	EVENT
Early Life	10-18				
Term 1	18-22	Rogue	Thief	--	Romantic ally
Term 2	22-26	Rogue	Thief	--	backstab chance declined gained ally
Term 3	26-30	Rogue	Thief	--	Injury dex-2 (cr5000 per point to heal)
Term 4	30-34	Scout	Surveyor	--	committed crime
Term 5	34-38	Prisoner	Inmate	Rank 1	contact

ARISTOTLE “ARIS” PAPADAKIS

Aristotle "Aris" Papadakis

STATS: Strength: 12 Dexterity: 4 Endurance: 10 Intelligence: 9 Education: 3 Social Standing: 10	Home World: Asim (Asimov) Race: Human Age: 34 Played by: Janis
SKILLS Admin: 1 Athletics: 0 Athletics - Strength: 1 Carouse: 0 Drive: 0 Drive – Wheel: 1 Electronics: 0 Electronics – Comms: 1 Engineer: 0 Flyer: 0 Gun Combat: 0 Gun Combat – Slug: 1 Mechanic: 2 Medic: 0 Melee: 0 Melee – Unarmed: 1 Pilot: 0 Science – Religion: 0 Stealth: 1 Steward: 0 Streetwise: 0 Survival: 1 Vacc Suit: 0	

Background

LIFEPATH	AGE	CAREER	ASSIGNMENT	RANK	EVENT
Early Life	10-18				"Son of a preacher man". Father was the priest of the local Asimov community. The parish is still a very dedicated following. The parish is still a very dedicated following. Aris was the black sheep of the family. Though equally good at quoting the Bible as working on the farm he was always up to no good.
Term 1	18-22	Citizen	Worker	-	Aris's excellent social skills and his father's reputation helped him get away with petty crimes and one thing led to another and Aris started using alcohol and recreational drugs during his teens.
Term 2	22-26	Pre-Career	Mechant Academy	Non-graduate	The celebrations of Aris becoming the first academic family member soon turned to sorrows as Aris Uni career was a booze and drug infested 24/7 party. Not many realised that the constant partying was Aris way to self medicate due to very low self esteem when he realised he didn't have the brains required what it takes to manage a Uni degree. Constantly getting into trouble for organising a range of illegal activities (bare knuckle fights, parties on campus, dealing drugs etc) led to Aris being kicked out of Uni. He hit rock bottom mentally.
Term 3	26-30	Believer	Mainstream	Initiate	Aris decided it was time to change his life. He studied the holy book at length under the supervision of his father. Without the pressure of exams, and staying out of any larger town/city to avoid getting into trouble, the relative peace of mind did give him a serious understanding of the Bible and he does consider himself religious. The parish hailed the change as a blessing and a sign of the holiness of the Papadakis family. To the degree that they raised a statue of the family in the town square. But what was that? Gossip of Aris being seen, late at night, in the company of the local drug dealer Hawk? Surely that can't be right?!


Term 4	30-34	Prisoner	Inmate	Rank 1	Rumours turned out to be true. Soon the focus shifted from Bible studies to running errands for Hawk. One "negotiation" ended with the victim telling the authorities about it and Aris ended up with a prison sentence for assault. In prison Aris attended vocation training (mechanics), but never quite had the interest to complete the training. Having served a 4 year sentence Aris is now released. He realises that he needs a fresh start. Asimov is too small and too rural. It's time to see what else is out there!
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ALLIES, CONTACTS, ENEMIES, RIVALS

Sergey "Hawk" Sokolov: Aris has good contacts with this local drug dealer (Sokolov means hawk in Russian).

PATRICK “PADDY” STIRLING

Sergeant Patrick "Paddy" Stirling

STATS: Strength: 12 Dexterity: 4 Endurance: 10 Intelligence: 8 Education: 11 Social Standing: 5	Home World: Sabruse Race: Human Age: 42 Augmentation: Combat Arm, Improved (STR 15, Protection +4 shield, fitted with Concealed mono blade) Played by: Toby
SKILLS Athletics: 0 Athletics – Dexterity: 1 Drive: 0 Drive – Wheel: 1 Electronics: 0 Electronics – Computers: 1 Engineer: 0 Engineer – Power: 1 Gambler: 1 Gun Combat: 0 Gun Combat – Slug: 3 Heavy Weapons: 0 Language: 0 Leadership: 1 Medic: 1 Melee: 0 Melee – Blade: 1 Melee – Unarmed: 1 Recon: 1 Seafarer: 0 Stealth: 1 Streetwise: 1 Survival: 1 Tactics: 0 Tactics – Military: 1 Vacc Suit: 1	

Background

Early Life:

Patrick “Paddy” Stirling was born and raised on the backwater world of **Sabruse**, a miserable, frozen rock with a population barely scraping 2,000. The only off-world contact came from a lone Frontier Scout outpost that brought occasional supplies, but no one in their right mind visited for fun. Sabruse wasn’t on the tourist maps.

Eighty percent of the planet was covered in what the locals called “water”—but in reality, it was liquid methane, deadly and frigid under an insidious atmosphere that forced everyone into vacc suits the moment they stepped outside. There were no roads, no cities, no luxuries. Just a scattering of prospectors, miners, and scientists eking out an existence. Travel was limited to heavy-duty submersibles and the occasional grav vehicle. It was a hard life, and nobody got rich.

But if nothing else, the people were close. They had to be.

Paddy hated it.

“No potatoes on Sabruse, more’s the pity, since there’s no bloody soil to grow anything. We lived on rations brought in by Free Traders, so we did. Oh, what I wouldn’t give for a proper portion of chips!”

With nothing else to do, Paddy threw himself into work. He learned to pilot submersibles, operate their computers and sensors, and generally handle the brutal conditions. But outside of that? There was nothing. Nowhere to go. No one to meet.

So, he read. Books were rare, but whatever he could get his hands on, he devoured - stories of distant worlds, adventure, war. Many were in foreign languages, so he read those too and picked up a smattering of foreign languages. Despite the hardship, despite the isolation, he came away well-read and sharp-minded.

Physically, he grew strong. Wading through knee-high sludge in a vacc-suit built endurance and raw strength, though he never had the grace of a dancer. But that was fine. Paddy wasn’t made for finesse—he was made to endure.

Term 1: Military Academy

Paddy leaped at the first chance to escape Sabruse, enrolling in the **Military Academy**. Hardworking and disciplined, he excelled in his studies, but he had neither the connections nor the desire to become an officer. Instead, he enlisted in the **Army** as a regular **infantryman**, where the real soldiers were. At the Academy, he forged an unbreakable bond with Jock Fraser and Alfred “Fred” Ritchie. The three were inseparable—until a training exercise went horribly wrong, and Fred was fatally wounded. His last words, “Remember me,” became a solemn vow between Paddy and Jock. From that day forward, they swore to stay brothers-in-arms, **an ally**, no matter where in the galaxy they ended up. Thus, “*The Friends of Freddy*” was born.

Term 2 : Army – Infantry – Combat Patrol

Paddy's first real deployment was meant to be routine—a standard patrol through contested territory. His squad was moving through the outskirts of a ruined settlement when everything went to hell. The first man went down to a sniper's round, the second to a pressure mine. Then came the drones, their engines screaming as they descended, tearing through cover with precision fire. Pinned down and outgunned, the squad was on the verge of being wiped out.

But Paddy wasn't one to die quietly. He took charge, barking orders, rallying the scattered survivors. He led a desperate breakout – covering the squads retreat, moving the wounded, and keeping the enemy off balance with aggressive counterfire.

By the time reinforcements arrived, Paddy and his men had held out longer than anyone thought possible. He wasn't just another grunt anymore—he'd proven himself under fire. When the dust settled, he was promoted to **Lance Corporal**.

Term 3: Army - Infantry - Assault on Batav Fortress

Paddy had seen combat before, but **Batav Fortress** was a different beast. **A full-scale combined operations assault**, with artillery pounding enemy defences, airstrikes screaming overhead, and waves of troops storming forward. The ground itself seemed to shake under the relentless barrage. And Paddy was in the first wave.

They took heavy casualties. Paddy's squad was cut down within minutes. Then, **Colonel Stokes**, his commanding officer, was hit. Paddy threw himself into the fire, dragging Stokes to cover and using his basic medical training to stabilize him. Paddy hauled Stokes onto his back and ran back to the field hospital, where a Marine Support Corps officer was barking orders, keeping the wounded moving and supplies flowing. It was here that Paddy first met **Aleksandr "Xander" Zarkov**. They exchanged words as they worked together to patch up Stokes as best they could. The fortress finally fell, and the battle was won.

Later, when Stokes recovered, he promoted Paddy to **Corporal**. More than that though, Stokes recruited him into his Special Forces unit that he was setting up.

Term 4: Army - Infantry – Disaster and Dismissal.

Paddy's fourth term in the army **nearly killed him**. His Special Forces Unit was sent on what was supposed to be a **strategic strike** against an enemy stronghold on **Zeta-12**. But it was a **suicide mission** from the start. The intel was bad, the support never arrived, and the enemy was waiting. Paddy and his comrades fought like hell, but most of them never made it out.

As he lay in a military hospital, slipping in and out of consciousness, he overheard whispers of why they had been sent to die. It was all a political manoeuvre, orchestrated by **Senator Alistair Vexmoor**—a ruthless schemer who saw soldiers as nothing more than expendable assets. The mission had been designed to fail, a calculated disaster that Vexmoor used to justify seizing more power and resources. Paddy's unit had been sacrificed for one man's ambition.

Yet, someone high up had different plans for Paddy. When he finally woke up, his shattered bones had been rebuilt—not just with standard military-grade treatment, but with something

more advanced. Stronger. Faster. More resilient. The kind of Augmentation that didn't just happen by accident.

Paddy was discharged from the Army on medical grounds. He carried the scars—both physical and mental—of a soldier betrayed. And with Vexmoor's name burned into his memory, he had a new mission: find a way to make the bastard pay.

Term 5: Army - Infantry - The Recon Raid

After being discharged, Paddy Stirling tried to infiltrate the underworld gangs, he wanted to get help, to use their networks to get closer Senator Alistair Vexmoor. He even tried posing as an army recruitment officer in prisons, extolling the merits of joining the forces on release for a better life and opportunities, whilst subtly trying to get any leads or contacts. But the best he got was feedback saying "Too risky, Too much heat."

Then, the call came. General Stokes, his old commanding officer and the man responsible for Paddy's augmentations, reached out with an offer: "I gave you that metal for a reason, son. And now I need you, **Lance Sergeant** Stirling!" Yes, the "offer" came with a **promotion** too.

The Orphee Recon Mission – "Something Wasn't Right"

Orphee was a dead-end world—a TAS Red Zone, officially classified as inhospitable and primitive. The few inhabitants lived at a Stone Age tech level, with no infrastructure, no spaceport, and yet intelligence suggested there was an "anomaly" that had to be investigated. That meant Paddy Stirling.

Paddy's special forces team was inserted via low-orbit HALO drop. The insertion was smooth, and for three days, Paddy's unit moved undetected through hostile terrain. The natives were primitive, little more than hunter-gatherers, yet strange ruins dotted the landscape—evidence of an ancient, lost civilization. The team followed the signals to a massive underground complex, long buried beneath the mountains.

Inside, they found a vault of Ancients' technology, still functioning. The energy readings came from a reactivated power core—and someone or something had turned it back on.

As Paddy connected his laptop and started to download data files, something woke up. Defensive systems, automated sentries, energy-based security measures, and self-repairing drones—all remnants of a long-dead civilization—activated in response to their presence. The mission instantly turned from recon to survival as the team was hunted through the ancient corridors. One by one, Paddy's squad mates fell, until only he and a handful of others escaped. The complex, now aware of intruders, sealed itself off once more, hiding its secrets.

The debriefing was classified TOP SECRET, but the **Recon Raid** Mission was deemed a **success**—Paddy had secured the critical data his team was sent to retrieve. Yet, despite his role in recovering it, he was never privy to the secrets it contained.

Term 6: Army – Supply Corps – Another Brutal War! The Siege of Undrelyn.

Paddy had seen more than his fair share of war! General Stokes had retired and there was no one pushing him toward the front lines or suicide missions anymore. So, he re-enlisted—this time in the **Support Corps**, hoping for a quiet term before drawing his pension.

It wasn't long before he crossed paths with an old friend—Brigadier Sir Aleksandr Zarkov, now retired from frontline service and training new Supply Corps recruits. As Paddy was older than most of the recruits, he spent the evenings with Zarkov reminiscing about old battles, lost friends, and the madness of military bureaucracy. Paddy found himself learning from Zarkov, picking up logistical tricks and the art of running supplies under fire.

But fate had other plans. The army deployed him into another **brutal ground war**, expecting him to stay behind the lines and keep the supply chains running. Undrelyn was a strategically important planet in the Lost Way subsector. But Paddy had spent too long in the thick of it to just sit back. He took charge of battlefield logistics, getting supplies where they were needed most, and personally tending to the wounded under heavy fire. His experience saved lives, and when the dust settled, he was **promoted to Sergeant** for his leadership.

Now – Escape to Exocet

With his final term complete, Paddy left the military for good. He'd served longer than most, fought in wars that should have killed him, seen too many friends die, and walked away more machine than man thanks to the augmentations given to him. Now, he has a few credits in his pocket, skills to spare, and no idea what will come next.

It started at General Stokes' funeral. A quiet, dignified affair, attended by old comrades, officers, and dignitaries who barely knew the man. Paddy had stood apart from the pomp, paying his respects in his own way. But that's when he saw them—the "Men in Black."

They thought they were discreet, blending into the mourners, but to Paddy's trained eye, they stuck out like a sore thumb. Watching. Waiting. Stokes' death had been ruled an accident—a tragic car crash—but Paddy had his doubts. And now, it seemed, someone wanted to make sure he didn't ask too many questions.

They followed him. Shadowed his movements. So he set a trap. One night, he ducked down an alley, let them think they had him cornered. Then he turned. The fight was quick, brutal, decisive. Paddy wasn't a man to waste movement. When it was over, two of them lay groaning at his feet, the third barely conscious. Paddy pressed a knee to his chest, growling in his ear, demanding answers. The man coughed, spat blood, and sneered.

"You're a dead man walking, Stirling... Someone wants you silenced."

Before he could say more—CRACK. A sniper round took him out mid-sentence. The bullet silenced him and any more answers.

Paddy saw the laser sight, a flickering red dot on his chest.

Instinct took over. Paddy rolled, heard the shot whistle past, felt the impact as it blew a chunk out of the wall behind him. Vexmoor. It had to be. The bastard wasn't finished with him yet.

That was enough. Paddy had to disappear. He grabbed his few possessions and headed straight to the Starport. First outbound ship. Didn't matter where...

The history from this point is a blur of lost memories – in line with the story plot. For mor information, see the Section on When Paddy Met Cali in the Extras section.

CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE:

Paddy Stirling was a man built for war, but not for orders. He carried himself with the quiet confidence of someone who had seen more than his fair share of battles and walked away from most of them. His slow, deliberate Irish drawl often disguised the sharp wit and well-read mind beneath his hardened exterior. A soldier through and through, he had little patience for pomp and even less for officers who had never seen the sharp end of a battlefield.

His father was Scottish, his mother Irish, and Paddy inherited the best and worst of both. He could drink like a Highlander and fight like a Belfast brawler, but it was his sharp mind that set him apart. He had devoured books in his youth—philosophy, poetry, history. He quoted the classics not to impress, but because they meant something to him. Words, like war, had weight.

Physically, he was built like a man who had spent his life in the trenches. Strong, solid, and steady, with sandy brown hair that refused to grey despite the years. His face was almost always shadowed with stubble, sometimes growing into a ragged beard when he didn't bother shaving. He moved with the patience of a predator, never rushed, never flustered. And then, of course, there was the arm—his left, augmented with cutting-edge tech, stronger than any flesh-and-bone limb. It wasn't something he flaunted, nor something he trusted completely. It was a reminder that he had survived when others hadn't, that someone, somewhere, had decided he was worth rebuilding.

Loyalty, for Paddy, was earned, not given. He had little time for blind obedience or reckless authority, but when he called someone a friend, they could count on him until the bitter end. Now, stranded on Exocet, caught in yet another fight that wasn't his, Paddy had to ask himself—how the hell did he always end up in these messes?

Paddy is a man who has been through hell and back—several times. Once a fiery, reckless soldier with something to prove, he has matured into a pragmatic survivor, valuing skill, loyalty, and experience over bravado. He has no illusions about war; it is a meat grinder that chews up good men and leaves the worst ones in charge.


He has a deep distrust of officers, particularly career politicians in uniform, thanks to Senator Alistair Vexmoor, who once sent Paddy's entire unit on a suicide mission for political gain. Paddy barely survived, only to wake up in a military hospital with augments he never asked for. This betrayal hardened him, making him deeply cynical about the upper echelons of command.

Despite this, he is fiercely loyal to the Friends of Freddy—a brotherhood forged in blood between him and Jock Fraser after their friend Alfred "Fred" Ritchie died in training. If Paddy calls you a friend, he will fight to the end for you.

He enjoys a stiff drink—usually whiskey or the stronger, homemade poteen from his home world. Drinking with him is an experience; he holds his liquor well and tells grim, darkly humorous stories of his time in the service.

CALISTA “CALI” FOX

Calista "Cali" Fox

STATS: Strength: 6 Dexterity: 8 Endurance: 9 Intelligence: 9 Education: 9 Social Standing: 9	Home World: Thebus Race: Human Age: 41 Played by: Toby
SKILLS Admin: 0 Animals: 0 Astrogation: 0 Athletics: 0 Drive: 0 Drive – Wheel: 1 Electronics: 0 Electronics – Computers: 1 Gun Combat: 0 Gun Combat – Slug: 1 Language: 0 Mechanic: 1 Medic: 0 Melee: 0 Melee – Blade: 1 Navigation: 1 Pilot: 0 Pilot – Spacecraft: 1 Recon: 0 Science – Zoology: 0 Science – Psychology: 0 Seafarer: 0 Stealth: 1 Streetwise: 1 Survival: 2 Vacc Suit: 0	

Background

Early Life (0–25)

Calista “Cali” Fox was born and raised on **Thebus**, a backwater world with a population barely scraping 8,000. The planet was harsh—its thin atmosphere and meagre resources forced the inhabitants to become self-sufficient or die trying. Life on Thebus was simple but gruelling; survival was a daily battle against the elements and isolation. The people were xenophobic by necessity, suspicious of outsiders who might strip-mine their world for the little it had. Cali’s father was a ranger, a guardian of the sparse forests and protector of the wildlife that clung to life under the thin sky. Her mother was a **zoo-ologist**, who studied the limited fauna of Thebus, teaching Cali how to track, hunt, and understand animal behaviour.

From a young age, Cali spent her days learning to hunt, track, and live off the land. Her mother taught her to identify animals, understand their patterns, and survive using whatever nature provided. This upbringing turned her into a survivalist—tough, resourceful, and sceptical of authority.

From age 18 to 25, Cali worked at the **local starport** as a part-time secretary. Though it was a far cry from her dreams of adventure, it was a window into the galaxy she yearned for. She watched the comings and goings of traders, scouts, and corporate agents, absorbing everything. She noticed shady deals and picked up a few tricks of the trade, but the job only made her long for more. Yet, despite her practical skills, she was fascinated by the larger galaxy. She devoured any news or off-world reports she could get her hands on, dreaming of worlds beyond the grey and cold of Thebus.

Term 2: The Scout Draft (25–29)

Cali’s interest in preserving nature put her in the good graces of **Governor Maric Hale**, the stern and pragmatic leader of **Thebus**. Hale’s iron-fisted rule was born out of necessity—the planet had little to offer, and what it did have needed protecting from off-world interests. Seeing a spark of promise in Cali, Hale sponsored her application to a **surveying corporation**. Yet, the corporate types turned her away, unimpressed by her rough edges and local accent.

Realizing the only way off-world was through service, Cali submitted to the draft. Fortune favoured her, and she was accepted into the **Scouts** as a **surveyor**. It was a job that suited her well—small crews, long missions away from civilization, exploring border worlds. It was freedom, even if it came with a uniform. Cali learned the basics of survival in alien environments, how to operate and repair equipment, and how to pilot survey craft. Her pragmatic nature made her a reliable crew member, even if she wasn’t always the most sociable.

Term 3: The Drifter’s Path (29–33)

When her draft term ended, Cali applied once more to the corporations and was rejected again. Set down in a **distant starport** with no job and no purpose, she drifted. Living hand-to-mouth, she used what she had learned to survive: stealth, guile, and adaptability. She avoided attention, sticking to the shadows, slipping past patrols and watching from the dark corners of

cargo bays or coffee shops. During this time, she became a **nomad**, slipping through shadows and avoiding crowds. Yet, despite the loneliness, she relished the freedom.

Without a steady job, Cali moved from one outpost to another, trading what she could and learning all she could about the different worlds she passed through. Her fascination with off-world life never waned. She watched people, listening to their stories and secrets, fascinated by the diversity of off-world life. During this time, she developed a deep understanding of human nature—how to read a face, catch a lie, and disappear into a crowd.

Term 4: Back to the Scouts (33–37)

Realizing the corporations would never have her, Cali reenlisted with the **Scouts Survey Branch**, this time as a **pilot**. She enjoyed the missions, piloting a survey ship with a small crew to remote systems, landing on worlds no one cared about. The isolation didn't bother her—better the company of trees and stars than a corporate office. How as a youth could she have imagined herself in that role? How would her life have changed if her application had been accepted?

However, during a survey mission to a hostile planet, the ship was caught in a freak storm during descent. The resulting crash left Cali and her crew stranded with damaged communications and limited supplies. Forced to survive on an alien world, Cali's survival skills were put to the test. They managed to hold out for a week until a rescue team arrived, but the injuries she sustained—broken ribs, a concussion, and severe lacerations—although not serious, were enough to get her **unceremoniously discharged**. The scouts didn't have much room for injured surveyors, and with limited funding, she was cut loose.

Term 5: The Wilds Call (37–41)

With no uniform, no job, and no trust in people, Cali turned back to what she knew best—**surviving**. She ventured into the wild outbacks of alien worlds, documenting her exploits and surviving on her wits. Her name spread—people began calling her **“Foxy”** for her ability to slip past danger and her auburn hair. Her exploits as a survivalist even gained some recognition. She wrote a few articles for a survivalist magazine under the name **“Foxy Fox”**, gaining a modest following.

Ironically, the very thing she now despised—corporate interest—came calling, offering her credits for endorsements and gear reviews. Needing the money, she accepted, gritting her teeth as she posed for holos in survival gear she barely trusted. Despite the irony, the money kept her fed and allowed her to keep moving. Her reputation as a capable survivalist spread, and soon, even prospectors and traders sought her out for advice on surviving the wilds.

Current Situation: The Woman in the Woods (41–Now)

After years spent in the Scout Service and later earning a reputation as a survivalist, Cali Fox had become restless. The fame she had gained from her survivalist exploits was never something she sought, and after a while, the attention became more of a burden than a benefit.

The idea of sponsorships, interviews, and scripted survival stunts grated against her core instincts. She was a survivalist, not an entertainer.

She needed an escape. Somewhere remote. Somewhere no one would bother her.

The history from this point is a blur of lost memories – in line with the story plot.

For mor information, see the Section on When Paddy Met Cali in the Extras section.

Appearance and Character

- **Age:** 41
- **Build:** Slim, fit, and athletic.
- **Hair:** Long, auburn red, usually pulled back.
- **Eyes:** Green and calculating.
- **Clothing:** Worn survival gear with a few corporate patches half torn off.
- **Augmentation:** None, all flesh and blood.
- **Accent:** Speaks with a **hillbilly drawl**, slow and deliberate, often using colourful expressions.



Cali is suspicious of people, especially in large groups. She prefers the company of trees to that of men. Yet, beneath the gruff exterior, she has a deep empathy for those who struggle against the odds. She's pragmatic, calculating, and slow to trust—but once loyalty is earned, it's unbreakable.

Short Summary:

Calista "Cali" Fox dreamed of becoming a corporate agent, but twice she was rejected, as a backwater colonial with no polish or pedigree. Always overlooked for promotion, never quite fitting into the bureaucratic mold, she abandoned a traditional career and carved her own path. She was drafted into the Scouts, surveying the fringes of known space. As a drifter, she moved from world to world, learning to adapt, survive, and blend in where needed. When the stars called again, she rejoined the Scouts as a pilot, only to be discharged a second time after an injury. Undeterred, she leaned into what she did best, becoming a survivalist, living off the land. She became a legend on the frontier as a ghost in the wilds, the woman who lived where no one else could.

HISTORY WITH OTHER CHARACTERS:

Cali and Stan:

Cali and Stan served together aboard the *Wayfarer*, a battered old scout survey ship surveying the fringe worlds. For nearly four years, they endured the cramped quarters, the stale air, and the endless grind of planetary surveys. Cali was the pilot—steady-handed and unflinching—while Stan manned the sensors, always with a smart remark or a crooked grin. Despite herself, Cali didn't mind the company; Stan's smooth-talking charm balanced her blunt pragmatism, and he could at least shoot straight in a pinch.

Towards the end of their term, though, things took a turn. Rumors started circulating about missing supplies, encrypted comms sent without authorization, and off-the-books dealings with local prospectors. Cali kept her head down and her mouth shut—wasn't her problem unless it got someone killed. Then came the electrical storm. With the ship's systems fried and a rough landing ripping the hull apart, Cali's quick thinking and survival skills kept them breathing until rescue arrived two weeks later. Two weeks of splinting broken limbs, rationing supplies, and keeping watch through bloodshot eyes—every breath a painful reminder of her fractured ribs.

Back at starbase, while the crew was still shaking off the dust and half-drunk on R&R, Cali witnessed security drag Stan off in cuffs. The charge: smuggling and unauthorized trade. She stood at the edge of the docking bay, expression unreadable as Stan, still smirking, called over his shoulder:

"See you round, Foxy. Don't let the brass grind you down."

Cali's reply was a flat, "Keep your nose clean, or next time I ain't lookin' the other way." But inside, her thoughts were colder: *"Stan's as slippery as an eel in oil, but I've seen worse bastards wearin' uniforms. Can't say I was surprised."*

Cali and Charles:

While Cali was "freelancing" as a drifter, she picked up a cash-in-hand job as a local guide, owing to her survival expertise and her knowledge of the planet's treacherous terrain. Charles, in his diplomatic role, was part of an Imperial envoy assessing the newly colonized world for potential membership. The delegation was a mix of pomp and protocol, all fancy titles and highborn manners, and Cali had little patience for their airs.

But Charles was different. Despite his noble upbringing, he actually listened, took her advice seriously, and—unlike most of the so-called dignitaries—wasn't afraid to get his boots dirty. He even offered her a proper drink one evening, mixing a mean sun-downer cocktail aboard *The Lady of the Stars*—or *Ol' Betsy* as he liked to call her. Cali didn't think much of nobles as a rule, but she had to admit that Charles was less useless than most.

They parted on decent terms, and while Cali never expected to see him again, she did remember the way he spoke about his ship—with the kind of affection usually reserved for a faithful dog or an old friend.

Cali and Aris:

Cali's final stop as a wandering nomad took her to a remote village and a modest church that stood alone against the barren landscape. Intrigued by the statue of the Papadakis family outside, she stepped inside, curious. The air was heavy with incense and prayer, and Cali took a seat at the back, shadowed and silent, watching the world pass by from the corner of her eye.

She listened to Aris preach, his voice smooth and persuasive, weaving tales of redemption and faith. His father stood nearby, a stern guardian of the faith. There was something comforting in the ritual, in the way people looked to Aris for hope. Cali didn't have much use for gods, she trusted the forest and her own two hands, but she could respect those who did.

Over time, she got to know Aris. She liked their banter, the way he could turn a phrase and make even sermons seem like a fireside tale. Both were survivors in their own way - him with his faith, her with her knife and wits. But something wasn't right. Cali had learned to read people like a hunter reads tracks - the nervous twitch, the too-smooth words, the flicker of darkness in a man's eyes.

So she followed him. Kept to the shadows like she was stalking a wild animal. And what she found confirmed her suspicions: Aris, meeting in dark alleys with Hawk, a local dealer, shaking hands over whispered promises and credits that smelled of blood.

She confronted him, voice low but earnest, calling him a friend. "You're walkin' a tightrope over a fire pit, Aris," she warned, her drawl edged with concern. "That sort o' life don't end well, and it sure as hell don't suit a preacher's collar."

She even tried to persuade him to leave - to abandon the false promises and come see the worlds beyond that dust-blown village. But he wouldn't hear of it. Pride or faith, she never could tell which. Soon after, she signed on with the Scouts again, leaving that chapter behind.

She never did find out what became of him. For all she knew, he might've straightened out and gone back to his sermons—or been dragged down by the darkness she'd seen in his eyes. But seeing him again now, here of all places, she had a feeling she was about to find out.