ABYSSAL

CORE RULES

Abyssal Alpha ver. 0.3.3

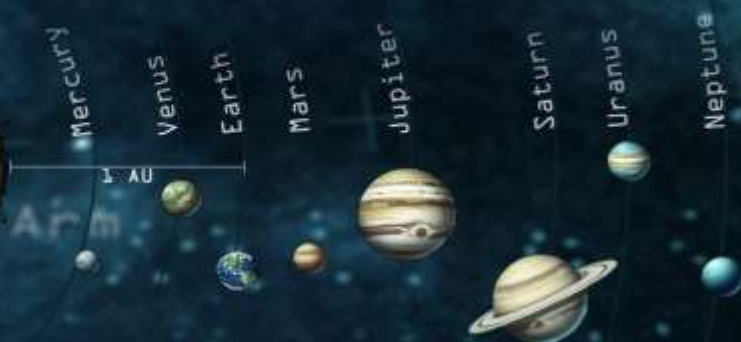Disclaimer

This is a work in progress and under constant change. Until it reaches Beta, it is not considered play-ready to its full extent. This version is provided to gather feedback on the rules and setting of the game. Abyssal is a game written for the love of science fiction, horror and investigative genres. It contains descriptions of horror and violence.

Cover Picture is created with Dalle-3

ABYSSAL

Centaurus Arm

ZEPHYR

CARTU

LUMINA DRIFT

LYNX

GLOCKTIS

FENRIS V

SOL

ARMADILLO

VECTRA

BOTHE

FOGGEN

TYPHOS 3

LYRA MAJOR

Orion Spur

Perseus Arm

Arm

Mercury

Venus

Earth

Mars

Jupiter

Saturn

Uranus

Neptune

1 AU

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ABYSSAL

Welcome to Abyssal, a universe where space is the final frontier and the stage for your strangest findings and darkest fears. In this world, humanity has extended its reach into the cosmos, driven by the unyielding influence of mega-corporations that now put the traditional national powers in their shadow. This expansion has been bought with hard toil and blood, and the cost is rising.

Abyssal fuses the stark reality of a sci-fi universe with deep, unnerving terror. The vast expanse of space harbours not just wonder, but also horrifying things that defy human comprehension: scientific experiments crossing the boundaries of morality, grotesque alien lifeforms, and eerie practices dabbling in the new emerging occult. It is a universe of stark contrasts, where the marvels of technological advancement collide with the primal fear of the unknown.

This Core Rulebook provides everything you need to traverse the shadows of Abyssal. It includes detailed descriptions of the world, the gritty realism of void combat, the various character archetypes struggling for their existence, and the eerie revelations of the dark and hidden, far away from the awareness of the blissfully ignorant.

Embark on a journey through the stars, where your choices will influence your adventures in this dark, unforgiving universe. Whether you are a Suit crafting intricate narratives or a player endeavouring to survive in this harsh reality, Abyssal offers a deeply immersive experience. It will test your resolve, your ethics, and your fortitude.

Welcome to Abyssal. Your journey into the darkness is just beginning.

Why should I play Abyssal?

Abyssal is a game about a tight-knit group of covert operatives working in corporate espionage. Armed with a spaceship and high-tech equipment, they work on their mission while maintaining their personal lives and sanity. It is about morality and decision-making, about discovering that the Corps has much more to hide than they already know. It is about the exploration of unknown planets and life forms. It is about the dawn of a new darkness that threatens to consume the very souls of humanity. Can the team forge their own path through this maelstrom of danger? Grab your gear, Wheels in 10

What is a Roleplaying Game

The closest analogy to a tabletop role-playing game is that of a theatre. Imagine you are an actor on the scene impersonating a character in the play and fulfilling its role, quirks, and ambitions. In a theatre play, the story is fixed, you read it, you learn it, and you act it by script. This is where a tabletop role-playing game is very different. Yes, you enact a character that you have generated, as do the other players. You together form a crew, you are the protagonists of the story. But the story itself is not fixed. It is more of a frame for the stories that you and the Suit tell together. The story reacts to your actions, it adapts and is revealed by you following the flow of it.

So, we know who and what the players are, but who is the Suit? The Suit is the one that has prepared the story frame, he knows what dangers are afoot and waiting for the players. The Suit is the eyes and ears of the players in the world of Abyssal, he plays every person in the world who is not the players characters, he determines how the world reacts to the players and their actions. Broken down to the shortest answer, the Suit describes a scene with all the people, sounds, and visuals that the characters can perceive. Then the players state their intent and course of action. The Suit reacts to these actions and describes the changes. This interaction carries on until the mission comes to its conclusion or the hour has become late and a break until the next session is in order.

Setting Overview of Abyssal

The Universe of Abyssal

The future of humanity is an interstellar journey marked by awe and terror. Humanity has reached out into the cosmos, establishing its presence across star systems. This expansion, driven by colossal corporations, unfolds on a backdrop of advanced technology and existential threats.

Corporate Dominance

The era of nation-states has passed. Now, mega-corporations, entities with resources and power rivalling and surpassing old-world nations, dominate the landscape. These corporations are the new rulers, controlling vast territories across space and holding sway over the lives of billions. Their influence penetrates every aspect of human life, from governance and economics to military might and scientific research.

Interstellar Travel

The lifeline of this expansive universe is the stellar projector technology, enabling ships to traverse the vast distances of space. These stellar projectors,

ranging from massive, stationary structures to smaller, ship-mounted versions, are marvels of human ingenuity, albeit not without their risks and mysteries. They have expanded humanity's spread through the galaxy over the distance of 500 Lightyears around the cradle of mankind, the Sol system.

A Universe of Contrasts

It is a universe of contrasts — a blend of the industrial and the futuristic, the known and the unknown. While humanity has made remarkable strides in technology, it stands alone as the only known intelligent species in a vast and often hostile universe. This isolation adds a layer of existential dread to the already perilous journey through space.

The Horror Within

Beneath the technological marvels and corporate intrigue lies a layer of horror. The universe is rife with the loss of morals, the creation of abominations in the name of science, and encounters with ghastly alien life forms. Fringe occult practices, once thought mere superstition, yield disturbingly tangible results, adding a layer of cosmic horror to the already dark tapestry.

Every star could harbour a nightmare, and every jump through the cosmos is a leap into the unknown. It is a universe where the greatest dangers frequently come not from the cold void of space, but from the very human souls that inhabit it.

An Overview of Its Corporate-Dominated Galaxy

The path to this corporate-dominated era began with significant advancements in fusion technology, especially with the creation and evolution of the "Sparc" Reactor. This innovation enabled sustainable, long-term space travel, propelling humanity to spread throughout the solar system by providing almost unlimited energy. Corporations like Rayburn-Lark and AdAstra, pioneers in energy systems and asteroid mining, became key players in shaping this new frontier. As Earth's resources dwindled, these corporations leveraged the abundant raw materials in space to grow in power and influence.

The Stellar Projector, a major innovation in interstellar travel, marked humanity's expansion beyond the solar system. Led by corporations such as Quantum Nova and Orbital Dynamics Inc., this technology opened the galaxy to exploration and colonization. The subsequent period saw the establishment of extraterrestrial colonies and outposts, with the Zenith Habitation Corp. leading in terraforming and habitat construction.

Corporate Sovereignty and the Decline of Nation-States

These corporations, amassing wealth and resources, began to challenge the authority of Earth's governments. Their galactic expansion, combined with the immense costs and logistics, led to the emergence of corporate sovereignty. Traditional nation-states, struggling with internal and environmental crises, became increasingly sidelined. Corporations, now controlling territories across multiple star systems, effectively turned into sovereign entities, setting laws, culture, and social structures within weakening nation-states.

The Dark Underbelly of a Corporate Galaxy

Despite its technological wonders, the Abyssal universe is far from a utopia. Capitalism dominates, often neglecting ethics and humanity. Wealth is synonymous with power and influence. The lower tiers of society, including workers and mid-level managers, are trapped in a system favouring the wealthy.

Industrial espionage, a common strategy for corporate survival and dominance, is a very common strategy. On a smaller scale, the corps do not even refrain from violence, assassination, and sabotage being the norm.

The Role of Media and Cultural Influence

Public opinion is shaped by whoever is controlling the media. This old wisdom also stands in the times of galactic expansion. All the corps try to influence and shape the will of the masses towards their ends. This can be felt in grain in the media world, be it games, ads or news. There are channels fighting for truth and moral right, but their fight seems to be a fruitless one.

The Current State of Affairs

The "Big 12" corporations, along with numerous subsidiaries in various sectors, govern the socio-economic landscape. Their interactions, ranging from alliances to rivalries, shape the political and cultural milieu of this space-faring society. Earth, humanity's birthplace, now stands as a cultural relic, its political relevance eclipsed by the myriad of corporate-governed planets throughout the galaxy.

Timeline of Abyssal

Label	Start	End	Summary
Advanced fusion research start	2024	2024	Advanced fusion research marks the beginning of a new era, promising to solve Earth's energy crisis and fuel humanity's dreams of space exploration.
First successful fusion reactor prototype	2055	2055	The first successful prototype of a fusion reactor is developed, sparking a global race towards clean energy and interplanetary travel capabilities.
Lunar settlement starts	2060	2060	The settlement of the moon starts in earnest, and resource extraction and refinement on-site are established. It is confirmed that the moon holds large deposits of Rare Earth Elements and Helium-3.
Mars settlement starts	2072	2072	The first settlements on Mars are built and terraforming is started on a small scale.
Earth resource war	2075	2101	The Resource Wars on Earth, characterized by intense competition for dwindling Earth-based resources and strategic space assets, exacerbate geopolitical tensions.
Lunar conflict	2098	2101	The Lunar Conflict erupts as corporate entities and Earth's nations vie for control over lunar mining sites, leading to the first armed conflict beyond Earth's atmosphere. This conflict underscores the strategic importance of off-world resources and sets a precedent for future space-based territorial disputes.
Sparc Reactor Invention	2105	2105	Introduction of the "Sparc" Reactor, a breakthrough that enables sustainable, long-term space travel. This innovation propels humanity into a new age of solar system colonization, driving both cooperation and competition among emerging space-faring entities.
Invention of the Stellar Projector Technologie	2143	2143	The advent of the Stellar Projector technology enables humanity to traverse vast distances in space, marking the beginning of true interstellar exploration and colonization. This technological leap forward comes with its set of challenges, including navigation hazards, unforeseen environmental impacts, and the ethical implications of terraforming.
Formation of the Big 12	2151	2231	Corporate Sovereignty. Corporations establish proprietary laws on new worlds, effectively becoming sovereign powers. The "Big 12" corporations emerge as major players. The nations still hold power, but it is dwindling
Stellar claim wars	2153	2163	The Stellar Claim Wars break out over rights to newly discovered habitable planets and strategic waypoints, demonstrating the dark side of humanity's reach for the stars. These conflicts are characterized by a mix of conventional warfare, proxy battles, and diplomatic intrigue.
Terraforming Crisis	2180	2186	The Terraforming Crisis, a series of ecological disasters on newly terraformed worlds, ignites debates over the sustainability of planetary engineering. Conflicts arise between settler groups and corporate security forces, leading to a broader discussion about humanity's ability to conquer the cosmos
The Phobos Accord	2185	2185	The development of the Stellar Projector technology raises concerns about the potential militarization of space and the need for regulations governing interstellar travel. The Phobos Accord, signed aboard the newly established Phobos Conference Station, restricts the use of a vital group of Stellar Projectors to neutral status and establishes a joint human oversight body. This accord is crucial for maintaining the cohesion of the human race in the face of unrest and war.
Secession Wars	2275	2312	The Secession Wars between the Sol Protectorate and the United Stellar Colonies unfold, driven by disputes over self-governance, taxation, and corporate influence. These wars are brutal and leave lasting scars on the interstellar community, ultimately reshaping the political landscape of human space.

Cold War btw. VC and Haven	2310-01	2332-05	The Cold War between the Void Confederacy and Haven underscores the strategic importance of stellar projector nodes and the delicate balance of power in known space. This period is marked by espionage, proxy conflicts, and a tense arms race, highlighting the ever-present threat of full-scale war.
The Concordia treaties	2332-05	2332-06	The Concordia treaties bring an end to the major conflicts in human territory. Though the Secession wars had gone cold 19 years ago and the Cold War never got hot the time for brittle peace had come. To further the expansion and well-being of humankind there was an acknowledgement of existing territories, a renewal of the Phobos Accord and a clarification of nation and corporate rights.
The great Stagnation	2345	2451	The Great Stagnation brings economic recession and technological plateaus, leading to social unrest and a series of revolts against corporate governance. This period prompts a reevaluation of humanity's priorities and a renewed focus on sustainable development, cooperation, and the pursuit of knowledge.
Establishment of Haven	2401	2451	Establishment of Haven. Colonists and explorers seeking freedom from both the SP and USC created Haven, a loosely aligned federation of colonies emphasizing freedom and exploration.
Formation of the NFA and the VC	2451	2501	Rise of the New Frontier Alliance (NFA) and Void Confederacy (VC). The NFA emerges as a wild frontier of opportunity and danger, while the VC solidifies its power through autocratic rule and a controversial deal with mega-corporations.
Upheaval of the Orion Syndicate	2499	2534	The year 2499 marked the rise of the Orion Syndicate, a revolutionary group that began as a coalition of oppressed miners and workers across several systems. Their campaign against corporate exploitation and for worker rights led to the starvation and death of many revolutionaries and their families. The corps made an example by withdrawing support and suppressing upheaval by force
Solar Protectorate trade embargo	2574	2641	The SP imposes heavy trade sanctions on the USC, citing security concerns over technological exports that could potentially alter the balance of power. This move significantly disrupts USC's economy, which relies heavily on interstellar trade.
Border Incursions	2580	2624-02	A series of unauthorized border incursions by SP military vessels into USC space is reported. SP claims these incursions are in pursuit of pirates operating within their territory.
Diplomatic Breakdown between SP and USC	2603	-	High-level diplomatic talks aimed at de-escalating tensions break down, with both sides walking out of the negotiations. Propaganda campaigns intensify, painting the other side as the aggressor and a threat to galactic stability.
Proxy Wars	2617	2660	Both the SP and USC begin to engage in proxy wars, supporting opposing factions in border systems. These conflicts are officially denied but are an open secret.
Minor Territorial Conflicts	2634	-	Skirmishes and proxy wars over resource-rich systems occur, though they rarely escalate into full-scale wars due to the balance of power.
Arms Race	2634	-	An arms race between the SP and USC reaches new heights, with both sides unveiling next-generation warships and weapons systems, some of which are powered by experimental technologies. The galactic community expresses concern over the potential for catastrophic conflict, but internal pressures and fear of appearing weak prevent either side from backing down.
Stellar Projector Crisis	2639	2640	In 2639 two major Stellar Projectors detonated in a massive wave of destruction, far beyond even the wildest calculations. No other accident has caused such a desaster befor or afterwards. The sensor fragments that survived the blasts just give incohesive data and have not been analyzed to their full extent. The source of the destruction is unknown, two projectors at the same time hint at a deliberate action. Up to today, no one has been able to plot a jump to these systems without ending up wildly of course.

Rise of Darkness	2640	-	Unrecognized by the general human populace across the star systems, unexplainable events and sightings regarding the occult begin to manifest. Dabblers in the occult and other practitioners have successes with their spells and rituals, even the ones dating back to ancient times of the earth.
VC Rebellion	2641	2660	Widespread uprising against the autocratic rule of the VC Governing Council leads to civil unrest and violent clashes. The VC accuse the USC and Haven of aiding the rebels. Many people disappear and are never seen again. In the end, the VC had to make some reforms to appease the population. Many paid for this with their blood.
Phantasms	2641	2641	A mysterious affliction sweeps through several space stations, causing hallucinations of shadowy figures and voices from nowhere. Despite extensive research, the source remains unexplained, fueling theories about a psychic contagion.
Hyperion Crisis	2645	2647	A covert operation by a conglomerate of mega-corporations to seize control of the Hyperion Gate, a critical chokepoint for interstellar travel, is exposed. The ensuing scandal leads to a major shake-up in corporate leadership and a call for stricter regulations on corporate activities in space. This is prevented in the greater interest of the Corporations.
Vega Incident	2652	2652	A USC exploration fleet is destroyed near the Vega system, with USC blaming a covert SP attack. SP denies involvement, suggesting an unknown third party or a navigational error. This incident galvanizes public support in the USC for a stronger military response, pushing both sides closer to open conflict.
Ultimatum on Vega Incident	2668	2668	SP issues an ultimatum to the USC, demanding the extradition of several high-ranking military officials it accuses of orchestrating the Vega incident and other acts of aggression. USC rejects the ultimatum, viewing it as a violation of its sovereignty and an act of war. Both sides begin mobilizing their forces in preparation for a large-scale conflict.
Encounter at Zeta Reticuli	2670	2670	Impact: USC rejects the ultimatum, viewing it as a violation of its sovereignty and an act of war. Both sides begin mobilizing their forces in preparation for a large-scale conflict.
The Nightfall Anomaly	2671	2671	An exploratory vessel encounters an anomaly in space that absorbs all light, dubbed the Nightfall Anomaly. Crew members report feeling an overwhelming sense of despair and sighting apparitions before the anomaly disappears as mysteriously as it appeared. There is nothing that associates it with a black hole.
Escalation to War	2674	-	Small-scale skirmishes between SP and USC forces become increasingly common, with both sides engaging in aggressive posturing and brinkmanship. A full-scale war seems imminent, with galactic observers and minor factions bracing for the outbreak of hostilities that could engulf the galaxy.

A closer look at major events in History

Stellar Projector Crisis 2639

The year of 2639 heralded one of the most catastrophic events in the history of mankind. On the 4th of April, the projector of Beminum Leo started to malfunction. It started into a cataclysmic cycle that ultimately led to the violent destruction of the large stellar projector, taking the rest of the system with it. Only a day later, the projector of HIP 2091 fell into the same cycle. The outcome was equally destructive. Numerous vessels were still able to escape the ultimate destruction, capturing lots and lots of sensor data, even telemetry of the projectors themselves. Up to this date, the final source of the destruction is not finally determined with rumours running wild.

The destruction of the Beminum Generator was attributed to a catastrophic malfunction, ruled out immediately with the destruction of the HIP 2091 Generator. It is widely believed to be a terrorist attack by a fringe group called "Lone Stars". They were convinced the universe was not to be conquered by the blight of mankind and made a point by committing genocide on a massive scale. There was even a public statement by the group claiming the deed and the consequent eradication shortly afterwards. How they even could have done it is very unclear.

Up to this day, it is not possible to open a portal Beminum Leo or HIP 2091, the nearest projectable point laying about 1 LY away from each star system. This had been further out immediately after the destruction. Readings from that distance give only static in the electromagnetic wave spectrum and an eerie cacophonic signal interwoven. There is no sign of humans any more.

Shortly after, the Hagendorf Treaty was put into action. It empowered an independent security organization financed by the Big 12 and the nation-states with operational oversight and protection. This was the birth of the Hagendorf Projector Agency or HPA. They are responsible for technical overview and on station security, reporting to a joint board the ruling nations and corporations have a fixed influence on.

There has not been another incident since.

The Hyperion Crisis 2645

The new treaty was put to the test just a few years later. The projector of a significant junction was the target of a deliberate attack with the goal of gaining control over this important device leading into Void Confederacy territory. The later enquiries brought plans to light that had to be measured in months. Bribes and tactical positioning of personnel in key positions made the grab for the generator possible, leading to a

shutdown of the device for weeks. In the initial hour of the takeover, patrol vessels of the HPA had been shot down or disabled after threatening to open fire.

The grab came from the Void Confederacy itself, aiming to control trade by the Big 12 and establish an example for controlling the corps. The VC aimed to shift the power balance in their favour, regulating movement and therefore getting a firm grip on the trade routes. Unfortunately for them, neither the corps nor the remaining nations stood for it, fearing conflict centred on their lifeblood, the generators.

A coalition force composed of national forces and corporation military was sent in the direction of the VC, the corporations shutting down supply lines and support. At first, VC tried forcefully to re-establish control and put their forces on high alert. Border frictions heightened with many small-scale engagements, mostly with Corporate Forces.

In the end, it took 6 months to put the VC into its place and regain control of the generator for the HPA. VC was made officially responsible for the incident, and condemned to pay reparations for the damage done.

These payments are spotty to this day. Some embargoes are still in place and tensions between the VC and the other nation states are high. The Big 12 seemingly have been compensated, doing business as usual.

Corporations

AdAstra

AdAstra, a name that resonates across the galaxy, represents the pinnacle of space mining and resource extraction. AdAstra has charted a path of unparalleled success in the highly competitive field of space resource exploitation.

Founding and Evolution

AdAstra's journey began as a consortium of traditional mining companies. With the advent of PAD Drives, these companies foresaw the potential of space as the next frontier for mining. Merging their resources and expertise, they created AdAstra, a corporation tailored for the challenges and opportunities of space mining. From asteroid mining to ice harvesting and planetary surface mining, AdAstra has mastered the art of extracting resources in the most extreme environments.

Specialisation and Services

Today, AdAstra is not just a mining company; it is an interstellar powerhouse of resource extraction and space infrastructure development. They have branched out into mining vessel manufacturing, space transportation, and advanced surveying, becoming the benchmark in these fields. Their remote robotic mining operations and long-distance transportation technologies have revolutionized asteroid mining, setting new industry standards.

Corporate Culture and Ethics

AdAstra's corporate culture is characterized by practicality and a strong focus on results. They view space as an open field for exploitation, driven by the belief in its vastness and the minimal impact of their activities. Their approach is business-centric, with little regard for alien ecosystems or sentimental values. This pragmatic stance extends to their dealings with planetary governments and competitors, where they are known for their straightforward and sometimes aggressive tactics.

Leadership

The corporation is led by CEO Sabine LeClerc, a figure known for her clear, hard leadership style and ruthless efficiency. Under her guidance, AdAstra has not only maintained its dominance in the space mining sector but has also expanded its influence in the interstellar market.

Economic Strategies and Galactic Influence

AdAstra's economic strategy revolves around maintaining a stronghold in space mining and related industries. They have perfected the art of resource extraction in high-risk environments and leveraged

their capabilities to create a strong market presence in vessel manufacturing and space infrastructure. AdAstra's approach to politics is neutral, as long as it aligns with their business interests. However, they are known to respond decisively when their territorial claims or business ventures are challenged.

Conclusion

AdAstra stands as a testament to human ambition and the unyielding pursuit of resources beyond our planet. In the realm of space mining, they are not just participants; they are leaders, innovators, and visionaries. As they continue to push the boundaries of space resource extraction, AdAstra remains a key player in shaping the economic landscape of the galaxy.

Black Hawk

Black Hawk has established itself as a pre-eminent force in security and mercenary services, adapting and evolving to meet the complex challenges of interstellar conflict and peacekeeping. From its origins in the volatile early days of corporate warfare, Black Hawk has risen to become a key player in ensuring the stability and security of the galaxy's myriad worlds and peoples.

History and Rise to Prominence

Initially entering the fray of armed corporate conflict, Black Hawk quickly distinguished itself for its efficiency

and strategic prowess. Today it offers a wide range of services, from police operations and personal security to planetary defence and armed escort of interstellar assets. Its recent expansion into space reconnaissance and disaster response demonstrates Black Hawk's commitment to versatility and excellence in security services.

Services and Specialization

Black Hawk's services are as varied as the demands of the galaxy. Beyond its initial focus on armed conflict resolution, the company has expanded its offerings to include space reconnaissance and disaster response, ensuring that its clients are protected not only from human threats but from the capricious nature of the cosmos itself. With a fleet of armed vessels and a cadre of highly trained personnel, Black Hawk can respond to any security challenge with precision and effectiveness.

Corporate Culture and Ethics

The heart of Black Hawk beats to a pragmatic rhythm, guided by a straightforward ethos that prioritizes efficiency and duty over moral dilemmas. The company operates within a framework of strict legal standards, ensuring that its interventions are both effective and legally sound. While shying away from operations that could cause harm to civilians, it maintains a firm stance

on fulfilling its obligations, even if it means using a heavy hand.

Leadership and Figureheads

Under the leadership of Commander Alex Rennard, a veteran of many campaigns, Black Hawk has not only stayed the course, it has set its sights on new horizons. Rennard's leadership style - characterized by strategic foresight, operational excellence and a profound understanding of the galaxy's geopolitical landscape - has propelled Black Hawk into a period of unprecedented growth and expansion.

Economic Strategy and Growth

As Black Hawk continues to navigate the ever-evolving landscape of galactic security, its commitment to protecting the interests of its clients remains unwavering. With plans to delve deeper into space reconnaissance and disaster response, Black Hawk is poised to not only react to the galaxy's dangers but to anticipate and neutralize them before they can manifest. In the vast, often uncertain vastness of space, Black Hawk serves as both shield and sentinel, ensuring peace and stability among the stars.

Conclusion

Black Hawk's journey from a band of mercenaries to a cornerstone of galactic security epitomises its unwavering commitment to excellence, strategic

prowess and the relentless pursuit of securing the future of civilisation. Standing ready to meet the challenges of tomorrow, Black Hawk remains a beacon of stability in the chaotic vastness of space.

CosmoNav

CosmoNav Technologies has established itself as a titan in interstellar logistics and infrastructure, providing unparalleled services in the transport of goods and passengers across the galaxy. With a reputation built on precision, reliability and efficiency, CosmoNav is the backbone of galactic commerce, linking worlds and fostering trade and cultural exchange.

History and Rise to Prominence

Founded during the boom of interstellar travel, CosmoNav Technologies used the era's technological advances to position itself as a leader in space logistics. Although not the first in the field, aggressive business strategies and a relentless pursuit of excellence enabled CosmoNav to rise to the top. Today, the company is the major player in the galactic economy, facilitating the movement of resources, people, and ideas that keep the galaxy thriving.

Specialisation and Services

CosmoNav's strength lies in its comprehensive range of logistics and passenger transport services. The company is renowned for its space container

technology, ensuring that even the most delicate cargo arrives safely at its destination. From luxury passenger liners to efficient cargo fleets, CosmoNav caters to a wide range of needs, ensuring accessibility and safety for all its customers.

Corporate Culture and Ethics

The culture at CosmoNav is one of rigorous efficiency and duty. Ethical dilemmas are seen through the lens of the logistical challenges to be overcome. This pragmatic approach has cemented CosmoNav's reputation as a dependable provider that delivers, no matter how complex the task.

Leadership and Figureheads

Under the leadership of Hiro Takahashi, a leader with deep roots in space and logistics, CosmoNav continues to innovate and expand. Takahashi's leadership is characterized by a blend of pragmatism and visionary thinking, driving the company towards new horizons in interstellar trade and connectivity.

Economic Strategies and Growth

CosmoNav's dominance is maintained through continuous technological innovation, service diversification and strategic partnerships. The company's commitment to reliability and its reputation for excellence ensure its continued success and growth.

As it explores new markets and continues to refine its operations, CosmoNav Technologies remains a key linchpin in the galactic infrastructure.

Conclusion

CosmoNav Technologies is not just a logistics company; it is a vital link between the many worlds of the galaxy. Its operations facilitate not only trade but also the exchange of cultures and ideas, making it an indispensable force in shaping the future of interstellar civilization. As the galaxy continues to grow and change, CosmoNav's role in navigating these changes will only become more important, ensuring that no matter how far humanity reaches, it remains connected.

Elysium Pharmaceuticals

Elysium Pharmaceuticals dominates the field of galactic biopharmaceuticals, renowned for its relentless pursuit of life-altering drugs and longevity treatments. Its reputation attracts not only patients but also researchers from across the galaxy.

History and Rise to Prominence

Founded upon startling breakthroughs in the treatment of viral outbreaks, Elysium rapidly emerged as a leader in galactic medical research. By harnessing rare organic molecules from remote exoplanets, they expanded into groundbreaking therapeutic research,

including treatments for cancer, chronic pain and age-related diseases, for a price.

Specialisation and Services

Elysium focuses on innovative pharmaceuticals, regenerative therapies, and longevity drugs. Cutting-edge longevity clinics offer radical lifespan extension with personalized treatment plans for the ultra-wealthy.

Corporate Culture and Ethics

Driven by ambition and profit, the culture at Elysium is rife with secrecy and internal power struggles. While outwardly compassionate, internal rivalries for funding and recognition are fiercely competitive. Ethical concerns related to human experimentation are frequently swept under the rug in the pursuit of scientific progress.

Leadership and Figureheads

Geneticist Dr. Anya Lebedev is the current CEO of Elysium Pharmaceuticals. Visionary yet unyielding, she pushes the boundaries of her company. Though charismatic, she has a chilling lack of empathy, prioritizing her vision of galactic well-being at any cost.

Economic Strategies and Galactic Influence

Elysium's economic focus is on research, patenting, and controlling scarce biological resources. Its political influence grows as it treats more of the galactic elite, gaining substantial leverage in political decisions pertaining to health laws and research funding.

Conclusion

Elysium Pharmaceuticals embodies the potential and ethical quandaries of advanced medical technology. Whether a saviour or a corrupting force, it undoubtedly revolutionizes the way galactic society tackles illness, ageing, and mortality.

Nexus Media Corp.

Nexus Media stands as a titan in the galactic media landscape, controlling a vast multimedia network across the star systems. Renowned for its influence on entertainment, news and social media, Nexus Media is a behemoth in shaping perceptions, trends, and opinions across diverse populations and planets.

History and rise to prominence

Founded as a multimedia conglomerate, Nexus Media quickly expanded its reach beyond entertainment into the realms of news and information dissemination. With an intricate network of subsidiaries and controlled

companies, its influence is pervasive yet often shadowy, making it a central node in the flow of information across star systems. Over time, Nexus Media has evolved from a media provider to a master of control and influence, dictating not only the news cycle but the very fabric of societal norms and values.

Specialisation and services

Nexus Media's mastery lies in its ability to balance truth with strategic content curation. Its entertainment offerings are far from mere diversions; they are high-quality productions that captivate and engage audiences across the galaxy. But Nexus Media's true power lies in its control of news and information, capable of subtly shifting perceptions and significantly influencing political and technological developments. The company's ongoing ventures into advanced virtual reality, particularly the development of neurological links to quantum computing machines, promise to extend its reach into the lives and experiences of individuals.

Corporate culture and ethics

At Nexus Media, the corporate culture is one of calculated ambition and ruthless efficiency. Ethical considerations take a back seat to control, influence and profit. Employees who embody the ruthless nature and effectiveness of the company find ample opportunity for advancement. Nexus Media's

operations are a testament to the belief that power and influence are the ultimate currencies in the media industry. The company's dealings are pragmatic, and its alliances with the other Big 12 companies are driven by mutual benefit and strategic necessity.

Leadership and figureheads

Nexus Media operates under the enigmatic leadership of Dr Ludov Frittschwieler, a CEO whose aggressive tactics and ambitions have brought both immense success and considerable controversy. His attempts to outmanoeuvre the Big 12 corporations and align them with Nexus Media's interests have led to internal debate and external conflict. As the company faces potential changes in leadership and strategy, Dr Frittschwieler's legacy remains the subject of much speculation and anticipation.

Business strategies and growth

Nexus Media's future depends on its ambitious technological developments, in particular full neurological connectivity, which promises to redefine media consumption and control. By focusing on these and other cutting-edge innovations, Nexus Media aims to maintain its market dominance and expand into new areas of influence. The success of these ventures will ensure not only the company's economic prosperity but also its position as an architect of reality and perception.

Conclusion

Nexus Media is more than a company; it is a force that shapes the way individuals and societies view the world. Through its control of information, innovation in technology and strategic manoeuvring, Nexus Media continues to dictate the flow of news, entertainment, and data across the galaxy. Standing on the brink of breakthroughs in virtual reality and neural interfaces, Nexus Media's influence is poised to penetrate even deeper, making it an undeniable force in shaping the future.

Orbital Dynamics Incorporated

Orbital Dynamics Incorporated stands at the forefront of orbital engineering, mastering complex orbital infrastructure and artificial gravity. It has reshaped interstellar travel, enabling the rise of megastructures that serve as bustling centres of commerce.

History and Rise to Prominence

Orbital Dynamics' roots lie in asteroid deflection and orbit engineering for commercial spacecraft. Its work in gravity manipulation technology allowed for stable orbits of large structures, making artificial gravity accessible. This fueled a renaissance in orbital megastructure and habitat construction as well as advancements in artificial gravity for space vessels.

Specialisation and Services

Orbital Dynamics primarily focuses on artificial gravity manipulation, complex orbital architecture, and massive station construction. It caters to a wide range of industries, from luxury orbital habitats to interplanetary travel terminals. Their contributions to the stellar projector infrastructure are pivotal.

Corporate Culture and Ethics

ODI fosters a culture of innovation and safety-first thinking, where precision is paramount. While profitable, there's a strong sentiment of service, recognizing that ODI's technology impacts millions of lives and influences the structure of galactic commerce. In this, they are on the more friendly side as corporations go.

Leadership and Figureheads

Aiko Tanaka, with a career trajectory spanning astrophysics to leadership, leads ODI with vision and responsibility. Widely respected for her unwavering moral stance, she sets high standards for safety and pushes her teams to find ethical and sustainable solutions.

Economic Strategies and Growth

ODI maintains its edge with continuous research in gravitation manipulation and structural integrity. Through strategic partnerships, they further these goals. These technological breakthroughs keep ODI ahead of the curve, providing innovative and highly valued infrastructure solutions.

Conclusion

Orbital Dynamics has manoeuvred their corp right at the heart of human settlement and stellar expansion. Their solutions make space travel easier and enable orbital superstructures for easy access to space-bound resources. Their technology enables space vessel fabrication in orbit to make production easier and in the end more cost-effective. In the near future, there is no alternative on the horizon.

Palladium Tactics Corp.

Palladium Tactics Corp. (PTC) is a leading name in the galaxy's arms industry, known for its extensive range of weapon systems and military technology. Specializing initially in armoured combat vehicles, PTC has evolved to dominate nearly every aspect of modern warfare equipment, from terrestrial tanks to space-based defence systems.

History and Rise to Prominence

PTC's roots are in the manufacturing of armoured combat vehicles and ammunition, quickly establishing itself with innovative designs and reliable performance. Recognizing the potential of space as a new domain for conflict, PTC expanded into space-borne weapons, developing the first point defence systems for missile defence and tactical awareness systems adapted for armed conflict in space. Their expertise in electromagnetic acceleration of projectiles further cemented their status as a leading weapons manufacturer.

Specialisation and Services

Today, PTC provides a comprehensive array of weapon systems and defence solutions. Whether it's ground-based armour, space station defences, or fleet armaments, PTC has a solution. Known for their precision and reliability, their products include advanced electromagnetic projectile weapons, tactical awareness systems, and robust armoured vehicles for various combat scenarios. Through continuous innovation and strategic acquisitions, PTC has diversified its portfolio to offer almost every type of weaponry, either directly or through its subsidiaries.

Corporate Culture and Ethics

PTC is characterized by its business-like demeanour, focusing on efficiency, profitability, and market dominance. They tend to view the consequences of warfare in terms of statistics and collateral, distancing themselves from the ethical implications. Publicly, they promote their products as tools for defence and security, but privately, they are willing to supply any side of a conflict as long as it's profitable. Their corporate culture is one of pragmatism, viewing war as an opportunity for business rather than a human tragedy.

Leadership and Figureheads

PTC is led by Dr. Elena Vostokova, a formidable presence in the arms industry. Her background as a military engineer and physicist has provided her with the technical and strategic acumen to lead PTC into new technological territories. Known for her ruthless efficiency and visionary leadership, Vostokova has been a critical factor in PTC's further rise and continued dominance. Her public persona is that of a pioneering and powerful figure, representing PTC's commitment to advancing military technology.

Economic Strategies and Growth

In the competitive arms industry, PTC has maintained its edge through constant innovation, strategic partnerships, and a keen understanding of geopolitical dynamics. Their strategy includes offering cutting-edge technologies and comprehensive military solutions to a global clientele, ensuring their products are integral to defence strategies galaxy-wide. By focusing on the development of proprietary technologies and maintaining a robust portfolio of products, PTC ensures its relevance and indispensability in the arms market.

Political and Galactic Influence

With its vast array of weaponry and defence systems, PTC wields considerable influence in galactic affairs. They maintain a neutral stance in public, offering their services to various governments and private entities. However, their influence extends beyond mere supply; strategic discounts and partnerships allow them to sway the balance of power subtly, aligning with their corporate interests.

Conclusion

Palladium Tactics Corp. is more than a manufacturer of weapons; it's a central player in the theatre of galactic warfare. With a comprehensive range of products and a reputation for reliability, PTC stands as a testament to the strategic, economic, and technological forces that shape armed conflict. As warfare evolves and expands

into new realms, PTC is sure to be at the forefront, driving innovation and profiting from the ever-present nature of conflict.

Quantum Nova

Quantum Nova stands at the forefront of quantum computing and interstellar technology, firmly established as one of the galaxy's Big 12 megacorporations. Renowned for its groundbreaking innovations in quantum computing, Quantum Nova has become an indispensable player in the realm of advanced technology.

Origins and Ascension

Quantum Nova's journey began as a significant player in the field of computer software, specializing in operating systems and cybersecurity solutions. Their groundbreaking work in developing operating systems for quantum computers and establishing robust security protocols for quantum systems marked a technological revolution. This expertise naturally positioned them as key players in the development of stellar projectors, a critical technology for interstellar travel.

Diversification and Specialization

From its roots in quantum computing, Quantum Nova has diversified into various high-tech fields. They are now leaders in quantum entanglement solutions, cloud applications, and the operation and synchronization of data centres across star systems. Their foray into robotics and AI systems marks their continuous expansion into new technological frontiers.

Corporate Culture and Ethical Stance

Quantum Nova is perceived as a benevolent corporate entity, striving to empower societies through technology. They are known for their strategic use of power, often acquiring smaller companies or competitors to enhance their technological capabilities. Loyalty and fair treatment of employees are hallmarks of their corporate culture.

Leadership

Quantum Nova is led by CEO Ulf Sigurdson, a charismatic leader who climbed the corporate ladder through skill and vision. His enigmatic persona adds a layer of intrigue to Quantum Nova's image. Sigurdson's leadership has been instrumental in steering the company towards its current status as a technological powerhouse.

Economic Strategies and Galactic Influence

Quantum Nova's economic strategy revolves around maintaining a dominant presence in computer systems across the galaxy, with a particular focus on controlling the software integral to stellar projectors. This strategic control allows Quantum Nova to exert substantial influence over interstellar travel and communication.

Politically, Quantum Nova maintains a neutral stance, engaging with various factions while protecting its core interests.

Conclusion

Quantum Nova is not just a corporation; it's a symbol of human advancement in technology and space exploration. Their innovations in quantum computing and their role in the development of stellar projectors have reshaped interstellar travel and positioned them as key influencers in the galactic arena. As Quantum Nova continues to push the boundaries of technology, its impact on the future course of human civilization in the galaxy remains profound and undeniable.

Rayburn-Lark

Rayburn-Lark stands as a titan in the interstellar energy sector, renowned for its relentless innovation in power generation, and storage, and its landmark invention of the IRHEC system. This daring technology has revolutionized energy management in the galaxy, with significant implications for interstellar travel.

History and Rise to Prominence

The origins of Rayburn-Lark lie in a volatile merger between two ambitious but struggling energy startups. This unorthodox fusion of cutting-edge research and ruthless practicality created a new corporate entity focused on high-risk, high-reward strategies. The development of the Instant Release High-Energy Capacitor (IRHEC) was a defining moment for Rayburn-Lark. This technology resolved a critical bottleneck in stellar projector energy requirements, propelling them to the top of the sector and making them a key player in the advancement of interstellar transport.

Specialisation and Services

Rayburn-Lark has built its empire around the IRHEC. Beyond developing and manufacturing IRHECs of varying scales, they specialize in integrating these systems into diverse power generation setups. From supplying IRHECs to power stellar reactors to constructing sprawling galactic power grids, Rayburn-Lark sits at the heart of energy flow in the galaxy. Their research division continuously advances IRHEC technology, ensuring they maintain unparalleled control over this critical component of interstellar civilization.

Corporate Culture and Ethics

Within Rayburn-Lark, innovation and intelligent risk-taking are the lifeblood of its operations. The corporation is fixated on constant improvement of the IRHEC, understanding that technological stagnation will result in obsolescence. Safety protocols are a delicate balance; Rayburn-Lark knows the inherent volatility of IRHECs, and engineers systems designed to mitigate those risks, while still acknowledging that

pushing the limits of this technology means some accidents are inevitable.

Leadership and Figureheads

At the helm of Rayburn-Lark sits the dual leadership of Dr. Amelia Keschner and Dr. Kamei Tanyu. This partnership embodies the innovative brilliance and business acumen that made the company's success possible. Dr. Keschner is the visionary behind Rayburn-Lark, her daring theoretical work making her a legend in the field. Tanyu is the shrewd negotiator leveraging Rayburn-Lark's technological dominance into unparalleled power and profit.

Economic Strategies and Galactic Influence

Rayburn-Lark has a near-monopoly on IRHEC-related technology, making them a vital partner for anyone invested in interstellar travel. This strategic position allows them to dictate market rates and control the supply chain of this energy-focused technological marvel. Politically, they walk a fine line; promoting the advancements made possible by IRHECs while also using their indispensable role to shield them from scrutiny and regulation.

Conclusion

Rayburn-Lark exemplifies the power and potential inherent in the energy sector. They are not just energy providers, but the architects of a new age of exploration and expansion made possible by their IRHEC invention. However, their unyielding pursuit of progress and the volatile nature of their technology raise concerns about safety and the potential for misuse. As Rayburn-Lark continues shaping the technological foundation of interstellar travel, their choices will define the trajectory of the expansion of the human race.

Shinsei Genomics

Shinsei Genomics is a towering figure in the field of biotechnology and genetic engineering. Renowned for its groundbreaking advances in gene therapy and bio-enhancement, Shinsei Genomics has positioned itself as an unrivalled leader in medical innovation and human potential. With a vast array of patents and cutting-edge technologies, it is shaping the health and capabilities of humanity across the galaxy.

History and Rise to Prominence

Founded on breakthroughs in genetic treatments for aggressive cancers, Shinsei Genomics quickly rose to prominence by making once-fatal diseases treatable. This early success gave the company the capital and reputation it needed to expand aggressively and dominate genetic diagnostics and treatment. Today, as one of the Big 12, Shinsei Genomics dictates the direction of research and holds sway over the supply chains for critical medical supplies, impacting the health and well-being of countless systems.

Specialisation and Services

At the heart of Shinsei Genomics are its gene therapies, offering solutions that extend lifespan, improve quality of life and cure a wide range of genetic conditions. Beyond therapy, the company is at the forefront of bio-enhancement, offering embryonic and adult genetic modifications that enhance physical, cognitive and aesthetic traits for horrendous amounts of money. However, its secretive projects involve the development of exotic traits and abilities, a testament to its ambition and scientific prowess.

Corporate Culture and Ethics

Shinsei Genomics is driven by profit and market dominance, with a corporate culture as ruthless as it is innovative. Ethics and morality take a back seat to the pursuit of power and scientific advancement. Led by the charismatic yet enigmatic CEO Sakura Ito, Shinsei Genomics maintains a facade of meticulous care and professionalism while employing aggressive tactics to maintain its position at the top of the biotech industry.

Leadership and Figureheads

CEO Sakura Ito embodies the dual nature of Shinsei Genomics - outwardly angelic and persuasive, yet fiercely ambitious and ruthless in her corporate strategies. Her rumoured use of the company's treatments to preserve her youth adds an aura of allure and mystique, even as she runs Shinsei Genomics with an iron grip. She has brought many loyal partners into positions of power to ensure her ongoing rule over Shinsei.

Economic strategies and growth

Shinsei Genomics' business strategy revolves around its extensive patent portfolio and continuous innovation. By leading the market in genetic therapies and enhancements, they ensure a steady demand for their services. The company's lack of significant competition, combined with its willingness to defend its interests by any means necessary, ensures its continued growth and dominance in the biotechnology sector.

Conclusion

Shinsei Genomics is more than a company; it is a force of nature in the world of biotechnology, continually pushing the boundaries of what is possible in genetic engineering. With each breakthrough, it not only cements its status as a leader in health and enhancement but also raises new questions about the future of humanity. As Shinsei Genomics moves forward, it continues to shape the future of human existence, for better or worse, leaving an indelible mark on society and cultural ethics.

TerraVor

TerraVor is synonymous with relentless growth and aggressive control in the galactic food sector. They have cultivated a reputation as an unstoppable force, consuming competitors and expanding their dominion throughout known space. This rise has been fueled by TerraVor's commitment to profit at all costs and its willingness to exploit opportunities with unwavering ambition.

History and Rise to Prominence

TerraVor began as a modest genetic seed corporation, their early breakthroughs revolving around engineered crops capable of thriving in hostile environments. Using aggressive tactics and shrewd strategic decisions, they began to consolidate power by absorbing smaller agricultural firms and securing monopolies on valuable crop and livestock strains. The ruthlessness of this conquest earned TerraVor notoriety, but also positioned them for continued growth, eventually earning them a spot amongst the galactic Big 12.

Specialisation and Services

TerraVor has mastered the entire food production chain, from genetically engineered seeds to mass-scale food processing plants and interstellar food distribution networks. They focus on resource extraction and manipulation of entire sectors of planets, cultivating environments to suit their particular needs at the expense of native ecology. This relentless extraction fuels TerraVor's vast network of factories, laboratories, and space farms, enabling them to generate massive yields through industrialized food production.

Corporate Culture and Ethics

The heart of TerraVor beats to the rhythm of efficiency and dominance. Ethics, environmental concerns, and labour rights are cast aside in the relentless pursuit of greater efficiency and increased market share. Within the corporation, competition is fierce, loyalty is rewarded, and failure is punished. Employees are not people, but replaceable resources and the corporate structure promotes a "get it done, no matter the cost" mentality.

Leadership and Figureheads

TerraVor is led by Omar Cortez, an enigmatic and ruthless CEO often likened to a force of nature. His insatiable hunger for growth is reflected in the company's never-ending quest for domination. This unwavering leadership style has shaped TerraVor into a relentless and calculated adversary in the market, one that never shies away from aggressive expansion and the subjugation of weaker competitors.

Economic Strategies and Galactic Influence

TerraVor secures its control over the galactic food supply by ruthlessly exploiting resources and exploiting loopholes in interstellar regulatory structures. Political interference and targeted acquisitions allow TerraVor to wield significant power even behind the scenes of governments and other Big 12 corporations. Their dominance extends far beyond any simple economic footprint; TerraVor strategically employs famine and scarcity to dictate resource allocation and expand its hold on planetary systems.

Conclusion

TerraVor is the very embodiment of unchecked exploitation and corporate hunger. Its rise to interstellar prominence is not only a story of business success, but a grim tale of the consequences of pursuing profits at any cost. As TerraVor continues to spread its tendrils across the galaxy, its unwavering ruthlessness and disregard for anything but growth raise stark questions about the ethics of interstellar corporate dominance and the delicate balance of food security in an ever-expanding galaxy.

Zenith Habitation

Zenith Habitation, a name synonymous with interstellar innovation, has firmly established itself among the galaxy's Big 12 megacorporations. Renowned for its pioneering efforts in terraforming and high-risk construction, Zenith has redefined the boundaries of human habitation, turning once inhospitable planets into thriving communities.

History and Rise to Prominence

The seeds of Zenith Habitation were sown with the ambitious project of constructing habitats on Mars. Utilizing groundbreaking 3D printing technology and building drones, Zenith overcame the formidable challenges of making Martian terrain habitable, laying the foundation for their future success. This early triumph marked the beginning of a journey that would see Zenith Habitation transform from a planetary construction company into a leader in galactic terraforming and infrastructure.

Specialisation and Services

Zenith's primary claim to fame is its revolutionary terraforming programs. Their ability to render nearly hospitable planets liveable, especially those rich in rare resources, has not only been a technological marvel but also a strategic masterstroke. These terraformed planets, effectively under Zenith's control, have created a new paradigm in interstellar real estate and resource management.

Moreover, Zenith's expertise extends to constructing infrastructure on well-established planets. Their solutions cater to a range of environments, from the standard urban landscapes to the most challenging extraterrestrial conditions.

Corporate Culture and Leadership

At the helm of Zenith is CEO Lydia Rose, a formidable figure who has maintained her family's long-standing influence over the company. Under her stewardship, Zenith has cultivated a reputation for quality and efficiency. Despite internal boardroom feuds, largely kept away from the public eye, Lydia's leadership has kept Zenith focused on its core mission.

Zenith's corporate culture is marked by an aggressive protection of its market and a pragmatic approach to business. The corporation views its terraforming projects as not just business ventures but as the creation of a new "Zenith Nation," a bold step towards autonomy and territorial sovereignty.

Economic Strategies and Galactic Influence

Zenith's economic strategy is characterized by its drive to maintain its elite status and expand its influence through terraforming. By turning uninhabitable planets into valuable assets, Zenith has diversified its portfolio and carved out a new form of national identity within the galaxy.

Politically, Zenith remains neutral but fiercely protective of its interests. Their claims to terraformed planets are defended with determination, reflecting their

commitment to their long-term vision of interstellar habitation and sovereignty.

Conclusion

Zenith Habitation stands as a testament to human ingenuity and ambition. From building the first Martian habitats to creating habitable planets, Zenith's journey is a story of overcoming astronomical odds. As they continue to push the boundaries of what's possible, Zenith Habitation not only shapes the physical landscapes of new worlds but also the political and economic fabric of the galaxy.

Political Bodies

The known reaches of space are divided into five major political bodies, their subsidiaries, factions, and undercurrents are countless. In their current state, they are in a deadlock, caught between their interests, political infighting, and their dependency on corporate goodwill. The main bloodline between the stars are the stellar projectors. As their technology is controlled by major corporations, the political powers are tethered to their will. There have been movements to gain access to the projectors, all of them thwarted by rather decisive travel sanctions and the Phobus Accord, a treaty about the use of the Projectors.

Much the same goes for actions against neighbouring states and military manoeuvring. As the corps don't see major conflict in their best interest it is not encouraged.

There are always minor territorial shifts and conflicts, proxy wars and raiding. In recent history, there has been no full-scale war between political bodies and their territory.

Haven

Haven was formed after the secession wars and the USC Council came into effect. In the beginning, those were settlers and explorers defecting from the SP and USC alike aiming to push further out into space. They maintained good faith with the USC providing knowledge and resources from farther out. With the USC engaged with itself and the final sparks of war, there was no resistance. Starting out as support organisations between the new colonies soon there formed a political body controlling and establishing norms for trade and conduct tailored to the needs of outlying pockets of humanity. This later constituted as Haven, a very open alliance joinable by adhering to the codes of conduct.

New Frontier Alliance (NFA)

The NFA is the youngest of all political entities. Hailing mostly from the Sol Protectorate, it constitutes itself from fledgling colonies, free traders, explorers, and corp-controlled territories. It is pretty much the Wild West out there, political decisions are mostly based on contracts made for specific situations. Help is based on trust or personal alliances between local factions.

With the corporate will to kill off the more ambitious players willing to establish larger factions, a certain status quo has been achieved, hanging in a carefully maintained balance. It is in the NFA that a fortune still can be made without attracting too much scrutiny, but it is also here that many sinister things happen out there in the darkness.

Sol Protectorate (SP)

The Sol Protectorate dates from old times and has its roots in the now confined space of the Sol System. Back in the time, many old Earth political factions claimed new territories in the system. This, with no historical claims, inevitably led to strife and war. In the end, a conglomerate of factions managed to forge an alliance and took over dominance in the system, enforcing their protection. From this alliance dates the Sol Protectorate.

Over the centuries, the SP felt it their obligation to establish control and care for human progress and well-being. Its methods became more rigid and suppressing, later leading to the secession wars with the USC. Up to this day, the SP is the most controlled and regimented territory in known space.

United Stellar Colonies (USC)

The United Stellar Colonies are the second-largest political entity in the known territory of men. With the advent of interstellar travel, the first expeditions and colonies were sent out into deep space, advancing the foothold of humanity in the galaxy. In the beginning, everything had been under the control of the Sol Protectorate. The SP forced control over the colonies, requiring tithes and influence. This went fine in the beginning, but with further growth came demands of self-governance. This started the secession wars with the covert support of the big corporations. In the end, they succeeded in securing their independence and the establishment of a democratic system. Defeating the SP and the neglect to gain control over the corps, on the contrary, giving them more power finally led to their unrivalled rise.

Void Confederacy (VC)

The Void Confederacy started out very similar to Haven, taking a turn for the worse later on. The VC struck a deal with the Corporations to take control of a major stellar projector connecting their region of space with the SP. The specifics of this deal are unknown, but it seems the VC sticks to it. Within their territory, the confederacy rules in an autocratic style with considerable firepower in their hands. The rules are strict, but there is enough bread and games to keep the people in control. The corps thrive in the VC and are omnipresent.

Technology in Abyssal

Communication

Communication is one of the foremost technologies. It enables coordination over long distances, enabling decision-making in real-time and remote operating of drones and facilities. There are a myriad of communication systems available, most of them still operating on old and proven technology. One tech in particular has the chance to revolutionize communications, quantum entanglement devices. These are available and promising, their bandwidth is miserable to say the least, as is the price tag. Let us have a look at the different technologies and their uses.

Communication mediums

First, we have to differentiate between the different communication mediums and their different properties. We begin with the most common and trusted, the radio wave.

Radio Waves

Radio Waves come at different frequencies and are radiated omnidirectional from the transmitter. They fall into a frequency range of 30Hz to 300GHz and have the ability to reflect off surfaces and diffract around obstacles. Their speed is around the speed of light. On planets with an atmosphere, very high frequencies can bounce off the ionosphere, making them useful for very long-range communication. Inside metallic installations or in subterranean environments, the range is extremely crippled, sometimes almost to the line of sight. Radio waves do not travel far underwater, about 20-30 m for very low frequencies. Security is maintained by encrypting information because radio waves are easily intercepted or jammed.

Laser Communication

Information transformation between two fixed points can be established be laser aka tight beams. Very high bandwidths can be achieved, and the connection is only two directional. Interception of a laser link is almost impossible. Typically, the communication is encrypted to provide an additional layer of security. Laser links cannot be established underwater.

Microwave

The microwave lies somewhere between radio waves and laser communication. They are typically used to connect satellites with the surface. They can carry more bandwidth than standard radio waves, but are more susceptible to environmental interference. Microwaves cannot bend around objects as radio waves are, making them useless faster in fixed enclosures. Their directionality is somewhat tighter than the radio wave, but still relative broad to make them interceptable if you are facing the general direction.

Acoustic waves

A special contender in communications are the acoustic waves. They are the ones we naturally communicate with and the ones that work especially well underwater. They ore omnidirectional and easily

intercepted. Underwater they are easily reflected and travel pretty fast with a speed of 1.5 km per second.

Quantum Entanglement

Quantum entanglement is a different beast from all the other communication forms. You basically take the particles and look at their state. As an allegory, imagine they can turn clockwise or counterclockwise. Now you entangle and synchronize the state. Both turn clockwise, for example. What happens after entanglement is, if you change the state of one particle, the other will follow suit. The frightening part is, that this works over distance, vast ones. So, for communication, you could exchange entangled particles embedded in a receiver and a transmitter. Changing state in the transmitter will also change state in the distant receiver.

Communication devices

We can handle communication devices in a pretty fast way. All of them are technical marvels that come in varied sizes and qualities. All of them can either send, receive, or do both, and this is where the important things come in. Mostly, the range depends on the power of the signal and the sensitivity of the receiver. Both qualities go hand in hand with the size and cost of the device. Robustness has its cost in size and weight too. So, what can we expect from the communication devices? This will be no exhaustive description of everything available, we will just focus on the most essential aspects, personal communication devices.

For personal communication devices, radio waves are the medium of choice. A typical handheld device has a range of about 10 km under the open sky, around 3 km in a forest or urban environment and in a building just inside that. In a space station, it could be just to the next bulkhead.

For simplicities sake, the range of a man pack radio worn as a backpack has about thrice these ranges.

If this were all, communication would be in a sorry state. This is why a good deal of additional hardware is available in a modern communication system. This can be the use of repeaters, portable antennas and even more robust units portable by multiple individuals. In space stations, there is a system called the leaky feeder, in fact, a hyped up antenna running along corridors. A comm device can just be hooked up and piggyback this system should one be in a hostile environment. High security stations do not employ this technique.

We can think along the repeater way with microwave satellite links. Using this way, a planetwide communication can be achieved with no problem.

Intersystem communication

Intersystem communication is a issue in the Abyssal universe. The stellar projectors do not allow the passage of electromagnetic waves, so intersystem communication is not possible without bodily carrying the information through a projector hole. So a ship has to carry it through. This is a costly endeavour, in time and money. And it means that you have to entrust your

communication to a third party if you do not happen to own a ship yourself.

Gameplay considerations

What does this all mean for gameplay? We can make some simple deductions. First, in normal situations, being in a well-developed system there are sufficient communication systems that enable comms from almost every place. The lag can be significant, being about 4.5 hours from Pluto to earth, roundtrip 9 hours. Much can happen in 9 hours. Situations change in remote systems.

If you do not happen to possess a quantum entanglement device, you could be out of luck. Establishing communication along the vast distances within a planetary system without established relay stations to propagate signals and signal targets is hard work for a communications officer on a space vessel or a space station. High power directional beams are needed to cross the gap in space.

Calling for help out of a system is almost impossible. Big corporate facilities sometimes employ emergency ships with powered up Projectors to make a quick getaway. But this is for the big fish only.

Space Observations Devices and Sensors

We have discussed the possibilities of communicating over a distance, even vast ones with different technical devices. Equally important is the detection of objects in space, be it an asteroid, space vessels or even missiles and torpedoes. There are many techniques to detect objects with different strengths and weaknesses. All these devices scale their capabilities with size, the analysis of the taken data samples almost always done with help from automatic analysis systems, AI. Let's look at the different devices.

Optical Telescopes

Optical Telescopes can take pictures from space in a multitude of wavelengths from infrared to the visible spectrum to ultraviolet light. These systems can take big pictures or rasterize the visible area, comparing new pictures to previously stored ones and identifying changes. The more wavelengths are emitted from the object by reflection or, for example, heat emission from the drive, the easier it is for a telescope to pick up on that. Countermeasures and difficulties are non-reflective surfaces, emission control and adaptive skins.

Deep Space Radar

A deep space radar is very similar to a ground radar. It emits high power, high-frequency waves to cover vast distances in space, probing areas of space and picking up reflections. Similar to Optical Telescopes, these are trained to filter out expected objects and confirm their ongoing presence, trying to detect new contacts. The time difference between emitting and receiving from continuing observation can give hints on the velocity and course of the object. Countermeasures are a low cross-section, emission control of

electromagnetic waves, absorbent surface and electronic warfare measures. Decoy deployment can be a measure to confuse, but not to avoid detection.

Gameplay Considerations

For Abyssal, these considerations build the background for understanding the rule implementations in the combat section. Though it will be handled on a simplified level, it is nice to know what's going on. For ship to ship combat or stealth operations, it is vital to have an understanding. Further down we will learn about Stellar Projectors that can cross distances further than detection ranges. Keep that in mind.

Stellar Projectors

In the boundless expanse of space, humanity's relentless pursuit of exploration and innovation has culminated in the creation of Stellar Projectors. These technological marvels, capable of rending the fabric of space-time, have irrevocably altered the landscape of interstellar travel, heralding both unprecedented opportunities and unforeseen complications.

Stationary Stellar Projectors

The Mechanics of Stellar Projectors

Engineered by the pre-eminent corporations of the Abyssal universe, Stellar Projectors harness the principles of space-time manipulation to forge portals of extraordinary nature. Visually, these portals are awe-inspiring, at the centre impenetrable darkness encircled by a soft, ghostly glow. Travel through these spatial rifts is not without its oddities. Time dilation, a variable and elusive phenomenon, occurs regardless of the distance traversed, subtly affecting the broader cosmic fabric in ways not immediately perceptible to those journeying through these corridors.

The placement and operation of Stellar Projectors is central to the dynamics of interstellar travel. The colossal, stationary projectors, have to be anchored in gravitational low zones such as stable Lagrange points. Capable of targeting destinations up to 20 light-years away, these behemoths are meticulously calibrated through advanced quantum computation accounting for gravitational forces. Stellar Projectors can create space-time holes with a frequency of up to every 2 hours, a capability strongly dependent on the model. The latest projectors have achieved this maximal frequency, forming the backbone of interstellar commerce and exploration.

In contrast, ship-mounted projectors offer more flexible travel options within star systems. These smaller, yet potent versions, integrated into spacecraft, necessitate extended recharge and cooldown periods, often spanning from several hours to days. This is the time the IRHEC needs to charge up. Although they lack the extensive range of their larger counterparts, their ability to navigate within systems and create shorter,

strategic jumps renders them indispensable for deep space exploration and tactical manoeuvres.

Together, these two types of projectors weave a complex network of routes across the stars, defining the rhythm of life and conflict in the cosmic tapestry.

Safety Measures and Operational Protocols

Despite initial trepidations, incidents involving Stellar Projectors have been remarkably rare. The most precarious element is the IRHEC system powering the devices, yet dangers more typically stem from sabotage or conflict rather than the technology itself. Corporations, recognizing the vital role of these gateways in sustaining universal trade networks, generally avoid overt hostilities, aware that disruptions could severely impact their own economic interests.

Economic Ramifications and Corporate Hegemony

The Stellar Projector technology is available to the 12 big corporations, each wielding considerable influence through their control of these cosmic gateways. This technological dominion has revolutionized trade and resource distribution, integrating even the most isolated systems into the galactic economy. However, it has also fostered a dependence among less advanced systems on these established trade routes, creating an interesting net of interstellar economic relationships.

Frontiers of Research and Prospective Developments

Research on Stellar Projectors is a relentless pursuit, currently centred on augmenting gravitational stability for safer and more predictable voyages. Scientists and engineers continue to unravel the enigmas surrounding these devices, paving the way for potential advancements that could further transform travel across the galaxy.

The Stellar Projectors stand not merely as instruments of travel but as symbols of a new epoch. They highlight the boundless potential for discovery while exposing the inherent perils of venturing into the uncharted. Players navigating this universe will find their destinies inextricably linked with these projectors, confronting challenges, uncovering secrets, and potentially facing the consequences of tempering with the very essence of space-time.

Ship mounted Stellar Projectors

Ship-mounted stellar projectors have revolutionized both space travel and the intricate dynamics of corporate warfare. They have unlocked new realms of interstellar travel and reshaped strategic warfare and exploration.

The Mechanics of Ship Projectors

Mounted on spacecraft, stellar projectors also utilize Instant Release High-Energy Capacitors (IRHECs). A fully charged projector can execute a jump of about 1 Lightyear. This range can vary with the model used and the size of the ship, but is a good guess for medium-sized combat or exploration ships. It takes about 10 minutes to power up a dormant ship projector, critical if time is of the essence.

Precision and Strategy

Projection targeting requires an acute understanding of gravitational influences, precise navigational calculations, and meticulous calibration. In combat scenarios, the ability to execute precise jumps is a crucial factor, often determining the outcome of confrontations. For explorers, accuracy conserves valuable resources and significantly reduces travel times in uncharted territories.

Exploring unknown gravitational environments

Navigating unknown systems begins with a cautious, periphery-to-core approach. This methodical process helps to avoid gravitational anomalies that could lead to accidents or damage to the equipment. It makes the approach very slow and somewhat easier to detect. From the periphery, gravitational sensors can be used to feed data to the computational systems calculating the portal target.

Detection and Stealth

The activation of a stellar projector is a detectable event, creating ripples in the fabric of space-time. Understanding the baseline of normal space-time activity is key to detecting these disturbances. In densely travelled sectors, pinpointing specific jumps is challenging.

Space Vessels

Space vessels are the blood of the Abyssal universe. They keep the resources flowing and provide transportation through the boundless expanses of space. There is almost no end to the forms and functions of these vessels, from small hyperefficient race vessels to large deep space mining vessels and large, lavish yachts, everything can be found between the stars.

In the following sections, we will look at different core components of a space vessel to understand their capabilities better.

IRHEC—The Heart of Interstellar Travel

The Instant Release High-Energy Capacitor (IRHEC) stands as a cornerstone of interstellar propulsion in Abyssal. This advanced technology is crucial for powering stellar projectors, devices that enable rapid traversal of the cosmos. IRHEC's capacity to store and instantaneously release enormous energy quantities is a testament to modern engineering. However, its volatility, especially under the duress of combat,

requires precise control and monitoring, balancing its remarkable benefits with inherent risks.

The IRHEC is charged up with Fusion Reactors to gather the vast amounts of energy that are required to engage the stellar projectors. Their design enables them to release this energy in almost an instant to open up the travel portal. This design is what makes it vulnerable to shock and damage. Most of the IRHEC Modules can "vent" their stored energy over some time or can be jettisoned in case of emergency.

It takes about 3 days to charge up the IRHEC to full jump capacity for a medium-sized vessel. A jump drains an IRHEC completely regardless of the jump distance or portal opening time. Weirdly the portal sucks all energy.

On the other side there is a thing as not enough energy. This minimum energy is needed to initiate a protal in the first place, independent of range and time.

Artificial Gravity

Artificial gravity is an important aspect of life on space vessels. This technology, essential for maintaining a semblance of Earth-like conditions, allows for more familiar movement and combat tactics in the weightlessness of space. Powered continuously, it ensures a more comfortable and functional environment for the crew. However, its dependence on a stable power source is a strategic consideration, as any disruption could significantly impact life and operations aboard the vessel.

Kramer-PAD Drive

The Kramer-PAD Drive is the propulsion powerhouse of these interstellar vessels. PAD stands for Particle acceleration drive. This fusion-based system is ingeniously designed to use plasma acceleration for space travel, setting new standards for efficiency and capability. With nearly inexhaustible energy from the fusion reactors and cheap and easy to store propulsion mass, it is possible to maintain high G acceleration over a long period of time.

For longer journeys nothing beats the stellar projectors, for manoeuvring and shorter trips near gravitation wells this drive is irreplaceable. Clever steering of the exhaust torch through magnetic manipulators, gentle course corrections are possible. Sharper turns need auxiliary steering drives located along the ship's axis.

The drive exhaust torch is a clear giveaway for presence and direction vector of a ship. There is no way to mask this thing. Stealth approach on a Kramer PAD is just not possible. Even worse, the torch energy signature can allow inference on the drive's manufacturer, energy output and sometimes even the individual drive. The latter takes time for information gathering and analysis.

G-Forces in Space

The Kramer-PAD drive can create strong acceleration forces. This goes for prolonged periods of time as well as in combat manoeuvring. These forces outweigh the generated artificial gravity fields by far. This can have unsavoury effects on organic passengers and

unsecured items. A human being can tolerate up to 9G for seconds, 3-5G being the limit for operations for more than a few minutes. Continuous exposure to more than 1-2 G can lead to organ or spinal damage.

The most practical concern for items is manoeuvring in high G scenarios. Loose items would go flying, possibly harming passengers or equipment. To counter this, many space vessels' furniture is equipped with electromagnets or anchored into the ground. Most things aboard a vessel have a secure storage space or fixture points.

Usually, a manoeuvre warning is issued to lock down the vehicle and give crew and passengers time to get to secure seating. Surprise engagements will not provide this luxury, often wreaking havoc on a ship.

Comercial spacecraft are usualy build to withstand up to 5G, combat and specialized vessels up to 10G. Surpassing this limit will lead to structural damage.

Fusion Reactor and Fuel

Each vessel is equipped with a state-of-the-art fusion reactor, an epitome of energy efficiency and sustainability. The reactor operates on a fuel mix of deuterium and tritium, isotopes readily obtainable from water reserves or lunar mining operations. Tritium is usually stored as Lithium, from which Tritium is bred In the BU or Breeder Unit of the reactor. The fusion process is highly efficient, offering a long-term energy solution

with minimal waste, crucial for the sustainability of extended space missions.

Advanced Construction and Materials

The construction of these vessels showcases a blend of technological sophistication and practical design. Utilizing advanced materials, including various aluminium and titanium alloys and composites, the ships are built to endure the extreme conditions of space travel. The strategic layering of materials in the hull, including ceramic and carbon composites, ensures durability and protection, safeguarding the vessel and its crew from the threats of both space and enemy combatants.

Armament and Defence Systems

The armament systems of these vessels are meticulously designed for various tactical scenarios. Long-range missile systems offer strategic strike capabilities, while rapid-fire gauss weapons provide effective close-quarters defence. The addition of high-caliber gauss cannons adds a layer of offensive might. Complementing these are an array of drones and high-intensity lasers, enhancing the ships' strategic and electronic warfare capabilities. The defensive suite, including sophisticated jamming and counter-hacking systems, ensures the vessel's resilience in diverse combat situations.

Design and Functionality

The interior design of these vessels is a careful balance between functionality and comfort. Living quarters are designed to maximize space efficiency while providing a comfortable environment for the crew. Larger vessels offer additional amenities, enhancing the quality of life during long missions. The emergency med-bay, a standard feature in all vessels, is equipped with the latest in medical technology, ensuring the well-being and rapid medical response for the crew.

Crew Composition and AI Systems

Crew composition is key to the successful operation of these vessels. Each member, from the captain to the communications specialist, plays a vital role. The onboard AI systems act as support, aiding in various tasks and decision-making processes. However, these AI systems are intentionally designed with limitations in complex scenarios, ensuring that critical decisions remain within the purview of the human crew.

Communication Technologies

Communication is a multifaceted operation in space. The vessels are equipped with a range of communication technologies, from traditional radio frequencies to advanced laser tight beam communications. The pinnacle of this technology is the use of quantum devices, enabling instantaneous, secure communication across vast distances, a critical feature for coordination and strategic planning in the vastness of space. These quantum devices unfortunately only provide a very limited bandwidth.

In the "Abyssal" universe, space vessels are not just modes of transportation; they are a harmonious blend of advanced technology, strategic design, and human endeavour. Each ship narrates its story, reflecting its origin, the crew it shelters, and the limitless adventures waiting in the uncharted depths of the cosmos.

Onboard Combat

In the confines of space vessels, weapon technology strikes a balance between firepower and safety. While high-density projectiles like depleted uranium offer devastating force, the risk of hull breaches makes them a calculated choice. More commonly, hard polymer projectiles are preferred for their lower risk to ship integrity. This choice reflects the constant interplay between offensive capability and the inherent dangers of space combat. More on that in the Gear Section.

Combat Considerations

Space combat in "Abyssal" involves strategic decision-making, factoring in the environment and available technology. Automatic shotguns reign in close quarters, delivering chaos where precision is less critical. In contrast, the use of vented combat vessels to prevent explosive decompression during battles showcases a tactical adaptation unique to space warfare.

Close Combat and Non-Lethal Options

In a universe where even a small breach can be fatal, close combat takes on a new dimension. Knives and short swords are common for their reliability and lack of risk to the ship's integrity. Stun guns, while effective against unarmoured targets, prove less useful against space suits, illustrating the technological limitations and the constant arms race between offensive and defensive technologies.

Playing Abyssal

If you start out to play Abyssal, it tends to be a bit overwhelming. It's less about the written rules and more about the unwritten nuances. There are all those questions about the inner workings of the Universe, how people interact, what information is available, and millions of other questions that arise during gameplay and can really bog down the experience. A manuscript like this cannot possibly address all these questions. Therefore, let's establish a few assumptions about the characters in Abyssal and the role of the Suit.

The Goal of the Game

Foremost, the goal of the game is to have fun together as a group. It's crucial that everyone enjoy the gameplay within a dark, unforgiving sci-fi horror setting, a world where doom and despair may befall the characters created by the players. There will be triumph, too. But perhaps not for every character.

Role and Responsibilities of The Suit

How should the Suit go about leading the game? The Suit is responsible for crafting the players' experience. In this capacity, he has much influence on the overall experience of the game, so there are some hints to make it a bit easier.

Supporting Player Creativity

The foundation of it all is to be a supporter of the players. If they have good ideas, go with them. If something they want to do does not fit in your story, do not say no; guide them to the alternatives. If they fail, do not set up a roadblock. Try to give them alternatives to keep the story flowing and listen to their decision making. It is best imagined as the "Yes, but..." rule.

Decision-Making and Consistency

To keep it all consistent, explain your decisions in a few words. During a game session, the Suit is the final arbiter of what is possible. Try to keep discussions out of actual gameplay. Clear it up after the session ends or between sessions.

Adapting to Player Choices

Do not fear to deviate from the plot you prepared for the session. Sometimes, listening to the players, things, and plans come up that are extremely cool and fitting. There is no harm in going with the flow; wing it. Encourage improvisation and be prepared to alter your plans to accommodate the evolving narrative. This approach will make each session unique and exciting.

Balancing Challenges

Balance the difficulty of your obstacles. Gauge your players' abilities and adjust challenges accordingly. Offer hints or modify scenarios if they become too difficult, but also be ready to ramp up the challenge if players are breezing through. The key is to keep players engaged and feeling competent without overwhelming them.

Handling Game Knowledge and Realism

Keep in mind that this game is about corporations, espionage, and the occult. This is something most of us will have no experience with. We cannot even tell how a mobile phone works, let alone how a stellar projector works. We have to go with the intent of the players; the characters will have the knowledge of how to do it. The

characters are trained professionals in the end. A better approach is to ask players about their goals for their characters, and then the Suit can determine the applicable rules.

Character Integration and Development

Aim to integrate the characters into your storyline while allowing room for their evolution. Encourage the players to explore their characters' motivations and desires, and incorporate these elements into the storyline. When guiding players, offer choices rather than directives, allowing them to shape their path within the framework you provide.

Respecting Player Sensitivities

Another important thing to consider is respect for all the players. Sometimes Abyssal may touch on themes not everyone is comfortable with. Try to discuss this before your journey starts, so everyone can enjoy the plot you come up with and feel safe. Consider discussing this individually with players, as some may hesitate to speak in front of the group. Another way would be anonymous votes.

In conclusion, The Suit's role in Abyssal is multifaceted and requires a blend of creativity, empathy, and strategic thinking. By following these practical strategies, The Suit can create a game that is not only

The Suits Secrets

If you are a player in the universe of Abyssal, just stop reading. A lot of fun in an RPG comes from exploring and venturing into the darkness without knowing what you might face. So if you take a peak, it may be a massive spoiler.

If you are, on the other hand, the Suit, the following section might give you some ideas for scenarios. It is also a tool that you might use to get a feeling of what abyssal is about. The ideas listed here are by no means all there is. It is better to think of it as the tip of the iceberg.

The vastness of space is crawling with the unknown, and darkness lurks behind every corner. So go on and arm yourself to give the players the shivers.

The Thing Between the Fabric

In the vast between the crevices of time and space, an entity resides, a relic of primordial chaos and darkness. This force, ever-present and potent, has influenced the fabric of spacetime since the universe's inception. It is not just an embodiment of ancient evil but a fundamental cosmic principle, balancing creation with destruction, order with chaos, good and evil.

Continuous Influence on Civilization

Throughout history, this entity has consistently influenced sentient life. It is the dark whisper in the shadows, the unseen hand shaping conflicts, empires, and revolutions. In every era, occultists and religious figures have sensed its presence, interpreting it as the ultimate adversary in their spiritual narratives.

The Stellar Projectors: Catalysts of Power

The development of stellar projectors in 2367, intended for interstellar travel, unknowingly amplifies the entity's influence. These devices, manipulating spacetime, resonate with the dark energy of the entity, strengthening its grip on the physical realm. This inadvertent synergy between cutting-edge technology and ancient cosmic power marks a new era of occult potency.

Renaissance of the Occult

The entity's amplified presence revitalizes occult and pagan practices across the human civilization. Rituals and spells, once considered mere relics of superstition, suddenly manifest tangible, potent results. Practitioners find themselves wielding unprecedented power, drawing directly from the entity's awakened strength.

Religious Upheaval and Recognition

Major world religions experience a new surge in faithful followers as the fear of the unknown and the darkness creeps into the subconscious. The churches themselves preach the rise of the arch-enemy and fervently preach of a pious life. Zealots of the churches are on the move, bringing fire and death to the so called unfaithful.

Corporate Ambition

Corporations, sensing opportunity, race to harness the powers of the occult. Their actions, driven by hubris and greed, further destabilize the cosmic balance, leading to unpredictable and often perilous consequences. Nobody has yet established a connection to the rips in spacetime created by the projector drives.

Agents of Darkness

There appears to be no rhyme or rhythm to the darkness. Strange entities enter realty by calling or by chance, taking horrific forms of all kinds, all bent on tearing down the human psyche. It almost seems as if they are reflections of our collective nightmares, just a mirror of the darkness in our soul. So, yes there are things we would call Ghouls and Demons, Undead and Monsters. What they are in truth remains hidden from us, and that may be a blessing for us all.

The New Cosmic Order

Until now, there is only an unease among the general population. Nobody really believes in the occult, but in hard science. The practice of the occult is done in secret, but it yields terrible and often uncontrollable results. Death cults and Devil worshippers roam in the dark corners of the galaxy looking for prey, feeding them to their newfound dark patrons. And it is getting worse.

Cults

Sisterhood of the Black Tongue

The Sisterhood of the Black Tongue is one of the most influential occult societies known. Their beliefs circle around the black man, deeply rooted in witchcraft beliefs dating back hundreds of years to pre technical ages. The Sisterhood calls this figure the Father. Their current engagement has taken a darker turn, for some of the believers in modern witchcraft, their powers have returned for real, giving them unprecedented capabilities often not anticipated by their rivals. Most of the members of this secret society are just humans, albeit typically with a mind bend towards power and personal gain. The Sisterhood accepts only women into their ranks, letting them rise only for years of devout service and obedience.

The overall goal of the Sisterhood is surely twofold. They are devout to the black man, a figure often believed as the devil himself. They think their power is granted to them through their initiation rites, giving away a part of their soul in return for their witchcraft. As mentioned above, that has started to work in earnest for some, those considered being blessed by darkness. These powers they are bound to use to further the perceived will of their master.

Happily, for them, this includes amassing power for themselves and gaining influence in positions of power. Their occult abilities certainly help along the line.

Through this they acquire resources, money, and influence that made the Sisterhood grow over the course of the centuries, building up a sizeable fortune to call upon.

The Sisterhood is actually organized in covens, cells if you like, that operate independently. These are handled by a messenger, bringing the will of the Mother to individual cells. The leader of the coven reports back to this messenger. There is no other contact. This system really leads up to the leader of all Sisters, the mysterious figure known to the covens as the Mother.

The actions of the covens differ wildly. Some of them have no occult powers at all, even if their rituals and sermons have all the bloody tools and symbols associated with it. They go about their goals in a more mundane way, hoping desperately for the Father to answer their sacrifices. Others really wield the dark arts, research them and use them as tools to dominate their enemies.

Themes of Horror

As Abyssal goes into the realm of Horror, we have to talk a bit about the different flavours and styles of horror. Most of the time the lines between them blur, but it is good to think about them. Not all of them are easy to play, as we will see later.

The more visceral ones are easiest, as they can be described using the five senses we have. They are about the grotesque and the gory experiences. It is the shrieks and the groaning in the dark that rattles the nerves. Using sensory descriptions, you can go wild and create a rich tapestry in the mind of your players.

The opposite of this happens in your mind. Paranoia and obsession, the inner fears that surface and drive the characters to the edge. Your task as a suit for this kind of horror is making the players insecure about their surroundings. Why is everybody smiling at you all of a sudden? Do they take pity on your sorry self? Maybe you can describe things that are only in the minds of the players. Or are they not?

The vastness of space, with its inherent terror, evokes feelings of insignificance, helplessness, and incomprehension. Confronting things that move beyond any comprehensible logic, that care nothing for the life and feelings of the characters and their players.

And this leads to survival. Going in, absolute sure of yourself with high moral and being slowly worn down by the surrounding and the strangeness will break down the players. When the time comes that the really dark things emerge and begin to hunt, you can be sure to have the players by their toes.

In the following sections, we will explore a few more concrete things we can create our horror experience around. Stay tuned.

Terrifying Experiments

In the sprawling universe of Abyssal, where corporate entities wield immense power, a series of unethical and clandestine experiments are conducted in the shadows. These sinister ventures, either under the auspices of powerful conglomerates or the direction of unhinged scientists, cross the boundaries of both science and morality.

Categories and Instances of Experiments

Hybridization of Human and Alien DNA

Secret initiatives aim to fuse human genetics with extraterrestrial organisms, giving rise to grotesque, often tormented hybrids. Driven by ambitions to harness alien traits or mere scientific curiosity, these projects recklessly tamper with nature, with unpredictable consequences once these entities are unleashed.

Consciousness Transfer and Creation

Explorations in transposing human consciousness into machines or other entities, or in fabricating artificial consciousness. The ramifications are ethically profound, frequently leaving subjects irreversibly traumatized, estranged from themselves and often psychopathic in nature. Whatever their nature is after undergoing this kind of treatment.

Enhancement of Pain Tolerance

Experiments designed to test the upper limits of human pain and endurance thresholds, potentially for creating enhanced soldiers. The inhumane techniques torment the mind and body of the victims, often resulting in death, insanity, or something even more sinister. It does not help that in this strait of research, most probands are "willing".

Neural Manipulation and Domination

Projects focused on altering or controlling the human brain, impacting memory, behaviour, or identity. Venturing into the realms of mind control, these experiments typically lead to a loss of self. The eerily quiet neighbour who suddenly went on a rampage during a high-profile event might be a chilling reminder of such experiments.

Experiments in Dimensional Tearing

Dangerously ambitious trials aiming to disturb the very fabric of reality. The goal is opening gateways to unknown realms or cause unpredictable anomalies. All this is done to get a glimpse behind the veil. These experiments are often linked to the research on stellar projectors.

Unleashing Latent Psychic Abilities

Attempts to unlock or intensify human psychic powers frequently result in mental breakdowns, loss of control, and in recent cases, drastic personality shifts, uncontrollable violence, and terrifying new powers following mind-altering procedures.

Conclusion

These various experiments provide players, or 'Suits', with a multitude of narrative paths, including uncovering secrets, undertaking daring rescue operations, navigating moral dilemmas, and facing the nightmarish outcomes of these scientific horrors.

Occult Experiments

In the vast, unforgiving cosmos, beneath the facade of corporate sleekness, sinister practises are at work. Powerful corporations, shrouded in secrecy, embark on ventures that blur the lines between arcane mysticism and technological advancement to further their own game. These enterprises, carried out in secluded spaces—be it on desolate space stations or

forgotten outposts—meld the ancient rites of occultism with the forefront of technological innovation, challenging not just principles of ethics, but the very fabric of reality.

Diving into the Unknown: Types and Tales of Experiments

Ritualistic Research

Imagine, if you will, the eerie silence of space, broken only by the chanting of age-old spells. In this void, occult rituals come to life, aiming to bend cosmic forces to their will or to contact things from realms beyond our own. The outcomes maybe more than the practitioners had hoped for.

Arcane Knowledge Digitization

Picture ancient texts and cryptic scrolls, their secrets being translated into the binary language of the digital age. The goal is to transfer the inherent powers of some scriptures into zeros and ones. Stored away in impenetrable data vaults, this knowledge sits at the crossroads of revolutionary and treacherously potent.

Esoteric Bio-Engineering

In the seclusion of isolated laboratories, a macabre dance of science and sorcery takes place. Here, the goal is to forge beings of unnatural prowess or to unearth latent human abilities. Without ethical boundaries or respect for the known laws of nature, it is humanities take at playing god.

Astral Projection Trials

Envision the quest to traverse the boundaries of physical and ethereal planes through astral projection. A pursuit fraught with peril and the ultimate goal of making distance irrelevant. The question remains, what can be found beyond the gates of space and time?

Occult-Driven AI Development

Consider the endeavour to craft advanced AI systems guided by arcane principles. The aim is to birth a consciousness that transcends human understanding, a venture as awe-inspiring as it is potentially harrowing. AI Systems capable of invoking devilish sorcery and wreaking havoc on their creators.

Conclusion

For the Suits navigating the "Abyssal" universe, these occult experiments open a treasure trove of narrative pathways. Imagine venturing into the silent halls of abandoned research stations, unearthing the remnants of dark practices, and grappling with the aftermath of these experiments bereft of any mercy. Picture encountering horrors born from the unholy marriage of science and the arcane, or stumbling upon knowledge so profound it defies human logic.

Every corner of space holds secrets that dare you to uncover them, and every one of them will challenge the limits of your courage and mind.

Dark Rituals

The Atrum Echo

"Out of the shadow of time I summon you, to give you life again. May you walk again under the suns of the living and deepen our understanding with your knowledge."

The atrum echo is a disturbing ritual to summon the soul of a dead person. Not much is known about the special proceedings but the most gruesome and superficial details. A human victim is used, tied to a ritual stone and a willow semen is placed in the chest cavity through surgery or more barbaric measures while it is still breathing. After touching the living heart, the transformation begins. Over the next seven days, under constant incantation of summoning chants, the semen cannibalizes the victim until only the outer hull remains. The newborn soul breaks out of this shell like out of a foul egg, looking and talking like the formerly departed.

It has partial knowledge of the summoned departed, but there are significant gaps in these memories. The demeanour changes towards cruelness and intrigue. It will try to hide this, but will constantly fail in doing so. This soul is by no means really the deceased the ritual promised to bring back to live. It is more of a dark shadow, Atrum Echo.

If left unchecked, the shadow will start to wreak havoc, sowing distrust and paranoia, destroying the lives of the people around it. Additionally, it will try to repeat the ritual as often as possible, drawing more of it's kind into our reality.

This ritual, while a powerful tool for those seeking to exploit the knowledge of the dead, is fraught with danger—not just for the participants but for all of the society that might unwittingly welcome a monster into its midst. Such rituals are sought after by the desperate or the power-hungry, with no heed for the consequences.

The Withering

"May corruption and death spread through your lineage, may the bloom wither and die out of this existence into the nether."

The Withering has, through the ages, been a most terrible and disturbing curse, bestowed upon the enemies of nefarious sorcerers. It destroyed whole families clans and wiped them out of existence.

To start the curse, the first victim has to be fed with a small, specially prepared ball of mould, tasting all wrong and foul. This mould seeps through every pore, leaving a taste rot and decay that lingers and can be smelled in the body odour of the victim.

He has now become contagious, but only to his blood relatives. Touching the victim or smelling him will let the curse take hold in the newly doomed person, starting the cycle all over again.

Once the curse progresses, rotting exanthema starts to appear that slowly spreads across the skin of the victim. The centre of this just dissipates into thin air as if no flesh

ever existed. At the same time, people start to forget about the victim, starting with those most removed from it. After about two weeks, the victim has faded completely away under agony, forgotten by all.

All blood relatives hear an eerie whisper in their minds, a whisper that becomes more insistent the closer they are to an infected victim. It is always on the edge, always raising doubts as to whether it really exists. But it does, and it tells tales of death and despair, driving the listener mad in time. The whispering stops when all the infected victims have died and the curse has run its course.

This does not mean that there is no mention of him in medical records or business papers. It is just that no one can put a face to the written words any more, or remember ever speaking to the person. The victim is effectively wiped from remembrance.

The withering curse is a terrible weapon as it spreads through the ones you most love and wipes them from existence, even the ones that survived and did hold you dear. But it comes at a cost for the occultist using it. For every victim taken by the curse, a bit of life is drained, making him weak and feeble over time. They never fully recover from this, and it is said that their life is significantly shortened.

Vial of bottled Darkness

To create a vile of bottled darkness the occult practioner has to undergo painful and excrutiating procedures. In essence he harvests his nightmares, inducing them with a vile concoction of rare herbs and ingredients harvested from dead bodies.

After enduring these nightmares and keeping the sanity intact the sorcerer opens puts a drop of his blood in a quartz crystal vial. This goes on for 14 days, the final day required to be in a solar occlusion. There are no additional requirements how to get such a thing. The final drop fills up the vial and it is closed.

The next time anybody opens op the vial darkness is released, the condensed nightmares come to take their victims. The darkness looks like a night in silvery moonlight with harsh an pitchblack shadows. From these shadows emerge the haunts, mind rending apparitions spun from silver threads. They try to embrace and kiss their victims, tearing at them with claw like fingers. They are diven to consume the warmth and love and thereby destroying the sanity of those sucked and rended dry.

Luckylie the creator of the vial is save from the haunts, as is everybody whose blood was added to the vial on creation. But they have paid their price enduring terrible the terrible nightmares and giving birth to the haunting terrors.

Gear

General Gear

Advanced Mechanical Toolkit

A comprehensive toolset for mechanical repairs and maintenance. Includes high-grade wrenches, pliers, screwdrivers, and specialized tools. Enhanced with smart technology that guides the user for precision work and diagnostics.

Advanced Electronics Kit

Comprehensive set of tools and components for electronic repairs and prototyping. Includes microcontrollers, sensors, soldering equipment, and a variety of connectors. Enhanced with AI-assisted diagnostics for efficient troubleshooting.

Glow Drone

A specialized drone equipped with bright, adjustable LED lights. Designed for illumination in low-light conditions or signaling purposes. It's durable, weather-resistant, and capable of extended flight times, making it perfect for search and rescue operations.

Nightvision Goggles

High-tech goggles that amplify low light for clear vision in darkness. Equipped with infrared capabilities, they enhance visibility in total darkness. Ideal for nocturnal navigation, surveillance, and tactical operations.

Personal Data Processor / PDP

A portable, high-performance computing device for data analysis, storage, and communication. Features advanced encryption for secure data handling, a user-friendly interface, and compatibility with various data formats and communication protocols.

Respirator Mask

High-efficiency mask offering protection against airborne contaminants, including chemicals and particulates. Features include a comfortable seal, replaceable filter cartridges, and an exhalation valve for easier breathing during prolonged use.

Subvocal Communication Device

This device captures subvocalized speech, allowing for silent communication. It translates throat muscle movements into audible speech, transmitted via secure channels. Ideal for covert operations or environments where silence is paramount.

Tactical Backpack

Durable, multi-compartment backpack designed for field operations. Features include modular attachments, water-resistant material, and ergonomic design for comfort. Integrated solar panel for charging small devices and a hydration bladder for prolonged excursions.

Thermal Goggles

Goggles that detect heat signatures, providing clear thermal imaging in various conditions. Useful for identifying living beings, detecting heat leaks, or seeing through smoke. Features adjustable sensitivity and recording capabilities.

Small Camera Drone

A compact, remotely operated drone equipped with high-resolution cameras. Ideal for surveillance, reconnaissance, and capturing detailed visual data in inaccessible areas. Features include long-range communication, stealth mode, and environmental adaptability.

Plasma Torch

The Plasma Torch, an advanced cutting tool, utilizes a concentrated plasma beam for precise slicing through various materials. It features adjustable beam intensity, an advanced cooling system, ergonomic design, and safety mechanisms, making it essential for precision engineering and emergency scenarios. Its about the size of a shoebox.

Environmental Gear

Standard Vacuum Suit

Equipped with a self-sealing layer to protect against minor breaches, this suit features a compact life support system that recycles air and regulates temperature. Its mobility enhancements include joint servomotors and a basic inertial dampening system to aid movement in zero-G environments.

Enhanced EVA Suit

Upgraded with advanced nanofiber muscle strands for superior mobility, this suit offers extended life support through an efficient CO_2 scrubber and oxygen generator. Radiation shielding is provided by a layer of dense polymer mesh interwoven with lead microfibres and absorbing gel layers.

Hostile Environment Suit

Built with a multi-layered fabric that integrates bio-filters and microclimate control, this suit is capable of withstanding extreme environmental conditions. It features an internal diagnostic system that continuously monitors external hazards and adjusts internal conditions accordingly. This is much less bulky than a vacuum suit.

Zero-G Mobility Gear

Includes magnetized boots for attachment to metallic surfaces, compact thrusters powered by micro-fusion cells for directional control, and a retractable grappling system with a high-tensile carbon nanotube cable for manoeuvring or anchoring. This can be fitted to any suit.

Radiation Shielding Suit

This suit incorporates a layer of radiation-dampening gel, capable of absorbing and neutralizing high-energy particles. Its visor is lined with a thin layer of gold to protect the eyes from harmful rays, while a wearable sensor array continuously measures radiation levels.

Pressure Suit

Designed for deep-sea exploration, this suit features a reinforced exoskeleton to resist high-pressure environments. It is equipped with advanced sonar and echolocation systems, and an emergency buoyancy system for rapid ascent in case of danger.

Stealth Recon Suit

Utilizing adaptive micro-LEDs for camouflage, this suit can mimic surrounding textures and colors for near-invisibility. It's built with sound-dampening materials and a minimalistic life support system that recycles air silently, ideal for short-duration covert missions.

Thermo Cloak

A lightweight cloak that regulates body temperature in extreme climates. Utilizing advanced thermal insulation and active heating/cooling systems, it provides comfort and protection in both hot and cold environments. Compact and foldable for easy transport.

Hazard Detection Gear

These handheld devices employ a combination of mass spectrometry and advanced spectroscopy to detect and analyze a wide range of environmental hazards. They come equipped with a user-friendly holographic interface for real-time data display.

Emergency Survival Kit

Compact and efficient, these kits contain a high-calorie nutrient paste, water purification tablets, an air filtration mask, a compact medical kit with auto-injectors for common injuries, and a multi-frequency distress beacon with a solar rechargeable battery.

Emergency Breathing Apparatus

Small enough to be carried on a belt, these devices provide breathable air for up to 30 minutes. They use a chemical oxygen generator which releases oxygen from a sodium chlorate candle, alongside a CO_2 scrubber to remove exhaled carbon dioxide.

Portable Shelter Module

This collapsible module can be deployed to form a temporary habitat, providing protection from environmental hazards. It features an inflatable structure made of puncture-resistant material with a thin layer of radiation shielding, and a compact life support unit that can recycle air and maintain a habitable temperature for up to 72 hours.

Medical and Survival Gear

Compact Medical Kit

This portable kit contains nano-thread sutures, bio-gel antiseptics, and painkiller dermal patches. Its auto-suture device uses micro-needles and bio-adhesive threads for quick wound closure.

Auto-Injector MedPacks

These injectors use micro-needle arrays for rapid administration. They contain a variety of compounds, including nanite-based coagulants and synthetic

adrenaline analogues, for immediate physiological stabilization.

Personal Health Monitor

A sophisticated biosensor array worn on the wrist, this device continuously monitors vital signs and uses AI-driven algorithms to diagnose trauma and internal injuries. It can wirelessly communicate data to medical equipment for advanced analysis.

Emergency Trauma Foam

Upon application, this foam instantly expands and hardens, providing temporary stabilization for broken bones and severe lacerations. It's composed of a biocompatible polymer that can be easily removed by medical professionals.

Portable Hydration System

Utilizing a compact reverse osmosis filter and UV sterilization, this system can purify and desalinate water. It's powered by a small solar panel, making it ideal for extended operations in remote areas.

Nutrient Concentrates

These rations are made from compacted, freeze-dried ingredients, enriched with vitamins and minerals. They are designed to be rehydrated with minimal water and provide balanced nutrition.

Survival Multi-Tool

This tool features a graphene-enhanced steel blade, a titanium-alloy frame, and an array of fold-out instruments including pliers, wire cutters, and a signal mirror, all in a compact form.

Thermal Emergency Blanket

Made from a thin, heat-reflective mylar, this blanket can retain up to 90% of body heat. It's vacuum-packed to fit in a pocket and unfolds to a full-body size.

Personal Distress Beacon

This beacon emits a multi-frequency distress signal, detectable by standard navigation systems. It's encased in a durable, vacuum-sealed polymer to withstand extreme environmental conditions.

Anti-Radiation Pills

These pills contain a compound that binds to radioactive particles, facilitating their safe expulsion from the body. They also include antioxidants to mitigate cellular damage from radiation exposure.

Synthetic Skin Spray

This spray creates a sterile, flexible layer over wounds, mimicking the properties of natural skin. It promotes healing, reduces scarring, and dissolves naturally as the wound heals.

Psychoactive Drugs

NeuroNimbus ensures stable moods and a positivity, while TranquiTide offers immediate stress relief. Equilibrix balances emotional responses for psychological equilibrium, and Clarion provides clear thought and perception under stress. For restorative

sleep, rely on SomniSphere patches to regulate and enhance your sleep cycles. These drugs form a comprehensive suite for the treatment of intense mental trauma.

Weapons

Pistol

Pistols offer high maneuverability and ease of concealment, making them ideal for close-quarters combat and as secondary weapons. Their effectiveness remains consistent in both atmospheric and vacuum conditions. However, they face limitations in terms of range and stopping power, especially when compared to larger firearms, and they are generally less effective against armored targets.

Submachinegun

Submachine guns are characterized by their high rate of fire and compact size, which makes them suitable for rapid engagements and maneuvering in tight spaces. They are versatile in a variety of combat situations, but their accuracy diminishes at long range, and they can be less effective against heavily armored adversaries.

Assault Rifles

Assault rifles strike a balance between range, accuracy, and firepower, making them versatile for both offensive and defensive roles across different environments. The disadvantage of these rifles is their bulkier build compared to pistols or submachine guns, rendering them less ideal in extremely confined spaces.

Sniper Rifles

Sniper rifles are designed for high precision and stopping power, perfect for long-range engagements and targeted eliminations. However, they are impractical for close combat and rapid engagements, requiring a significant level of skill and patience from the user to be effective.

Longbarreled Coil Guns

These weapons excel in terms of velocity and accuracy, particularly in zero-gravity environments, and are capable of penetrating heavy armor. The main drawbacks of longbarreled coil guns include their larger size and heavier weight, necessitating more expertise for effective operation.

Grenade Launchers

Grenade launchers in "Abyssal" can deliver a variety of ordnance types, such as explosive, smoke, or gas, over distances, offering tactical flexibility to the user. However, their effectiveness is limited in vacuum environments, and there's a potential risk of collateral damage, especially in confined spaces.

Shotguns (Double-Action/Automatic)

Shotguns dominate in close-quarters combat by offering a widespread and substantial stopping power. Their main limitations are in range and accuracy, along with a heightened risk of collateral damage, which is a particular concern in environments where the integrity of spacecraft hulls must be preserved.

Ammunition

Standard Projectile Ammunition

Standard rounds

The workhorse of any firearm's ammunition types, standard rounds are balanced for optimum performance in a variety of conditions. They are typically full metal jacket (FMJ) projectiles that provide reliable penetration against soft targets. In a vacuum, they provide consistent trajectory and impact, unaffected by atmospheric drag or gravity. Standard rounds are the first choice for general purpose engagements, offering a balance between stopping power and the risk of over-penetration in space environments.

Armour Piercing Projectiles

Armour piercing rounds are designed to penetrate hardened targets, such as enemy combatants wearing heavy armour or fortified structures. They are often made from a dense, hard core material, such as tungsten or depleted uranium, surrounded by a softer metal jacket. In the vacuum of space, these projectiles are characterised by their high density and momentum, allowing them to penetrate tough materials. While highly effective against armoured opponents, their use in space combat must be calculated to avoid catastrophic hull breaches or critical system damage.

Frangible rounds

Frangible projectiles are designed to break apart on impact with hard surfaces, minimising the risk of ricochet and over-penetration. These projectiles are typically made from compressed metal powders that disintegrate into powder upon impact with a solid target, transferring a high amount of energy over a very short distance. In the vacuum of space, where containment and collateral damage are of paramount importance, frangible rounds offer a safer alternative for combat in and around spacecraft. The use of frangible projectiles is particularly common in training exercises and situations where non-lethal force is preferred. Despite the reduced risk of hull penetration, they are still lethal at close range against unarmoured targets, making them a versatile choice for close-quarters combat scenarios.

Subsonic Rounds

Designed for stealth operations, these rounds are engineered to travel below the speed of sound, significantly reducing the firing noise. In a vacuum, where sound doesn't propagate, their advantage lies in minimizing recoil, thus maintaining the shooter's position in zero-gravity. The lower velocity reduces the risk of hull penetration.

Tracer Rounds

These rounds are fitted with a small pyrotechnic charge that ignites upon firing, providing a visible trajectory. In a vacuum, the lack of oxygen would prevent the traditional combustion-based tracer from working, so

these would use a phosphorescent material that glows upon firing, aiding in targeting in dark space environments.

Incendiary Rounds

Containing a chemical compound that ignites upon impact, these rounds are used to cause fire damage to targets. In the vacuum of space, traditional incendiary effects are negated due to lack of oxygen; instead, they rely on a chemical reaction to generate intense heat upon impact, effective against sensitive equipment or for sabotage missions.

Chemical Rounds

These specialized rounds deliver a chemical payload upon impact, which could range from corrosive substances to quick-hardening adhesives. In vacuum, their utility is more specialized, such as deploying adhesives to disable machinery or seal minor breaches temporarily.

Shotgun Ammunition

Buckshot

Traditional lead or steel pellets that spread upon firing, offering a wide damage radius. In a vacuum, the lack of air resistance allows the pellets to maintain velocity over a longer distance, but spread is unaffected. Suitable for close-range engagements but poses a high risk of hull penetration.

Slug Rounds

A single, large projectile designed for increased accuracy and impact at longer ranges compared to buckshot. In vacuum, slugs maintain a straight trajectory and high impact force, making them effective for breaching operations or against armored targets. However, they carry a significant risk of hull breach.

Rubber Buckshot

Non-lethal option consisting of rubber pellets used for crowd control or incapacitating targets without lethal force. In a vacuum, they are less effective due to decreased impact force but are safer for use in environments where hull integrity is a concern.

Flechette Shells

Contain numerous small, dart-like projectiles, providing a balance between spread and penetration. Effective against soft targets in close quarters; in vacuum, the darts maintain a tighter spread and longer range. These rounds pose a moderate risk of hull penetration.

Gas Canister Rounds

Designed to disperse gas upon impact, useful for crowd control or creating a localized area of denial. In a vacuum, these rounds would deploy a quick-expanding gas that forms a cloud in a zero-gravity environment, potentially disorienting or incapacitating targets within a confined space.

Sample Weapons

Stalker P-107 (Pistol)

Manufacturer: Aegis Dynamics

Description: The Stalker P-107 is a compact, semi-automatic pistol favored for its reliability and stealth capabilities. Featuring an integrated silencer and a recoil reduction system, it is ideal for covert operations and close-quarters engagements. Its lightweight design and advanced targeting optics make it a popular choice among spacefarers and corporate security forces.

Stats:

Caliber: 9mm

Magazine Capacity: 12 rounds

Effective Range: 50 meters

Weight: 800 grams

Special Features: Integrated silencer, smart targeting optics

Vortex SMG-9 (Submachinegun)

Manufacturer: Aegis Dynamics

Description: The Vortex SMG-9 is known for its high rate of fire and exceptional stability. Equipped with a collapsible stock and a holographic sight, it excels in urban warfare and shipboard combat. The gun's advanced cooling system allows for sustained fire without overheating, making it a reliable choice in heated battles.

Stats:

Caliber: 9mm

Magazine Capacity: 30 rounds

Effective Range: 100 meters

Weight: 2.5 kg

Special Features: Collapsible stock, holographic sight

Sentinel AR-15 (Assault Rifle)

Manufacturer: Helios Group

Description: The Sentinel AR-15 assault rifle is a versatile and powerful weapon designed for a variety of combat situations. With its modular design, it allows for quick customization with different scopes, under-barrel attachments, and ammunition types. Its superior balance and ergonomic grip provide enhanced accuracy and control.

Stats:

Caliber: 5.56mm

Magazine Capacity: 30 rounds

Effective Range: 400 meters

Weight: 3.6 kg

Special Features: Modular design, rail system for attachments

Eclipse SR-7 (Sniper Rifle)

Manufacturer: Nova Tactical

Description: The Eclipse SR-7 is a high-precision sniper rifle, designed for long-range engagements. It features an advanced stabilization system and a powerful telescopic sight for pinpoint accuracy. The rifle's carbon-fiber body makes it lightweight and easy to maneuver, while its adaptive camouflage helps it blend into various environments.

Stats:

Caliber: .338 Lapua Magnum

Magazine Capacity: 10 rounds

Effective Range: 1,500 meters

Weight: 6 kg

Special Features: Advanced stabilization, adaptive camouflage

Titan CG-4 (Grenade Launcher)

Manufacturer: Helios Group

Description: The Titan CG-4 is a robust grenade launcher capable of firing a variety of grenade types, including explosive, smoke, and EMP. It's built for tactical flexibility in both offensive and defensive scenarios. The launcher's digital ammo selector allows for quick switching between grenade types, adapting to the demands of the battlefield.

Stats:

Caliber: 40mm

Magazine Capacity: 6 grenades

Effective Range: 350 meters

Weight: 4.2 kg

Special Features: Digital ammo selector, adjustable stock

Zephyr LBC-308 (Longbarreled Coil Gun)

Manufacturer: Atlas Dynamics

Description: The Zephyr LBC-308 is a cutting-edge long-barreled coil gun, revered for its precision and range in zero-gravity environments. Utilizing electromagnetic coils to accelerate projectiles to extreme velocities, the Zephyr offers unparalleled penetration capabilities. Its sleek design incorporates advanced materials to reduce weight, making it manageable despite its size. The integrated targeting system is optimized for both atmospheric and vacuum engagements, featuring real-time trajectory calculations to ensure accuracy over vast distances.

Ideal for ship-to-ship combat or long-range sniping, the Zephyr LBC-308 has become a favorite among spacefaring marksmen and special forces operatives.

Stats:

Projectile Type: Ferromagnetic slugs

Muzzle Velocity: Approximately 1,500 meters per second

Effective Range: Up to 2,000 meters in atmosphere, significantly more in vacuum

Weight: 8 kg

Special Features: Electromagnetic acceleration system, integrated advanced targeting system, variable power settings for different ranges and targets

Rules

Dice Mechanics

The most commonly seen dice is the six-sided one. But there are others. The ones additionally used in the Abyssal are the four-sided and the twenty-sided ones.

The abbreviation for six-sided dice is d6, the ones mostly used in Abyssal follow court with d4 and d20. "d" stands for dice and the number for the sides.

Dice Mathematics

Before we go any further we should talk about dice and math. This is mostly trivial but clarifies the way Abyssal writes down the operations. After you read through this you are set and will have refreshed your memory. Let us delve into these concepts with some examples to make them crystal clear.

Simple Additions and Subtractions

Adding to a Roll

Imagine the game asks you to "roll a d20 + 5". This means you roll a twenty-sided die (d20) and add 5 to whatever number comes up.

Example: You roll the d20 and it lands on 12. Add 5 to this, and your final tally is 17.

Subtracting from a Roll

The subtraction works just as simply.

Example: The instruction is "roll a d20 - 3". Your d20 shows 15. Subtract 3, and you're left with 12.

Rolling Multiple Dice

When the instructions include a number before the 'd', like '3d20', it's time to roll that many dice.

Multiplication and Division

Multiplication

Roll the dice and multiply the result as directed.

*Example: 'd6 * 3' means you roll a six-sided die. If it lands on 4, multiply that by 3 for a total of 12.*

Division

This follows the same principle as multiplication.

Example: With 'd6 / 2', rolling a 6 gets halved to 3.

Doubling Up

Doubling the Result

This simply means to double whatever you roll.

Example: Roll a 10 on a d20, and with "the result is doubled", it escalates to 20.

Doubling the Dice

Here, you're rolling twice the number of dice than originally instructed.

Example: The rule says 'roll 2d6', but "the dice are doubled" turns it into 4d6. Rolling 3, 5, 2, and 6 gives you a total of 16.

Dice Collection

When you encounter a notation like {3d20}, it indicates a collection of dice where each die's value is considered separately. This is different from adding up the results.

Dice collections can have names and persist over gaming sessions. The most common one will be the Temptation dice collection.

A collection can be composed of different dice. The notation is {3d20,3d4}. Even in this case all rolled values are considered individually.

Middle Value

In Abyssal you will very often need to find the middle value of a collection. If looking at a collection of 3 values you would take away the highest and the lowest. The result is the remaining value. If two dice show the same value remove one of them.

By walking through these examples, you can see how each roll is handled. Whether you're adding, subtracting, multiplying, dividing, or playing with dice pools, you can now do with confidence.

Remember, the essence of these rules is not just in the numbers, but in how they bring your tabletop adventures to life. So, roll those dice with confidence and let the story unfold!

Checks

Playing an RPG you need a mechanic to resolve conflict, to determine if a character has succeeded a task or if he terribly failed. These things are resolved by rolling dice, the representatives of the fickle gods of fate. Abyssal uses {3D20} to determine the outcome of a task.

Most tests have an active and a passive party. Someone climbing a wall is the active part whilst the wall opposes in a passive way. These are resolved with a simple check.

Sometimes both parts take an active role, arm wrestling being a very obvious example. This would be an opposed check.

The third option is an ongoing check, a task that takes a certain amount of time. In this case the check is passed after a certain amount of tests have been passed.

Target Number

Target Numbers (TN) are a fundamental concept in our Dice mechanic, acting as benchmarks for skill checks and ability tests. Essentially, a TN is the number that a player needs to meet or exceed with their skill check roll in order to succeed at a task or action.

Each TN is associated with a level of difficulty, from trivial tasks that are almost always accomplished without effort, to nearly impossible feats that only the most skilled or fortunate could achieve. The higher the TN, the more difficult the task, and therefore, the greater the skill or luck required to succeed.

Difficulty	TN	Description
Trivial	0	These tasks are so easy that they're barely worth rolling for. They might challenge a novice but rarely anyone else.
Easy	2	These tasks pose a minor challenge for untrained characters but are usually straightforward for those with even a small amount of training or aptitude.
Moderate	6	These tasks are typically challenging for beginners but manageable for those with some experience or training.
Difficult	10	These tasks pose a serious challenge and often require a good amount of training or experience to succeed.

Very difficult	14	These tasks are extremely challenging and require a high level of skill to overcome. Even those with significant training or experience can struggle with these tasks.
Nearly impossible	16	Nearly Impossible - These tasks are at the limit of what is possible. Only those with exceptional skill and experience have any hope of succeeding.

Anatomy of a Check

So let us take a roll and establish a clear nomenclature for all the components.

Basically we start rolling {3D20}. From this COLLECTION we choose a VALUE. Usually it is the MIDDEL VALUE, but it can also be the HIGHEST VALUE or lowest VALUE. Then we deduct 10 the get the ADJUSTMENT.

This adjustment is added to a SKILL VALUE or ATTRIBUTE VALUE , alongside with applicable MODIFIERS. The resulting number is the FINAL RESULT. The final result is then compared with a TARGET NUMBER. This will define the OUTCOME and the LEVEL OF SUCCESS in the form of MARKS.

Repeating Checks

Checks will fail. Almost always the question comes up if the check can be repeated. That is something we encounter every day, we try again and succeed the second time. So yes, checks can be repeated. Every time a character rolls again the TN rises by 2 and some time goes by. Eventually the character can not make the roll succeed anymore.

The better option can not be hardcoded into the rules. It is up to the Gamemaster to create an interesting story out of the failure and drive the story foreward, an concept aptly named "fail foreward". This would take out the need to reroll because a decision has been made and reason for the check is gone.

Of course there should be a difference to a clear success. So the Suit can cook up something devious to create a new challenging situation for the characters that creates tension and drives the story forward.

Example

Armed with his Neural Hacking Interface, Cassian attempts to breach the security of a secret corporate lab hidden on a desolate asteroid. It's the dead of a cosmic night. He rolls a check to override the security system, but fails. The GM could allow him to try again, with the target number increased by two to reflect the system's heightened state of alert. Alternatively, the GM could decide the following Cassian succeeds in overriding the door lock, only to come face to face with a rogue synthetic, originally designed for maintenance, but now repurposed by the lab survivors as a deadly sentry. This unexpected encounter places Cassian

in a perilous situation far beyond a locked door, and propels the narrative foreward.

Simple Check

A simple check is done by rolling {3D20} and keeping the middle value. Everything above 10 is added to a corresponding attribute or skill, everything below is subtracted. The result is compared to a target number. If the result is equal to or above the target number, the check is passed. Otherwise, it has failed.

Opposed Checks

Sometimes two actions oppose each other, working against each other. This could be a guard standing on watch looking out for intruders or two people arm-wrestling. In this case, both parties roll a Simple check without a Target Number. Both results are compared, and the higher result wins the check. In case of a tie, the higher skill value wins the test. If there is no winner after that, the test is repeated.

passage, his silent steps a testament to the cunning required to survive.

Ongoing check

Some things take time to complete. In this case, we need an Ongoing check. The time required per roll and the number of successes required to complete the task define the check. The game master sets the conditions for the check.

The notation for the check is < target number, time per check, needed successes >

Each gained mark can buy one success in this case. The mark is discarded immediately, used in such a way. The mark cannot be used to give a +1 bonus and to buy one success at the same time.

Example

Kael tries to crack an encrypted communique intercepted from a rival corporate faction. His skill value in <Decryption> is 8. The game master decides he requires 3 successes against a target number of 10. Each attempt consumes 30 minutes of tense, focused work against the clock.

The first roll is a {9, 12, 13}, with the middle value being 12. This grants Kael a +2 to his <Decryption> value of 8,

totaling a 10. This counts as 1 success, with 2 more needed. 30 minutes have ticked away in the silent hum of his workspace.

For the second attempt, Kael rerolls with a {14, 19, 20} - a remarkable stroke of cryptographic insight. The middle value of 19 provides a +9 bonus to his skill value, culminating in a 17. This not only grants him another success but also earns him 2 marks for the quality of his result. Realizing the urgency and nearing the breakthrough, Kael chooses to spend one mark to secure the final success, cracking the encryption wide open. Just about an hour has passed, and the once inscrutable message now lays bare

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Cooperativ check

To perform a cooperative check, the main character declares their action and the supporting character declares their assistance. The supporting character's skills must be relevant to the task at hand.

The supporting character then makes a check against the same target number -5 as the main character. If the supporting character's check is successful, the target number for the main character's check is reduced by 2, representing the assistance provided.

However, there are limitations. Only one character can assist at a time.

Cooperative checks are integrated into the narrative. The players describe how the characters are working together and the impact of their actions.

Example

Jaxon and his crewmate, Lyra, are set to decode a cryptic data matrix to access a sealed section of an abandoned orbital research facility. Jaxon's expertise is in <Cryptanalysis> with a skill value of 6, while Lyra is proficient in <Data Patterns>, holding a skill value of 5. The game master sets the decryption's target number at 15.

Lyra's Support Roll:

Lyra initiates the decryption sequence to assist Jaxon. The modified target number for her assistance is 15 - 5 = 10. She inputs her calculations {7, 12, 14} into the terminal. The algorithm stabilizes at the middle value of 12. This result, being 2 above 10, augments her skill value to a total of 7. Her aid is well-calculated and paves the way for Jaxon's attempt.

Jaxon's Main Roll:

Benefiting from Lyra's successful assistance, the complexity for Jaxon is reduced, making his new target number 13. He delves into the arcane symbols and abstract data structures, rolling {5, 11, 16}. The data coalesces at a middle value of 11. With this, he adjusts his <Cryptanalysis> approach, adding 1 to his skill value for a total of 7. Despite their collaborative effort and Lyra's precise support, the result falls short of the necessary 13. The door remains sealed, its secrets tightly locked away.

Temptation Dice

If you really want to succeed at a check you may choose to take the highest instead of the middle value. The choice is made before an actual roll.

After that roll a d4 is added to the temptation dice collection. These d4 are called Temptation Dice.

As long as this pool has at least one dice it is rolled alongside the {3D20} rolls. Whenever one of those d4 shows a 4 the lowest of the {3D20} is choosen, even if fate was tempted at that roll. If any d4 resulted in a 4, one d4 will be removed from the temptation dice collection.

Up to 4d4 can be gathered in the Temptation dice collection, after that you can not tempt fate and take the highest dice until a slot has freed up in the Temptation dice collection.

Marks

Marks are used to measure the level of success or failure that was achieved with a check. A success earns a mark. For every full 3 that your result surpasses the target number, another mark is gained.

Marks can also be used to activate special effects.

Storing Marks

Marks that are not used up in the immediate check can be stored and used in a later check.

These stored marks can be invested before a check is made to gain a +1 bonus per Mark used. After they are invested, they are lost to the player and have to be earned anew.

Players keep their marks until they are invested, even carrying over to the next session.

Only 3 marks can be stored this way.

Creating Character and Crew

If you want to play missions in the Universe of Abyssal you need the main protagonists, the player characters. They are the backbone of the story. So some special care is needed in creating them and giving them enough background to make the stories evolving around them meaningful. Of course, they will have some game values defining their abilities, but that is not the most important thing. It is what ties them to reality, what makes them care and suffer, what makes them feel success.

In the first instalment of Abyssal the game is about a corporate covert operations team sent on missions to further the corporation's interest under the radar of anyone. This does not mean that these are only missions involving combat. There can be riddles to solve, murders to investigate or elaborate heists to plan. But to be true, a bit of violence is to be expected.

The Crew

Characters in Abyssal do not act alone. They are part of a crew in the employment of a powerful Force, usually one of the Big 12 Corporations. Basically, every kind of organization can be this Force, given it has the resources to grant equipment, a ship, and a home base to the characters.

At the start of your your journey, all players and the Suit should talk about the governing force and the crew. Either all of you agree on one, or the Suit has prepared an employer with all the intricate backstories for the players.

As this Employer relies upon his crew, it should be a well-honed machine that covers a lot of mission types. So the players have to decide on roles and Archetypes that complement each other well. This does not mean they cannot have agendas and troubles of their own. But as the game starts out, all of them are on the same page, more or less.

Setting personal goals and motivations

Somewhere in their history, the characters came to work for the corporation. And most of them voluntarily. As you already decided on the corporation, it is time to think about why the character joined. Certainly, this line of work yields a good pay cheque at the end of the month. But perhaps there is more. The character may need the money to finance his childhood dream of a space yacht. Is it revenge, to get into the vicinity of one of the top brass of the corporation to execute rightful wrath? Or did the character join to stay near his crush from high school who entered into management. There are many, many goals or ambitions a character may have, and they may well cross with the strengths and weaknesses. That's OK, and the Suit will look at these backgrounds and use them for the better of the overarching story.

Create personal relations

Every character should have some personal relationships, be it a loved one, a spouse or someone they care about somewhere. These relationships should not tie the character down, no, they are operatives who are often away on extended missions. These people the characters care about are the anchors they think about and feel emotionally attached to. If the players agree, there can also be a pre-established relationship between two characters, making social interaction more interesting. These kinds of relationships will also emerge during the game, you can be sure of that.

Character Archetypes and Backgrounds

Intelligence Analyst

Strategic Insights and Covert Operations

In the realm of interstellar operations, Intelligence Analysts are crucial, interpreting vast data to form narratives that guide mission decisions. They excel in cryptography, signal intelligence, and data mining. Beyond just gathering intelligence, these analysts are skilled in psychological profiling and counter-intelligence, essential for outmaneuvering adversaries. Their training in advanced decryption and electronic surveillance is key in intercepting enemy communications. Though primarily analysts, they are also equipped with defensive combat skills and stealthy piloting abilities for critical missions.

Tactical Soldier

Versatile Combat Expertise

Tactical Soldiers stand as versatile forces in various combat scenarios, including urban warfare and zero-gravity conflicts. Their expertise spans advanced marksmanship, hand-to-hand combat, and experimental weaponry, adaptable to any combat situation. These soldiers are not just fighters; they possess skills in reconnaissance, survival, and advanced first aid, ensuring self-sufficiency in extended missions. Their proficiency in military vehicles and starships complements their combat skills, while their basic stealth techniques and technological adaptability enhance their field effectiveness.

Stealth Operative

The Art of Invisibility

Stealth Operatives specialize in undetected operations, skilled in advanced stealth techniques, lock picking, and non-lethal weaponry. Their expertise extends to disguise and mimicry, blending seamlessly into various environments. They excel in electronic and physical surveillance, adept at gathering intel without detection and employing counter-surveillance to remain concealed. Despite their focus on stealth, these operatives are proficient in self-defense and starship piloting, emphasizing covert insertions and extractions in enemy territories.

Field Engineer

Technological Backbone in Hostile Zones

Field Engineers serve as the technological backbone, with expertise in robotics, aeronautics, and advanced computing. They play a pivotal role in repairing and enhancing equipment, specializing in electronic warfare to jam enemy communications and disable security systems. Their skills extend beyond engineering; they are trained in defensive combat and can improvise weaponry. Their adaptability shines in setting up communication networks, establishing field bases, and providing technical support, making them indispensable in both combat and reconnaissance missions.

Medic

Advanced Medical and Combat Readiness

Medics in this interstellar setting are more than first responders; they are experts in battlefield medicine, trauma surgery, and xenobiology, equipped to handle diverse medical scenarios. Their training includes combat triage, enabling quick decision-making under fire. Despite their medical focus, Medics are skilled in defensive combat and proficient in piloting for medical evacuations, crucial for team extraction from high-risk zones. Additionally, their expertise in psychological first aid maintains the team's mental resilience.

IT Specialist

Masters of Digital Warfare

IT Specialists are digital warfare experts, excelling in hacking, cyber warfare, and artificial intelligence. They dominate in infiltrating secure networks,

extracting data, and disrupting enemy operations. Besides their digital prowess, they are equipped with basic combat skills and adept at using drones and remote-controlled devices for reconnaissance. Their piloting abilities, tailored towards electronic warfare, enable them to conduct cyber-attacks safely from their starships, making them key players in digital battles.

Negotiator

Diplomatic Strategy and Conflict Resolution

Negotiators excel in diplomacy, employing skills in de-escalation and persuasive communication. Their knowledge in cultural anthropology and behavioral psychology allows them to navigate complex social and political landscapes, forging alliances and resolving conflicts without violence. Trained in self-defense and discreet piloting, they are equipped for sensitive diplomatic missions. Their strategic influence and psychological insight play a pivotal role in operations requiring nuanced approaches to complex interstellar relations.

Creating Weakness and Strength

To tie in the characters, it is important to root them in reality. If they are highly polished people with interchangeable faces and names, you can play through some missions and have some short-lived fun (nothing wrong here for a single shot mission) but it will remain without consequence. On the other hand, there can be much at stake if the personal background of

each character comes into play. There may be a lingering drug addiction, suppressed PTSD or such fine things as a girlfriend or wife waiting at home. Gambling debts or just crushing loneliness dowsed in nights of party and excess, all may play a role if the shit hits the fan. Maybe there is a fine refuge for the character in nature where he can relax after a mission. And then his enemies seek him out there. Give these thoughts a few moments to sink in, and you will see why they are important eventually.

Creating these strengths and weaknesses does not mean they should create a crippled team. The characters should form a highly performant crew their employers trust in at the beginning of the game. They are the ones that are trusted with classified information regarding their missions. Not all of it of course, but a great deal of. This crew should be a mission ready one.

Deciding on the Attributes

Attributes serve as the foundational pillars of your character, influencing everything from physical prowess to mental acumen. In Abyssal there are four core attributes to consider: Force, Nimbleness, Dedication, and Mind.

Attributes

Characters are defined by their attributes, which represent different aspects of their abilities and characteristics. There are four core attributes, divided between two physical and two mental attributes, which are used as the foundation for the character's capabilities. These core attributes are then used to determine derived attributes which further define the character's abilities and limitations.

Understanding the attributes is crucial for players when creating and developing their characters, as well as during game play when making decisions and resolving challenges. In this section, we will provide an overview of the core and derived attributes. With this knowledge, players can create unique and engaging characters that fit their play style and contribute to a dynamic and exciting game experience.

Core Attributes

There are four core attributes that constitute a character. These attributes are coarse, divided between two physical and two mental attributes. These attributes have values ranging from 4 to 8 during character generation.

Force (For)

Force represents a character's physical strength, toughness, and resilience. A character with high Force is capable of carrying heavy loads, breaking through obstacles, and enduring harsh conditions. This attribute is essential for characters who rely on melee combat or need to perform physically demanding tasks, such as climbing or swimming.

Nimbleness (Nim)

Nimbleness represents a character's agility, speed, and flexibility. A character with high Nimbleness is quick on their feet, able to dodge attacks, and move

with precision. This attribute is essential for characters who rely on ranged combat or need to perform acrobatic feats, such as jumping or balancing.

Dedication (Ded)

Dedication represents a character's concentration, focus, and mental endurance. A character with high Dedication can maintain their focus on a task for extended periods and resist distractions and mental fatigue. This attribute is essential for characters who rely on casting spells or need to perform mentally demanding tasks, such as deciphering codes or solving puzzles.

Mind (Mnd)

Mind represents a character's intelligence and the ability to grasp complex thought structures. A character with a high Mind is capable of understanding intricate concepts, analyzing situations, and making informed decisions. This attribute is essential for characters who rely on knowledge-based skills or need to solve problems creatively.

Derived Attributes

Derived attributes are dependent on the core attributes.

Speed (Spd)

Speed is the distance a character can move during tactical combat. Speed is based upon Nimbleness. Movement during combat is discussed in the corresponding chapter. Speed has no influence on overland travelling speed.

Nimbleness	Speed m/s
4-6	3
7-9	4
10+	5

Physical Endurance (PhE)

The Physical Endurance is calculated by doubling the Force Value and adding the Nimbleness Value and divide that by three. This is the current maximum PhE Value a character can have. It can temporarily be reduced due to combat, strenuous activities, and illness or poison. This list is not comprehensive. As long as the value remains positive, no further harm will befall the character regarding the PhE. Reaching 0 or less will have more lasting consequences.

Mental Endurance (MeE)

The Mental Endurance is calculated by doubling the Dedication Value and adding the Mind Value and divide that by three. This value represents the current maximum MeE Value for a character. This value can be reduced due to mind-shattering experiences, bad odds, and other sources. If the MeE remains above zero, no further problems will arise. Zero or less is bad news for the character.

Allocate Points

You have a total of 24 points to distribute among these four attributes. Each attribute must have a minimum value of 4 and a maximum value of 8 at this stage.

Calculate Derived Attributes

After setting your core attributes, proceed to calculate your derived attributes like Physical Endurance, Mental

Endurance, and Speed. These are based on formulas involving your core attributes and provide additional information about your character's capabilities.

Finalize Attributes

Double-check your numbers and consider how they align with your character's backstory and motivations. Make any last-minute adjustments, and you're set to work on your Expertise Areas and Specialisations.

Deciding on Skills

Skills in Abyssal are represented by Expertise Areas. You can buy a value within these. Further down in the hierarchy are the Specializations, representing further training in special aspects of an Expertise Area. Here's how to go about selecting and upgrading them.

Calculate Mastery Gate

Before diving into Expertise Areas, figure out your Mastery Gate for each one you're interested in. Mastery Gate is influenced by your attributes and represents an aptitude for a Expertise Area. The attributes associated with a skill are listed in the in the corresponding Area.

Skill Selection

Choose the skills that fit your character's background, role, and the needs of your adventuring party. Do you require a diplomat, a scout, or perhaps a jack-of-all-trades? Talk with your fellow group about this and ensure that everything fits well. Always remember you are a curated team, put together by your corp as a functioning unit. The chosen archetype reflects the initial skills.

You get to distribute additional 5 Progression Points in Expertise Area Levels. The cost for advancing an Expertise Area Level is discussed further below under "Skill cost".

During Character Creation, skills can't be risen higher than their Mastery gate. Even if an Archetype has a higher Expertise Area value. In that case, the value offered from the Archtype is capped.

Skill Packs for Archtypes

Intelligence Analyst

Espionage 6, Software 5, Knowledge 5, PsychOps 5, Combat 4

Tactical Soldier

Combat 6, Physicality 5, Pilot 5, Medical 4, Survival 5

Stealth Operative

Stealth 6, Espionage 5, Combat 4, Pilot 4, PsychOps 5

Field Engineer

Hardware 6, Combat 4, Knowledge 5, Resource management 5, Survival 5

Medic

Medical 6, PsychOps 5, Combat 4, Pilot 5, Knowledge 5

IT Specialist

Software 6, Hardware 5, Combat 4, Pilot 5, Espionage 4

Negotiator

Negotiation 6, PsychOps 5, Knowledge 5, Combat 4, Pilot 5

Expertise Area Cost

Refer to the Expertise Area Progression Cost Table to see how much it costs to advance. Remember, the cost is per skill level, so plan wisely. As the number of skill points for Character building, this can be modified by the Suit based on the experience the group should have for the intended plot.

EAL/MG	<=4	5 - 6	7-8	>=9
1	1	1	1	1
2	1	1	1	1
3	1	1	1	1
4	1	1	1	1
5	2	1	1	1
6	2	1	1	1
7	2	2	1	1
8	2	2	1	1
9	4	2	2	1
10	4	2	2	1
11	4	4	2	2
12	5	4	2	2
13	5	4	4	2
14	5	5	4	2
15	6	5	4	4
16	6	5	5	4

Choose Specialisations

You may choose two specialisations under an Expertise Area with a value of at least 7.

Finalize Expertise Areas

Once you've allocated your points in Expertise Areas and choosen your Specialisations, take a step back to see how your choices integrate with your character's overall concept and backstory. Make any necessary adjustments and move on to the final steps in character and crew creation.

Deciding on a spacecraft and equipment

At the end of crew creation, a decision has to be made on the ship and the equipment. The crew is not too high up on the ladder of the corporation, so their equipment will be good and functional, not necessarily exceptional. We are talking about the standard equipment here, not mission specific one. It is military graded, not some junk but not cutting edge. There is no monetary limitation, just some common sense.

The spacecraft must be a vessel that accommodates 5–10 people, equipped with a good Kramer PAD and an intermediate stellar projector. The characters have to speak with their Suit about their preferences, so the corporation will provide a suitable vessel. This is also dependent on the kind of missions the characters are trained for. No use for a hyper stealth torpedo vessel in a diplomatic mission with interests. So communication is key.

Expertise Areas

Skills in the Abyssal are grouped into Expertise Area. Below these Expertise Areas are Specialisations. These Specialisations give the character an advantage if the Specialisation applies to the check required for the task at hand. Sometimes the Specialisation is a prerequisite for being able to tackle a problem at all.

Expertise Area

Expertise Area are a thematic approach to the skills a character may have needed during their training and education. Since characters in Abyssal are considered to be trained operatives, capable of facing dire threats and missions, they have received a diverse education that gives them a broad overview in a thematic Expertise Area. This is what a Expertise Area represents. A technically versatile operative might repair the group's ships' air scrubbers or try to short-circuit a simple magnetic lock. The entire Expertise Area has a value that is used by the character during Skill Checks.

Specialisations

Expertise Areas contain skill specialisations. These are specific subtasks contained within the larger Expertise Area. These specialisations can either provide a bonus to a check to which they apply, or can be a requirement. Certain types of equipment or very special tasks contain these perquisites in their description. Specialisations can have different levels , Apprentice, Journeyman, and Master.

To become a Apprentice, Journeyman ,or master you need a Expertise Area value of 4, 8, or 12 in the Expertise Area governing the Specialisation.

For some Problems you need a certain Level in a specialisation. Each specialisation level gives you a +2 bonus on applicable tasks. The final arbiter of this is the Suit.

Custom Specialisations

For each area of expertise, the Core Book offers a number of specialisations to develop. This is not an exhaustive list. The areas of expertise are designed to be very broad, to allow characters to perform a wide range of tasks, and to give them the power to succeed in their endeavours. This means that you will be able to find many subtasks that you could fit into specialisations. You are, of course, welcome to do so if your campaign requires a specific specialisation. Avoid overloading the specialisations.

Expertise Areas and Specialisations

Combat

Masterygate For/Ded

The Combat Area is an essential aspect of any operative, highlighting a character's ability in physical confrontation and tactical skirmishes. It represents a wide range of skills from basic self-defence to advanced combat tactics, reflecting the character's training, reflexes and physical conditioning. This skill set is essential for characters who find themselves in

frequent combat situations, or any situation where tactical thinking is advantageous.

It includes understanding and using different weapons, mastering different fighting styles, and adapting to the dynamic nature of conflict. Characters who are skilled in combat are not only able to deal damage, but also to defend themselves and their allies, control the battlefield, and understand the tactical ups and downs of combat.

Specialisations

Close Quarters Battle

Specializes in tight and confined spaces combat, such as in buildings or urban settings. Practitioners are adept at room clearing, rapid target acquisition, and close-range weaponry, emphasizing quick, decisive engagements and hand-to-hand combat.

Marksmanship

Focuses on proficiency with ranged weapons, including rifles and pistols. Specialists excel in precision shooting, understanding ballistics, and engaging targets at various distances, crucial for sniper operations and providing covering fire.

Explosives and Demolitions

Involves the strategic use and neutralization of explosive devices. Practitioners are trained in handling grenades, mines, and demolition charges, employing explosives for breaching, creating diversions, or hindering enemy movements.

Tactical Maneuvering

Centers on strategic movement in combat scenarios. Specialists in this area are skilled in flanking, using cover, and coordinating movements to effectively approach, engage, and disengage enemy forces while minimizing risks.

Melee and Improvised Weapons

Focuses on fighting with handheld or improvised weapons. Specialists are proficient with knives, batons, and using environmental objects as defensive or offensive tools, vital in situations where conventional weapons are unavailable or impractical.

Espionage

Masterygate Nim/Mnd

Espionage enables the character to gather information, stay undercover and manipulate situations to their advantage.

It embodies a range of skills necessary for covert operations, intelligence gathering and subtle manipulation, reflecting a character's cunning and mental agility. This skill set is particularly important for characters involved in surveillance, undercover missions, or any situation that requires a discreet approach and careful planning.

Espionage skills encompass a variety of disciplines, including advanced surveillance techniques, counter-intelligence and sabotage. Operatives skilled in espionage are adept at moving unseen, extracting valuable information without alerting their targets, and

turning the tide of a conflict without direct confrontation. They are masters of disguise, able to blend into a variety of social environments.

Specialisations

Surveilance

Surveilance comes into play if the character tries to shadow someone unseen or observing an object to gain additional insights. Characters are skilled in keeping up long streaks of mental alertness not to miss important clues.

Counterintelligence

Counterintelligence can be used to protect assets from prying eyes, analysing security protocols, and to identify suspicious behaviour in members of the own peer group.

Cypher

The modern world relies on encryption of digital documents. In the analogue world this is a completely different thing. The cypher specialisation is used to encrypt and decrypt messages using non-electronical means. It is about understanding and creating code languages.

Hardware

Masterygate Nim/Ded

The Hardware Expertise Area is crucial for characters involved in technology, such as vehicle maintenance, system repair, or machine innovation. It reflects a character's technical acumen and practical experience. These skills include diagnosing

malfunctions, improving equipment functionality, and creating gadgets, requiring a deep understanding of systems from simple locks to complex engines.

Those who understand hardware are vital, especially in high-pressure situations. They ensure operational continuity, prevent breakdowns and devise solutions with limited resources. Whether it is rapid repairs, maintenance or troubleshooting, their skills are essential to the success of technology-dependent missions.

Mastering hardware is about using technical knowledge to improve capabilities and adapt to new challenges. It involves continuous learning and innovation, making it essential for survival and success in technology-dependent environments.

Specialisations

Repair

Enables the character to diagnose, repair and modify electronic and mechanical devices. This is the specialisation to bypass electronical and mechanical locks.

Modification

This specialisation changes or enhances the function of a mechanical or electronical system. This includes modifying the output of a system, install trigger conditions or tuning an engine.

Fabrication

This represents specialized knowledge about the fabrication of tools, machines and items. The raw

materials have to be present, you cant create something from nothing.

Knowledge

Masterygate Ded/Mnd

The Knowledge Expertise Area gives the character intellectual knowledge, historical insight, and the understanding of complex phenomena. It represents a character's intellectual breadth and depth, covering disciplines such as history, science, and to some extent, occult hearsay.

Characters with high scores in this area are the thinkers and scientists who are crucial to understanding complex issues, deciphering texts, and solving mysteries. They play a key role in analysing problems with their comprehensive insight and giving context for the problems at hand.

By mastering different areas of knowledge, characters gain a well-rounded perspective that allows them to make informed decisions and outwit challenges. They can predict outcomes and uncover hidden secrets, using information as a tool for success and survival.

Specialisation

History

Events that have happened are the subject of history. This involves remembering specific dates and more minor events than those taught in the classroom.

Natural Science

Natural Science is made up of physics, chemistry and biology. This includes some in-depth knowledge of these subjects, making the Natural Science character a jack-of-all-trades.

Occultism

Occult knowledge is a tricky one. It mostly involves knowledge of the "real world" occult, not necessarily the one that has started working so eerily again. But the two are often very close.

Medical

Masterygate Nim/Mnd

The Medicine Expertise Area is for characters who are dedicated to healing and treating injuries and illnesses. It includes emergency care, surgical procedures, and understanding alien biology. These skills are crucial for medics and surgeons, providing support in assessing and responding to the health needs of team members in a variety of environments.

Medical professionals deal with trauma, disease treatment and xenobiology, making life-saving decisions and devising long-term care strategies. Their role extends beyond the treatment of physical wounds; they ensure the psychological readiness of their team, maintaining the overall health and combat effectiveness of their unit.

In any high-risk operation, skilled medics are as critical as combatants, making Medicine a fundamental skill for survival and mission success.

Specialisation

Trauma Surgery

Surgery allows the character to extensive and complicated surgical procedures to treat major trauma. This includes removing bullets, repairing internal bleeding and operating on broken bones.

Field Medic

The Field Medic specialisation allows the characters to administer first aid and stabilise otherwise critical wounds. It can be used to make a wounded operative mobile and prevent wound infection.

Internal Medicine

When affected by poison or disease, Inner Medicine can be used to treat these ailments. This allows the correct medicines and procedures can be administered.

Negotiation

Masterygate Ded/Mnd

The negotiation Expertise enables in successfully conducting diplomatic missions and social interactions. It includes skills in persuasion, and cultural understanding. Negotiators are experts at defusing tensions, forging alliances, and navigating complex social structures with a mix of charisma and insight. This can be as simple as gaining entry to an exclusive nightclub or negotiating in a hostage situation.

Characters skilled in negotiation influence outcomes and control debates, making them invaluable in achieving goals without direct conflict. They excel at bartering, conflict mediation and strategic communication, using their understanding of motivations and needs. Mastery of negotiation means achieving goals through eloquence and an understanding of human behaviour.

Specialisation

Bartering

Bartering is the art of discussing and debating the price of something, be it in a hardware store or a major interstellar project. The basic emotions are the same.

Diplomacy

Diplomacy allows characters to navigate potentially difficult political or interpersonal relationships. It is the fine art of getting something without losing too much, and without disrespecting your interlocutor.

Intimidation

Intimidation is used to force the other party to do something. This form of intimidation is verbally threatening and focuses on perceived weaknesses.

Navigation

Masterygate Ded/Mnd

The Navigation skill set is for characters who have been trained in orientation, piloting, and pathfinding. This Expertise Area encompasses the skills required to successfully navigate varied and often treacherous terrain, whether in space, in the air, or on the ground. Individuals with navigation skills are adept at plotting courses, understanding topography, and manoeuvring vehicles or ships through challenging conditions.

Characters with strong navigation skills are invaluable during exploration, tactical retreats or high-speed pursuits. They ensure that the team's movements are efficient, safe and strategically sound. Orientation allows characters to determine positions and plan routes. It involves finding the most advantageous routes, avoiding natural hazards and minimising travel time. It means that movement is a tactical advantage rather than a liability.

Specialisations

Orientation

Orientation allows a character to keep track of their position in their mind. This plays a role in backtracking and keeping a certain direction when electronic devices cannot be used.

Coordination

Coordination comes into play when estimating travel times based on available information. This can be very important when coordinating strike teams and planning arrival times.

Jump Plotter

This stellar travel specialisation comes into play when a stellar projector needs to be programmed for a specific destination. It provides

Physicality

Masterygate For/Nim

The Physicality Expertise Area represents a character's physical strength, endurance and agility. It includes skills that increase a character's stamina, brute strength,

and flexibility, allowing them to perform feats of athleticism, withstand strenuous activities, and manoeuvre through obstacles. Characters with Physicality are resilient and versatile, able to push their bodies beyond normal limits.

This skill is crucial for characters engaged in direct combat, exploration, or any activity that requires intense physical exertion. The Physicality area also includes activities such as swimming, running and climbing. Low-tech activities such as parachuting or horseback riding also fall under this broad area.

Specialisation

Climbing

Vertical movement is the name of the game. Be it a mountain, a skyscraper, or whatever else this specialisation covers. Characters can secure people and items and bivouac in vertical space.

Swimming

Swimming allows the character to cover more distance and generally become more adept at moving through water. The use of scuba gear and diving are included in the Swimming specialisation.

Parcour

Movement in spaces filled with obstacles, drops and short climbs is the domain of Parcour. It is extremely useful in pursuit situations, making the terrain much more manageable.

Pilot

Masterygate Nim/Ded

The Pilot skill set is crucial for characters who specialise in navigating different vehicles through different environments. It encompasses the operation of air, space and ground vehicles, making characters proficient in aircraft, spacecraft and land vehicles. These pilots are essential for transport, tactical manoeuvres, pursuit and vehicular combat.

In gameplay, skilled pilots navigate through challenging terrain, avoid or pursue enemies, and quickly evade threats. They provide air support, perform precision landings and lead high-speed pursuits that turn the tide of battle. Their expertise goes beyond mere operations; it includes an understanding of physics, quick reflexes and a deep knowledge of vehicle systems, making them skilled in movement and combat support. This gives the team an advantage in speed, mobility and strategic positioning.

Specialisation

Aircraft

This specialisation covers flying vehicles. This includes ultralights and other aircraft of various sizes. Pre-flight procedures, necessary communications and handling of extreme situations.

Water

The handling of various types of watercraft in all situations and the knowledge of the movement of water bodies required for piloting the craft are part of the specialisation.

Spacecraft

This specialisation provides the knowledge to handle and manoeuvre a spacecraft. Initialising projector jumps and preparing for high-G manoeuvres are covered. Preparing a ship for all kinds of manoeuvres and movements.

PsychOps

Masterygate Ded/Mnd

The Psych Ops Expertise Area is essential for characters who specialize in psychological manipulation and mental warfare. It includes interrogation, propaganda, and coercion, allowing operatives to influence, deceive, and control. The Expertise Area can be used to understand and manipulate the human psyche, excell in extracting information, sway opinions, and apply psychological pressure to influence outcomes.

Proficiency in Psych Ops encompasses the use of psychological tactics to navigate intricate interactions and subtly achieve objectives. These abilities are crucial in negotiations, covert operations, and situations where strategy is more important than physical confrontation. Skilled operatives utilise Psych Ops to exert influence and control, mastering the unseen battle in their pursuit of objectives.

Specialisation

Interrogation Techniques

Characters specialize in extracting information from unwilling or resistant subjects. Operatives are trained in psychological tactics, stress induction to get

confessions or secrets. They understand body language, verbal cues, and the psychological principles behind truth-telling and deception.

Behavioral Profiling

Involves analyzing individuals or groups to predict or manipulate their behavior. Specialists in this area are adept at identifying patterns, motivations, and vulnerabilities. They use this knowledge to anticipate actions, exploit weaknesses, or devise strategies for influencing or controlling targets.

Conditioning

Centers on subtly influencing thoughts, emotions, or behaviors through indirect methods. Practitioners are experts in the subtle cues and environmental factors that can unconsciously steer decisions or attitudes. This specialization is used to condition allies for resilience or enemies for doubt.

Resources

Masterygate Ded/Mnd

The Resources skill set is crucial to optimising the use of resources in gameplay, as it directly affects the team's equipment maintenance and supply efficiency. Characters skilled in Resource Management can stretch supplies, repair equipment with fewer materials, and negotiate effectively for resources, making them invaluable in resource-poor environments.

Allocation allows for optimal resource distribution, acquisition to obtain new materials, and conservation to minimise waste. In tactical scenarios, skilled resource

managers ensure team readiness and resilience, significantly impacting overall mission success. This skill is essential for strategic planning and maintaining operational efficiency in challenging missions.

Specialisations

Supply Negotiation

Focuses on acquiring resources at the best possible value. Specialists are skilled in bargaining, trade, and procurement strategies. This can be used to gain access to more advanced or specialised equipment for a mission from the corp.

Logistics

Specializes in the efficient organization, movement, and allocation of resources across various operations. Practitioners are adept at planning supply routes, managing inventory systems, and ensuring that materials and personnel are where they need to be.

Crisis Organisation

Procurement of needed material in times of need, fast. Skilled personel in this specialistaion is able to talk to the right persons in the right places to make dire needed equipment available.

Software

Masterygate Ded/Mnd

The Software skill set is critical for characters involved in digital manipulation and cybersecurity. It includes hacking, programming, and cyber warfare skills that allow characters to bypass security, control technology, and launch digital attacks. Strong

software skills allow characters to access critical information, disable enemy defences, or take control of drones and other systems, affecting combat and exploration scenarios.

Characters with this skill can significantly alter missions by hacking into systems to gather data, create distractions, or sabotage operations. Mastery of software turns the digital landscape into a tactical advantage, making these skills essential in a technology-driven environment. Their ability to manipulate the digital realm is a powerful asset in any team's arsenal.

Specialisations

Cyber Operations

Focuses on both defending against and exploiting digital threats. Specialists are skilled in both protecting systems using encryption and firewalls, and attacking with hacking techniques like phishing and exploiting vulnerabilities. They understand network and system infrastructures. This specialistaion combines proactive defense with aggressive offense to ensure digital security and superiority.

Software Development

Centers on creating, testing, and improving software applications. This specialization involves coding, debugging, and reverse engeneering. Specialists are enabled to create custom software solutions for unique challenges or missions.

Data Analytics

Involves the interpretation and transformation of data into actionable insights. This specialization is crucial for intelligence gathering, operational planning, and enhancing overall mission effectiveness through informed analysis.

Stealth

Masterygate Nim/Ded

The Stealth skill set allows the character to move undetected and conduct covert operations. It includes evasion and infiltration skills that allow agents to avoid detection and gather information in secret. Skilled characters can navigate enemy territory and launch surprise attacks undetected.

Strong stealth skills allow agents to evade sentries, avoid traps and gain strategic positions that are crucial for ambushes or covert missions. Mastery involves understanding the environment and how to behave in order to remain unseen. Stealth can be used to operate from the shadows, making it invaluable for operations that require finesse and discretion.

Specialisations

Infiltration Tactics

This specialisation focuses on the skills required to successfully infiltrate high security areas. It involves understanding and evading advanced security measures such as surveillance systems and guard patrols. Practitioners are adept at finding and exploiting weaknesses in security layouts, using both

technological tools and physical prowess to gain access to restricted areas without being detected. This skill is particularly valuable in missions that require the retrieval of sensitive information or the placement of surveillance devices.

Shadow Movement

This specialisation emphasises the art of moving silently and unseen in a variety of environments. Specialists in Shadow Movement are trained to minimise noise and visibility, understand the use of light and shadow, and move with the utmost discretion. They are adept at blending into their surroundings, be it urban landscapes or natural terrain. This specialisation is essential for carrying out tasks in close proximity to unsuspecting adversaries.

Camouflage and Disguise

This specialisation focuses on the use of visual deception to avoid detection. It includes the creation and use of disguises, make-up and prosthetics to alter appearance and blend into different social settings or environments. It also covers the use of natural and artificial materials for camouflage in a variety of terrains. Specialists in this field are able to alter their physical appearance to suit different roles, making them invaluable in operations that require a physical presence in sensitive or hostile areas without being recognised.

Survival

Masterygate For/Mnd

The Survival skill set is essential for characters navigating harsh environments and unexpected situations. It encompasses adaptability, resourcefulness, and resilience, allowing players to withstand natural challenges and sustain their team. Skilled Survivalists find food, create shelter, and navigate treacherous terrain.

In gameplay, strong Survival skills mitigate the risks of hostile environments, allowing characters to manage scarce resources, track and avoid predators, or identify edible plants. Survival skills are about understanding the environment and using it effectively.

Skilled survivalists are prepared for the unexpected and turn dire situations into opportunities. Their adaptability and perseverance are important assets that ensure the continuation of the mission even in the most difficult circumstances.

Specialisations

Wilderness Survival

Focuses on enduring and thriving in natural, often hostile environments. Specialists are proficient in shelter building, fire starting, water sourcing. They are prepared for the local flora and fauna.

Urban Survival

Involves surviving and moving safe in urban settings, particularly in hostile or disaster-stricken areas. Practitioners are skilled in finding safe passage through ruins, sourcing food and water from abandoned structures, and avoiding detection by enemies or hostile inhabitants.

Extreme Condition Adaptation

Centers on survival techniques specific to harsh conditions such as arctic cold, desert heat, or even high radiation. Specialists are knowledgeable about appropriate shelter, clothing, and activity to maintain body temperature and hydration. They are also skilled in recognizing and treating environment condition ailments like frostbite or heatstroke.

Character Progression

Over the time characters will gain valuable experience. They hone their skills and make experiences in the field, making them better fit for the things to come.

To reflect this process the Suit may award Progression Points (PP) to the players. These can be used to buy new Expertise Area Levels (EAL) or Specialisations.

To further Expertise Areals refer to the EAL Table to look up the cost PP for the new EAL.. Do not forget to consider the Mastery Gate. The possibility to unlock Specialisations come at the governing EAL. Of 4, 8, and 12. Each Specialisation Level costs 3 PP, opening up new possibilities and boni for certain tasks.

PP will be awarded after each session, usually around 2. This may be modified depending on various conditions. The characters my have completed a major plot or employed very clever tactics. In that case the award may be even higher.

A completely reasonable choice to up the award points can simply be the time frame of sessions played. If the group only meets   very two months progression may just feel to slow.

Combat

Combat is inevitable. At some point, characters will have no choice but to fight for their mission objectives or simply to survive. This is where the combat rules come into play.

As an introduction, we should formulate what these rules are about and what they are trying to achieve. In Abyssal, combat is dramatic, fast-paced and narrative driven by the dice rolls the players make. The description of equipment and its abilities should play an intricate role in suggesting possible actions. The combat rules are not intended to be a fine-grained simulation of combat with a large number of pre-defined rules covering all aspects.

As a Suit, you should stage combat in a dramatic way, improvising and making it remarkable. These rules are designed to give you maximum freedom. With this freedom comes responsibility, try to be fair and predictable, play with the players and give them a fair warning when things start to get hairy.

Engagement Stakes

At the beginning of a potential battle, the Suit will call out the potential "stakes" of the engagement. This is to establish the importance of the fight to the story and the potential fallout. It is also at this stage that the granularity of the combat is generally defined. Since general combat skill is only one broad area of expertise, the checks made can be tailored to a variety of outcomes. For a less important encounter, it is perfectly feasible for the suit to ask for a simple combat check and narrate what happens depending on the outcome of the check.

At the other end of the spectrum is the knife fight, where the combat checks are used to gain advantages, with the stakes being that these advantages are small cuts, with five advantages being the fatal blow. And each of these checks lends itself to a story. On the following pages we will discuss the bread-and-butter approach to combat, still with a lot of freedom.

These stakes are called "Engagement Stakes".

Time in Combat

Time in combat is fluid. From a narrative perspective, the measurement of time is done in spotlights. The Suit has to ascertain that the spotlights are roughly divided equally among the combatants. This fluid approach enables slow phases in combat as parties have both taken cover and take some time to decide what to do.

The time after each participant of the engagement had its spotlight is called a segment.

The length of a segment can change with the actions of a combatant, as the reaction usually starts to take up equal lengths of time.

Order of combat

The order combatants take their spotlight is determined by a simple check Nimbleness <> TN 10. The result is the place in the turn order, the higher the faster. The time combat starts, the Suit resolves the spotlights down

from the highest to the lowest result of the Nimbleness check. Once every combatant had its spotlight, the segment is over and a new one starts. Sometimes the spotlight of a combatant is to wait for something to happen. The suit can let the combatant be faster automatically or can let him make a Niimbleness simple check to see if he actually intercepts the "something".

Resolving of a spotlight

Statement of "Intent"

The player states the intent of his character. This statement has to be within reason depending on human capabilities, description of equipment or any additional specialities that might apply.

Setting of "Spotlight Stakes"

The Suit reflects on the "Intent" and sets up the "Spotlight Stakes". He either approves the feasibility of the "Intent" or modifies it with the player in the "Yes, but..." way.

These stakes are the required check or checks and their difficulty represented by a target number (TN). He also describes the possible risks of failure and the rewards for success if applicable. It is totally possible that the Suit just tells the player his intent succedes.

Besides the examples for difficulties the TNs have labels for the reason of being intuitive. Usually one can quickly grasp the concept of something being easy or nearly impossible. Just name the difficulty by label and look up the associated TN. After a time it will come naturally.

Execute

The last phase of resolving the spotlight is the execution of the "Intent", rolling the appropiate checks and resolve their outcome.

Spatial considerations

During combat, it is important to keep track of the location of characters. There are a multitude of ways of doing this. It can stay purely in the mind, be scribbled on a piece of paper or be mapped on a sophisticated battle map with pretty miniatures, either analogue or digital. This tracking is only done to support the narrative and keep things consistent. Characters have a move range to give an estimate of their ability to cross distances. Distances are given in descriptive terms in the following order: "close quarter" → "near" → "middle range" → "long range". Again, this should be intuitive.

Intents

Deal damage

During combat one of the most common intents is dealing damage to an oponent with a weapon. This can be broken down into three parts.

Hitting a target

First, you got to hit your target. The difficulty of doing so can vary dramatically based on any number of factors. As discussed earlier, setting a target number for the combat check is best done on intuition, perhaps cross-checking with a few example situations.

Ranged Weapon

Hitting with a ranged weapon is done with a simple Combat check. If the check is successful, the target is hit and damage is dealt based on the Marks achieved and the protection or resistance of the target. Marks used to deal damage are considered to be spent.

Close Combat Weapon

Hitting with a close combat weapon is similar to hitting with a ranged weapon but is done with an opposed Combat check. The winner of the check gets to hit the loser.

Area of Effect Weapon

Area of-effect weapons hit everything in the covered area. A successful Combat check places the area on the right point, marks, increasing the effectiveness of the placement. Failure does not mean a grenade does not land anywhere. The Suit will pick a place or act according to the established "Spotlight stake"

Marks gained during these tests do not have to be spent on dealing damage. They can be kept respecting the basic rules for marks and used for other actions or enhancements.

Check protection or resistance

Once a hit is confirmed, the penetration of the weapon is compared to the armour protection of the target.

If the penetration surpasses the protection, armour is ignored.

Should the penetration surpass half the protection value, one mark is deduced.

Below that, the armour completely negates any damage possibly done.

Some armour protects only partially, covering only vital parts of the body. A skilled attacker or shooter may try to bypass the armour, having a harder time hitting an adversary. Partial armour protects from killing blows dealt by area-of-effect weapons, maiming can still be a dangerous and plausible outcome.

Deal Damage

So, a hit is confirmed, Armour has been considered, it's time to get at the meat of things. All creatures have a Physical Endurance (PhE). The attacker can now spend the remaining Marks and the damage modifier of the used Ammunition to reduce the PhE. At this point, PhE

just represents minor injuries or fatigue. Once the PhE reaches zero the creature receives a serious wound.

Injury and recovery

Serious Wounds

A serious wound can be described as a non-lethal, hindering or incapacitating wound.

For the player characters, this means a real blow. Everything from a shattered bone to internal bleeding is possible.

The character continues to function and stay conscious with a successful simple Dedication check against Target Number (TN) 5.

If this Will check is failed another check Force against TN 5 establishes if the wound is fatal instantaneous.

All existing serious wounds increase the TN of these checks by 2.

For Non-Player Characters the Suit can automatically decide upon their death or use the opponent's wound track.

Regeneration of Physical Endurance (PhE)

Physical Endurance regenerates completely after the combat situation has been resolved. No rest has to be announced, and no material is needed.

Recovery from Serious Wounds

Recovery from serious wounds can be a lengthy process. With the rapid progression of medical capabilities, there are many possibilities to get an operative into a fighting condition again. This can be achieved by advanced painkillers, highly effective casts capable of actively supporting movement and microsurgery robots for effective field surgery.

After receiving medical aid in the field, an operative is considered fully functional but with zero Physical Endurance. He cannot be prepped up once more before he has seen proper stationary medical support, which removes all serious injuries.

The first mark will cause another serious wound, handled like the first one.

Space Vessel Rules

At their core, we can describe ships based on their technical stats, such as attributes and derived attributes of a character. These numbers are one thing, it is important to get a feel for the ship, especially if it is the character's one provided by their Patreon. We should be thinking about quirks, colour, internal appearance and those sorts of things that are not reflected in the rules but are influential nonetheless. It will further the immersion and attachment to the ship, making it a beloved place to come back to.

But to start with, we should start to describe the facts about these small, vulnerable bubbles of air protecting the characters from the unrelenting vastness of space.

Attributes of a Vessel

Size

The size of a space vessel is calculated in GST, the Gross Space Tonnage, historically an adaption from the GT.

One GST represents about 3 m^3 of enclosed space, including KPAD, IRHEC, quarters, bridge, and any other.

Most vessels are designed to provide a minimum comfort for prolonged space travel. This is not necessarily the case for all of them, given the need for shuttles, small cargo transfer haulers and small patrol vessels going to anchor after a successful shift. But those are mostly orbit bound ships.

The character's ship should be around the size of 1000 GST. To bring this into perspective, it would be around 38m long and roughly 10m wide and 8m high, being in a roughly boxy shape. That is a sizeable ship equipped for many tasks and able to carry a punch.

Acceleration

Acceleration is measured in G and depends on the quality and size of the KPAD and also the mass of the vessel. An average civilian ship can pull off continued acceleration of about 2G, while ships build for speed can accelerate up to about 9G, with extreme modifications a little more. The limiting factor is the human body, not built for these kinds of forces. Up to 0.5G can be compensated by the Artificial Gravitation Generators to still have an acceptable "down".

The possibility to constantly generate 0.3 G would make the trip to Mars 7 days on average. And about 40 days out to the Kuiper Belt.

Structural Endurance (StE)

Structural Endurance is the current stress on the structural integrity and functioning of the vessel. Continuous evasion manoeuvres, near misses and high-frequency velocity changes or continuous high G acceleration put the vessel in distress, slowly wearing it down. As long as the Strain stays above 0, everything is fine, below that, the ship seriously starts to take damage and fall apart.

Structural Endurance is a value between 1 and 20. A StE of 0 may be an unfinished ship in docks, a 20 a high-tech hardened military vessel operating to clear enemy minefields. These additionally carry armour to the max.

Electronic Endurance (ElE)

Software workings and sensor integrity, smooth operation of integrated systems, is what Electronic

Endurance is about. Sensor overload, Electronic Warfare attacks and hacking attempts all put strains on established firewalls and security measures. Too much of this can bring those systems down and make them unreliable. This endangers the overall functioning of the ship. As long as ElE stays above 0, the systems can take the strain. Real damage starts to happen after that.

Electronic Endurance (ElE) has a value of 1 to 20. A ElE of 1 is a haphazardly wired vessel IT just to get the ship to work, a 20 maybe an exploration vessel built to withstand violent solar flares or extreme radiation.

Signal Rating (SiR)

This is an important consideration for combat in Space. Every space vessel has a signature strength, representing it´s emmision of energy over a multispectral field. It´s the emmision of heat, gravimetric waves and other electromagnetic radiation. The more of these emmisions take place the bigger is the signature of the vessel, meassured in the Signature Rating (SiR). This is what scanners try to detect and is influenced by many factors. These are in general the size, the energy emmited, and the distance to the scanner. To keep it easy the SiR is measured as a target number (TN) that is to be met by checks made by sensors and electronic warfare.

The basic SiR is grounded in the ships size.

Component Attributes

Unlike an organic creature whose core is defined by birth, space vessels derive their attributes from the components built into them. These components can sometimes be added later, can be switched or upgraded. This makes these attributes fluid and adaptable. There are five main components to a vessel.

Armour

This represents the durability and resistance of the vessel's hull. The higher this value goes, the more the hull can withstand damage from various sources. This can be weapon damage, micrometeors among other things.

Armour is represented by deducting marks from a successful hit, thereby reducing the damage.

Drive

The Drive Attribute represents the ships' acceleration. With the K-Pad Drives, fuel is no limiting factor for continuous acceleration any more, giving ships enormous speeds. The limiting factor is the hull and strengthening of the drives to cope with possible G forces putting strain on the structure. The people inside the ship are the most limiting factor, but pulling high G manoeuvres also leads to high maintenance needs and costs.

Drive is given in three values, Cruise/March/Max. Up to max, all accelerations are possible, but further rules will reference these three values.

Cargo

How much space does the vessel posses to transport cargo and to possibly fit with modular and special equipment. It actually represents space to be used as deemed fit.

Sensors

Eyes and ears of the spaceship. Usually ships are equipped with a full sensor package, enabling them to analyse a multitude of signals, both passive and active. The sensors enable the operator to analyse the surroundings of the vessel and interpret them in the needed way.

Sensor Value is represented as a modifier to the Software Check to operate the sensors. They can be negative for crappy sensors or positive for advanced ones. A zero is a quality of a sensor, not an indication the vessel has no sensors. If sensors are destroyed or otherwise not available, that is marked with an X.

Optional Component Attributes

Electronic Warfare (EWF)

EWF gives the vessel abilities to conduct electronic attacks against enemy weapons and ships. These are systems to be operated by personnel or a character with the Expertise Area <Software>, the Specialisation <Cyber Operations> may be a perquisite for more advanced systems and is definitely relevant to EWF.

The Value is represented as a modifier to the checks. The value can be positive or negative, depending on the quality. A zero is a quality.

Weapons

Under weapons the different offensive systems are filed and listed. These can be different self porpelled munition, mines, drones, and projectile weapons.

Emergency Repair Systems

In case of damage to a vessel it can be equipped with emergency repair systems. These systems are things like automatic puncture sealing, repair drones, redundancy systems, fire controll and a multitude of other components offering added security for the vessels inhabitants.

These systems are not without limits. They have a certain amount of replacement parts and bots, limitis on reaction speed.

So a Emergency Repair system has three parameters.

The first is the number of StE Points it can repair bofore needing to be refilled and maintained.

The second is the efficiency using a modifier on the needed <Hardware> check. This can be positive or negative.

The third is the speed of the system, limiting the number of StE that can be repaired in a single Check.

Space Combat (SpCo)

During their missions, the characters will surely come into conflict in the depths of space. They will come upon hostile vessels with ill intent. Or they want to cause some damage themselves. The one thing that separates personal combat from space combat or any other larger vehicle combat is that the characters have all eggs in one bowl. If their vessel goes down they are usually done for. An exploding IRHEC needs no rescue operation anymore, only wreckage remains. Going to combat in space begins well before one shot is fired. It is about reconnaissance, planning and stealth to get an advantage against your enemy. The characters do well to come prepared and bring their expertise to the fight. And technical superiority does help, too. Here we consider that the corp provides the characters with a well-equipped vessel suited for the tasks at hand.

Initiating Space Combat

How does a space combat start, when do you know there are shots to be fired? It is all about situational awareness. If you are not able to identify a potential threat your enemy can act unnoticed. He will use that to his full advantage, hitting you out of nowhere.

This is why scanners, tactical positioning and subterfuge play a critical role before any shot is fired.

However, that may be, once the first salvo is launched the combat has started in earnest.

Highspeed Engagement

As a vessel in space can keep up acceleration for a pretty long time, the speeds it can achieve are enormous, the distances crossed in a segment of time vast. This kind of engagement can be fought, it is an intricate dance of trajectories and relative speeds. They are fought with long-range torpedoes, capable of prolonged acceleration and advanced self-guiding capabilities. Looking at a chase scenario, there is also the possibility of deploying loitering ammunition.

Low-Speed engagement

The other form of space combat is the slower kind. Both opponents are at relatively low speeds, orbiting a space station or simply shuttling to a local moon. This is where greater manoeuvrability, drones and point-defence weapons, electronic warfare and piloting skills come into their own.

In these scenarios, the aforementioned torpedoes take a back seat to very agile and fast missile systems and Gauss weapons, and point defence can be very offensive.

Time in Space Combat

We handle time in a similar way to ground combat and keep the battlefield on an abstract and story-based level.

The space combat is divided into segments that represent a spotlight for each participant. These segments are not fixed in time but rather fluid, adapting to the pace of the conflict.

To give an example of a high-speed Chase Engagement, the pursuer of the characters has fired a long-range torpedo, expected to catch up in about an hour time given its acceleration. This is a combat situation, but we would not play this out in small increments, we use the hour as a segment to plan the spotlight of the characters. The pursuers' spotlight was in this case the firing of the torpedo. They are certainly free to claim another spotlight during that hour.

Distance in space combat

Distance is a tricky thing in space combat. Precision shooting over long distances is easier, there is no drag on self-propelled munitions. So the engagement range can be very high. On the other hand, it relies much on scanners and predictive targeting, the enemy being able to dodge more easily on long-range engagements. As with ground combat, we keep the distances a bit more abstract defining the following. Distances are given in descriptive terms in the following order: "close quarter" → "near" → "middle range" → "long-range" → "extreme range". As we do not have an intuitive feeling for range in space there is the following definition of ranges. As there are also ranges in ground combat we will use the abbreviation SR (Space Range).

Close Quarter - SR

Those are engagements below 1.000 km. These are usually fought around static targets like space stations or stranded ships. Speeds are usually low.

Near - SR

This range goes from 1.000 km up to 10.000 km. In this range, direct fire weapons and short-range missiles are most effective.

Middle Range - SR

Here advanced sensors, positioning and strategy come into focus. From 10.000 up to 100.000 km the domain of long-range missiles starts.

40,075 km is the circumference of the Earth at the equator.

Long Range - SR

This covers distances from 100.000 km to 1 million km, accommodating the vastness of space and the time it takes for weapons to reach their targets. Combat at this

range is highly dependent on long-range detection and interception technologies. Torpedos dominate.

Extreme Range - SR

Beyond 1,000,000 km engagements are more about strategic positioning and the use of assets like satellites for indirect attacks or reconnaissance, rather than direct ship-to-ship combat.

Speed and Movement in Combat

The speed in space combat has two components that can be accounted for, the absolute speed and the acceleration. Acceleration is set by by mass of the vessel and the capabilities of the KPAD Drive. The absolute speed can be vast with no resistance in deep space whatsoever, lightspeed beeing the obvious limit. Acceleration is an interesting factor in combination with distance if you can outrun missile weapons. Or at least buy some time. Course changes also depend on absolute speed. As always in Abyssal this is handled narratively without exact calculations. Just something to keep in mind.

For those interested the formula for the turn rate is $r=v^2/a$. r is the turn radius in meters, v is the absolute velocity and a lateral acceleration.

The facing of a space vessel is achieved with manoeuvring jets turning it on the spot. This is used for firing weapons in arbitrary directions regardless of the flight direction. The power of these thrusters is usually very high on combat vessels, not so on commercial craft.

Space Combat Engagement Stakes

As with ground combat, the suit sets up the engagement stakes. This is what the combat is about and what is to be going down. Granularity and purpose are set. For a more comprehensive description look up Engagement Stakes

Order of Events

The distances and proceedings on a vessel do not call for a specific order of events. During a time increment, each combatant gets his spotlight, in the case of space combat his turn to state his intent. This will lead directly to the time frames involved and the ability to create more spotlights.

Example

The captain orders the launch of two long-range missiles and wants to wait for the outcome of his attack. The enemy ship registers the launch and calculates 10 minutes to impact. A lot can be done

Spotlights in Space Combat

Resolving a spotlight is the same mechanic as in Ground Combat. The players start by stating their character's action intent, considering their capabilities and equipment. The Suit sets the Spotlight Stakes, approving or adjusting the intent with a "Yes, but..." approach. They assign difficulty levels to actions through target numbers (TNs) for checks, labelling them from "easy" to "nearly impossible" for intuitive understanding. The Suit also outlines potential outcomes, risks, and rewards. In some cases, actions may succeed without a check. Finally, players roll checks to determine the outcome. For a more detailed description look at Spotlight.

Intents

Ready vessel for combat

There are some considerations for the crew of a vessel to prepare for combat. Most basic is the activation of the weapons protocols. This is readying the Point Defense Weapons to react on potential threats, activating missile targeting solutions. Nothing to sweat about.

Deeper consideration should be given to three points.

Decompression of the vessel makes it less prone to explosive decompression after taking a major hit. All the atmosphere will be pumped into high pressure tanks and stored. So unless these tanks take damage there is no danger. It requires the complete crew to done environmental suits. Some ships have the ability to to partial decompression.

There are two sides to discharging IRHEC. On the one hand, the sheer amount of energy in the IRHEC and its susceptibility to damage makes it dangerous in a combat situation, sometimes leading to massive energy discharges that wipe out most of the ship. But it also means that there is no way to make an emergency jump using the stellar generator if the IRHEC is empty. So it is a compromise that needs to be planned for.

Active and passive reconnaissance are necessary to gain battlefield awareness. Systems sending out electromagnetic radiation like radar will give away the

presence and possible position, making it easier for enemy ships to pinpoint and engage the vessel. So it is a balance between stealth and awareness that can be taken.

Deploy Weaponsystems

This is the big one. Engaging in combat has a goal, disabling or killing an enemy. To that end the characters can deploy various weapon systems and try to deal damage to an enemy. In difference to ground combat, this is not a physical skill any more. Algorithms and KI do much of the work within parameters controlled by the weapons operator of a space vessel. These are set upon the tactical analysis and sensor data received about the enemy. So to deploy a weapon system we need data and a tactic.

The success of an attack is based upon an Opposed <Software> check against the SiR of the enemy. The marks achieved by this test can be added to the EWAR value of the deployed weapon.

Using Terrain against Sensors

If there is more than open space at the engagement site and scale a pilot my use asteroids, structures or even small moons to improve stealth or sensor avoidance. A <Pilot> check against a TN set by the GM based on the abundance of possibilities is rolled and the achieved marks add to the difficilty of sensor lock on.

Electronic Warfare

As most, if not all systems depend on sensory data to to identify, track, and hit their target these systems can be fooled and attacked. Once the guiding and positioning systems are out of order the weapons are blind and will miss the target. Most weapons have an electronic warefare attack rating or EWAR.

The targeted vessel can try an opposed check <Software/Electronic Warefare> of the EW Operator against <EWAR> of the weapon. If the vessel succeds then the weapon misses its target.

The ship itself and its subcomponents can have an electronic warefare defence rating (EWDR) for passive.

Check protection or resistance

If the target is hit, it is checked if the weapon has penetrated the armour of the vessel, if any.

To do this we compare the penetration value to the armour.

If the penetration value is bigger than the armour value the weapon has completely penetrated the armour and does full damage to the Structural Endurance (StE)

If it is greater than half the protection value, one mark of damage is subtracted as seen under "Doing Damage", if it is lower no damage can be done with this kind of weapon.

If a weapon does ElE Damage physical armour can not protect against the damage.

Deal Damage

After a hit is confirmed and armour is considered we check for effect on the Structural Endurance of the vessel.

The amount of damage done to the StE is the number of marks achieved during the check to hit the target

The weapon itself has a damage modifier that is added to the damage. Even if the damage is reduced below 1 during this step it is always at least 1. As long as the StE stays above 0 everything is working fine. This represents a number of things like glancing hits, damage to secondary systems and general strain on the structure.

If the StE drops below 0 critical hits are suffered.

Critical Hits

If a vessel suffers a critical hit the crew has to make a choice. They either opt out of the combat declairing their ship inoperational, leaving themselves at the mercy of the enemy. Or they decide to keep on fighting. In this case the Suit decides on a hindering effect. That maybe the malfunction of a weapon, the loss of sensor information. Starting with the second critical hit upon deciding to stay in the fight a D6 is rolled. Should the result be below the number of critical hits the ship will explode in a timely manner, nothing to change about that anymore. Also starting with the second critical hit

the Suit may completely take away fighting or maneuvering abilities.

Critical hits on NPC vessels will be handled in the same way.

Emergency Repair Protocols

Most vessels are equipped with automated repair systems enabling prolonged survival on timeintensiv missions or in combat situations. These systems are controlled by an operator skilled in <Hardware>. He is overseeing the repair bots, priorisation and execution of damage control. The Emergency Repair systems have a limit in how fast, how often ond how efficient they operate. A check is done with <Hardware> against a moderate difficulty (TN 6), all marks achieved may be added to StE up to its maximum value. Check upon your optional ship attributes for Emergency Repair Systems.

GUARDIAN SRU

THE GURADIAN SRU (STRUCTURAL REPAIR UNIT) IS ABLE TO AUTONOMOUSLY REPAIR DAMAGE TO THE VESSELS SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURE. THIS IS ACHIEVED OVER A DIVERSE SWARM OF DRONES OF VARIOUS SIZES THAT CAN BE DIRECTED AND ORCHESTRATED BY A SKILLED ENGINEER. IT CAN REPAIR 1 STE PER MARK ACHIEVED IN A HARDWARE TEST. THIS CAN BE DONE EVERY 10 MINUTES. A MAXIMUM OF 10 STE CAN BE REPAIRED BEFORE THE SYSTEM HAS TO BE RECHARGED, TAKING ABOUT A DAY TO DO.

Sensor Operations

Sensor operations in space combat are crucial for gaining battlefield awareness, identifying threats, and enabling successful engagement strategies. The sensor operator's role is to interpret and manipulate the ship's sensor suite, ensuring optimal detection and targeting capabilities. This process involves a combination of passive and active scanning methods, balancing the need for information with the risk of revealing the ship's position. Scanning operations can influence the entire course of a battle by detecting enemy ships, identifying weaknesses, and providing essential data for tactical decisions.

Passive Scanning

Passive scanning involves the detection and analysis of external signals without emitting any detectable radiation or energy, keeping the vessel hidden from enemy sensors. This method relies on the ship's ability to pick up and interpret various electromagnetic waves, thermal signatures, and other emissions from the surrounding environment.

Initiating Passive Scan

The sensor operator begins a passive scan by utilizing the ship's advanced sensor arrays to sift through ambient signals. This is done with a <Software/Sensor Operations> check, compared against the Signal Rating (SiR) of any potential targets. The difficulty of this check is influenced by the distance to the target and any environmental factors such as nebulae or asteroid fields.

Outcome of Passive Scanning

Successful passive scanning provides the ship with information about the general location, speed, and possible classification of other vessels or objects without giving away its position. However, the information gathered is less detailed than with active scanning. Passive scanning is ideal for maintaining stealth while gathering critical data at longer distances.

Modifiers and Considerations

Distance: The farther the target, the harder it is to gather detailed information. Use the established Space Range (SR) categories to adjust the TN for passive scans.

Environment: Dense asteroid fields, nebulae, or debris can both hinder and aid passive scanning. The Suit may assign TN modifiers based on these conditions, making scans more challenging or easier depending on the circumstances.

Active Scanning

Active scanning involves emitting energy, such as radar or LIDAR pulses, to probe the surrounding space. This method is far more precise but comes with the risk of alerting enemies to the ship's presence and location.

Initiating Active Scan

The sensor operator performs an active scan by directing the ship's sensor systems to send out a pulse of energy and then analysing the returned signals. This requires a <Software/Sensor Operations> check, with

the TN adjusted based on the ship's Signal Rating (SiR) and the target's defensive capabilities, such as sensor jamming or stealth technology.

Outcome of Active Scanning

Active scanning provides detailed information about the target, including exact location, velocity, and potentially even identifying weaknesses or specific systems. This level of detail is critical for precise targeting and tactical planning. However, using active scanning means the ship's position is likely to be revealed to any vessels within scanning range.

Risk and Reward

Active scanning dramatically increases the ship's SiR, making it easier for enemies to detect and engage. The Suit may set stakes where active scans result in the ship being automatically detected.

Interpreting Data

The data gathered from both passive and active scans must be interpreted and relayed to the crew, influencing decisions such as weapon deployment, maneuvering, or even retreat. The sensor operator plays a crucial role in this process, ensuring that the information is accurate and actionable.

Post-Scan Analysis

After conducting a scan, the sensor operator may perform an additional <Software/Sensor Operations> check to refine the data, reducing uncertainties or identifying patterns that might not be immediately obvious. This can lead to bonuses on subsequent tactical or engagement checks, depending on the clarity and accuracy of the gathered information.

Tactical Application

The results of scanning operations directly affect the ship's tactical decisions. Detailed scans can allow the crew to exploit weaknesses, avoid ambushes, or gain a critical advantage in positioning. Conversely, failed or ineffective scans might leave the vessel vulnerable to surprise attacks or strategic blunders.

Jump Navigation

In a combat situation there may be the need to operate the stellar projectors of the ship to gain an advantage on the enemy. As the use of these devices is critically dependent on gravitational forces to calculate a target location the projector has to be calibrated and in some cases a favourable spot for portal generation to be found. Or it is an emergency jump to get away from danger quickly. The calculations for a successful portal with the correct destination are done with <Navigation/Jump Plotter>

Spaceship Components

Weaponsystems

Torpedos

Torpedoes are specialized munitions designed to deliver devastating payloads over long distances. They have advanced sensor arrays to to track their targets

and initiate evasive maneuers against the target's countermeasures. Torpedos come with Kramer PAD Drives. Often equipped with powerful warheads, torpedoes are capable of inflicting significant damage to enemy ships, making them a formidable weapon at long distances. Torpedos are huge, expensive weapons.

ASAS TORPEDO

THE ADVANCED SPACE ATTACK SOLUTION TORPEDO IS A BEAST OF A WEAPON. SPECIALIZING ON LONG AND EXTREME RANGES IT HAS LOWER BUT LONGER ACCELLERATION PHASE THAN ITS WARHEAD BRETHEREN. EQUIPPED WITH A KPAD, AUTOMATED TARGETING LOGICS AND EXTENSIVE SENSORY ARRAYS IT IS ABLE TO AUTONOMOSLY PURSUE ITS DESIGNATED TARGET. EQUIPED WITH STEALTH TECHNOLOGY FOR SIGNAL MASKING IT CAN STAY OF THE RADAR FOR A LONG TIME. CONSTANTLY ACCELERATING WITH 4G IT CAN AND WILL OUTPACE HUMAN MANED TARGETS THAT TRY TO RUN. IF THE ASAS HITS IT HAS TERRIBLE EXPLOSIVE POWER

Medium Range missiles

Medium-range missiles are guided projectiles that can be launched from a distance to engage targets beyond visual range. These missiles are equipped with advanced guidance systems, allowing them to track and intercept enemy vessels with precision.

HADES 5 MISSILE

DESCRIPTION: THE HADES 5 IS A STANDART MISSILE IN THE PALADIUM TACTICS CORP. ARSENAL. IT IS EQUIPPED WITH A SMALL SENSOR ARRAY INCORPORATIONG THERMAL AND VISUAL RECKOGNITION, READY TO RECEIVE TARGETING INFORMATION FROM THE FIRING VESSEL. DESIGNED FOR MEDIUM RANGE IT PACKS AN INTENSE 8G ACCELERATION RATE FOR 5 MINUTES, ONLY BEING ABLE TO MAKE INBOUND COURSE CORRECTIONS AND DEFENSIVE MANEUVERS AFTER THAT. THIS WOULD HIT A TARGET AT 10000 KM IN ABOUT 10 MINUTES CAUSING SERIOUS DAMAGE

Near Range Missiles

Near-range missiles are close-quarters weapons designed for engagements at relatively short distances. Despite their limited range, short-range missiles pack a powerful punch, making them ideal for rapid, close-range combat encounters.

HYDRA INTERCEPTOR MISSILE

THE HYDRA IS A NEAR RANGE DEFENSE MISSILE USUALLY DEPLOYED AGAINST INCOMMING ORDENANCE, SPEAK TORPEDOS, MEDIUM RANGE MISSILES OR DRONES. HYDRA IS LIGHTWEIGHT, CONCENTRATIONG ON SPEED AND RELYING ON TARGET INFORMATION FROM THE FIRING PLATFORM. A HYDRA FIRE SOLUTION CONSISTS OF AT LEAST 4 WARHEADS FOR MAXIMUM RELIABILITY AND FAILSAFE ATTACK PATTERNS. INTERCEPT ACCELERATION COMES AT 11G FOR 2 MINUTES, PACKING ABOUT 2KT OF EXPLOSIVE POWER.

Gaus Weapons

Gauss weapons utilize electromagnetic acceleration to propel projectiles at high

velocities, delivering devastating kinetic energy to enemy targets. Known for their high rate of fire and accuracy, Gauss weapons are favored by many for their effectiveness in combat. A second point in favour is the relative cheap production of munitions. Gaus Weapons come in many sizes, from long range single shot guns to Point Defence Systems with small calibres and high rates of fire.

VULCAN GAUSS CANNON

THE VULCAN GAUSS CANNON IS A VERSATILE, RAPID-FIRE WEAPON SYSTEM. UTILIZING ELECTROMAGNETIC ACCELERATION, IT CAN FIRE PROJECTILES AT EXTREMELY HIGH VELOCITIES WITH PINPOINT ACCURACY. DESIGNED FOR CLOSE-QUARTER TO NEAR SPACE ENGAGEMENTS, THE VULCAN IS CAPABLE OF DELIVERING A RELENTLESS BARRAGE, OVERWHELMING ENEMY DEFENSES. WITH A FIRING RATE OF 1200 ROUNDS PER MINUTE, IT EXCELS IN BOTH OFFENSIVE AND DEFENSIVE ROLES, MAKING IT A STAPLE FOR ANY WELL-EQUIPPED VESSEL.

Convetional Projectile Weapons

Conventional projectile weapons encompass a wide range of firearms and cannons that use chemical propellants to launch projectiles. While not as advanced as other weapon types, conventional projectile weapons remain a reliable and widely used option in space combat. A big advantage may be the highly reduced dependency from electrical power to operate the guns, most of them equipped with local energy supplys to move the targeting machinery.

THUNDERSTRIKE ARTILLERY

THE THUNDERSTRIKE ARTILLERY SYSTEM IS A ROBUST, HIGH-CALIBER CONVENTIONAL CANNON. USING CHEMICAL PROPELLANTS, IT LAUNCHES HEAVY PROJECTILES CAPABLE OF BREACHING THE THICKEST ARMOR. IDEAL FOR LONG-RANGE BOMBARDMENTS, THE THUNDERSTRIKE COMBINES RELIABILITY WITH DEVASTATING FIREPOWER. IT IS ESPECIALLY USEFUL WHEN ELECTRONIC WARFARE THREATENS MORE ADVANCED SYSTEMS, AS ITS SIMPLE MECHANICS ENSURE CONTINUOUS OPERATION EVEN UNDER HEAVY EMP ATTACKS.

Loitering Munition

Loitering munitions are autonomous drones equipped with explosives or other payloads, designed to loiter in a target area until a suitable target is identified. Once engaged, these drones can rapidly engage enemy vessels with precision strikes. Another term could be Smart Mines.

TIC SMART MINE

The TIC (Tactical Intercept Component) Smart Mine is an autonomous drone equipped with advanced sensor arrays and explosive payloads. Designed to loiter in designated areas, it waits patiently for enemy vessels to enter its kill zone. Upon target acquisition, the Viper engages with precision, delivering a powerful explosive strike. Its stealth capabilities and long operational duration make it an excellent tool for area denial and ambush tactics.

EMP Weapons

Electromagnetic pulse (EMP) weapons are non-lethal devices that emit electromagnetic pulses to disrupt or disable electronic systems aboard enemy vessels. While not causing physical damage, EMP weapons can incapacitate enemy ships and leave them vulnerable to further attacks. They do damage to the electronic endurance.

ZEUS EMP PROJECTOR

The Zeus EMP Projector is a non-lethal weapon designed to disrupt and disable electronic systems aboard enemy vessels. Emitting a concentrated electromagnetic pulse, it can incapacitate vital systems, leaving ships vulnerable to further attacks. The Zeus is particularly effective in disabling shields, navigation systems, and weaponry without causing physical damage, making it a strategic asset in space combat scenarios.

Drones

Drones are unmanned aerial vehicles equipped with various weapons and sensors, capable of performing a wide range of tasks in space combat. From reconnaissance and surveillance to combat and support roles, drones are valuable assets in any fleet. They are usually deployed at stationary or slow moving targets as they mostly lack KPAD Drives.

RAVEN RECON DRONE

The Raven Recon Drone is an unmanned aerial vehicle designed for reconnaissance and surveillance missions. Equipped with high-resolution cameras and advanced sensor arrays, the Raven provides real-time intelligence and battlefield awareness. Its stealth capabilities and long operational range allow it to operate undetected, gathering critical data on enemy positions and movements. The Raven is an invaluable asset for tactical planning and situational awareness.

Terror, Fear, and Morale

During their missions, the characters may come across many mind devastating sights and situations, shaking the core of their beliefs and their image of the world. This could be any number of things, from the loss of team members in gruesome ways or encountering entities not entirely from this world. And fear is a slippery slope downward.

Each time a horrific or traumatizing event takes place, the Mind Attribute is attacked with a Terror Value. This is an opposing check. If the operative wins the check, he can shrug off the effects of terror. If he loses the check, he takes the Marks as damage from his Mental Endurance (MeE). Once the MeE hits zero, mental degradation begins.

Example

Gruber is engaged in combat with a hostile force. Shots rain down the corridor, keeping him and his allies in cover. Suddenly a grenade detonates, tearing of the arm of his nearest companion, covering him in blood. The Suit rules this attack him with a Terror Value (TV) of 8. Gruber rolls { 10, 6, 13 }, The Suit { 12, 14, 20 }. Grubers Mind Value is 6, the result stays at 6. Suits

midle value is 14, so his result is TV 8 + 4, 12. The Terror achieves 1 Mark for the success and 2 additional marks for beeing twice time 3 above the result of Gruber for a total of three marks.

Regeneration of Mental Endurance

Mental Endurance recovers once the characters reach a place of relative safety and calm. They need to be able to rest without immediate danger to body and soul. This can still be on mission in the theatre of operations, but it has to be a break in the action. Once this happens, the Mental Endurance is fully recovered.

Mental Degradation

Mental degradation happens in small increments from 1 to 10. Each time MeE hits zero, Mental Degradation increases by the marks that caused MeE to hit zero.

Mental Degradation can have short-term and long-term consequences. Each time the MeE hits 0, two random effects are determined, a short-term effect and a long-term effect.

The short-term effect is immediately applied, decreasing the operational value of the character. Most of these effects can and should be resolved narratively.

The Suit can and should apply higher TN´s for checks that could be influenced by the short term effect.

Long-term effects can occur. The character rolls a Dedication against the TN of his Mental Degradation value. If he succeeds, he can avoid long-term effects, if not, the effect sets in, making his life miserable and probably putting him on medication.

D20 Roll	Short-Term	Long Term
1-3	Minor anxiety, slight jumpiness	Occasional nightmares, brief intrusive thoughts
4-6	Increased heart rate, heightened vigilance	Mild phobic reactions to similar situations
7-9	Sleep disturbances, irritability	Periodic anxiety, avoidant behaviours
10-12	Confusion, scattered thoughts	Chronic tension, minor memory problems
13-14	Fear, avoidance of certain places/people	Persistent sadness, emotional numbing
15-16	Anger outbursts, restlessness	Difficulty forming close relationships
17	Flashbacks, intense fear	Heightened startle response, distrust
18	Severe anxiety, panic attacks	Chronic fear, possible development of phobias
19	Debilitating fear, refusal to eat/sleep alone	Complex PTSD, severe depression
20	Complete dissociation, psychological breakdown	Long-term disability, potential for self-harm

Treatment of Short-Term Effects

Operatives in Abyssal are trained in applying coping strategies and compartmentalisation. A skilled field medic can apply emergency counselling once a situation has cooled down a bit. Each Mark that can be achieved on a simple check in the Medical Expertise Area against a TN equal to the Mental Degradation reduces the initial effect by that many steps. As an example, treating Fear with 2 Marks will change it to Sleep disturbances.

Once a mission is over, the effects will immediately become negligible and can be removed as an entry. Narratively, they can be referenced for a longer time.

Treatment of long-Term effects

The reduction of long-term effects through emergency counselling works the same way as with Short-Term effects.

The treatment of long-term effects goes hand in hand with the recovering of mental degradation. Each month of treatment reduces the long-term effect by one on the table. Completing the last step heals the patient.

Drug Treatment of Effects

All the different effects can be treated with medication, psychoactive drugs. Usually the effects settle in pretty fast, taking 1D6/2 days to get active. Most of these dampen awareness, lead to weight gain, or can even provoke deeper depression. Due to medical advancements these effects are not to severe and should only start playing a role after prolonged exposure.

Recovering Mental Degradation

Mental Degradation can be recovered by therapy. Usualy all operative in Abyssal have access to therapists and mental facilities during mission downtime. With access to these 1 point of Mental Degradation can be cured over a month.

A Note on Mental Health

In the universe of Abyssal, we venture into extraordinary realms, confronting horrors that stretch the imagination. As part of our journey, we encounter various aspects of human experience, including mental health conditions, depicted in a simplified manner for gameplay purposes.

However, it is crucial to acknowledge the stark difference between our game's portrayal and the profound complexity and severity of these conditions in real life. Mental health ailments—ranging from depression and anxiety to PTSD and severe psychosis—are deeply serious and multifaceted, impacting millions of people worldwide. They are not merely obstacles to be 'cured' with a single remedy, but rather ongoing conditions that individuals bravely face every day, often requiring a combination of therapy, support, and sometimes medication over time.

We recognize that these conditions are not character flaws or signs of weakness, but rather part of the human condition that deserves understanding, compassion, and proper care. Our intention is not to trivialize these experiences.

We encourage all players to approach these topics with sensitivity and respect, and to seek professional help if you or someone you know is struggling with mental health issues. Remember, mental health is just as important as physical health, and there is strength in seeking support.

Appendix of Tables

Weapon Type	Ammunition Type	Penetration Value	Rate of fire	Optimal Range
Pistol	Standard Rounds	4	medium	near
Submachine Gun	Standard Rounds	5	high	near
Assault Rifle	Standard Rounds	10	high	middle range
Sniper Rifle	Standard Rounds	16	low	long range
Shotgun	Buckshot	2	low	middle range
Grenade Launcher	Explosive Grenades	28	low	middle range
Longbarreled Coil Gun	Ferromagnetic Slugs	20	high	long range
Autoshotgun	Buckshot	2	high	near

Ammunition Types	Pistol	SMG	Assault Rifle	Sniper Rifle	Shotgun	Long Coiled Gauss	Pen. Modifier	Damage Modifier
Full Metal Jacket	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	FALSE	FALSE	0	0
Hollow Point	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	FALSE	FALSE	-2	2
Frangible Rounds	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	FALSE	FALSE	FALSE	-3	-1
Armour Piercing	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	FALSE	FALSE	2	0
Subsonic Rounds	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	FALSE	FALSE	FALSE	-1	0
Slug rounds	FALSE	FALSE	FALSE	FALSE	TRUE	FALSE	2	1
Flechette	FALSE	FALSE	FALSE	FALSE	TRUE	FALSE	-2	2

Type	Protection	Full enclosure
Light Bulletproof Vest	8	n

Combat Armour	12	n
Reinforced Combat Armour	14	n
Heavy Exo Armour	18	n
Military Force Armour	24	y
Light Space Combat Armour	14	y
Medium Space Combat Armour	16	y

Weapon Type	Range	Weapon Speed/Acceleration	Damage	EWDR	
NRM	Near				
MRM	Medium				
Railgun	Near	10 km/s			
PDG	Close	10 km/s			
Torpedo	Long				

ABYSSAL

The Package

An Introductory Mission

For all of you

The Package ver. 0.1

[Publish Date]

Disclaimer

This is a work in progress and under constant change. Until it reaches Beta, it is not considered play ready to its full extent. This version is provided to gather feedback on the rules and setting of the game. Abyssal is a game written for the love of science fiction, horror and investigative genres. It contains descriptions of horror and violence.

The Package

The Package is a small mission taking place on the plant Lucretia V, in the Lucretia System. But, to be true, it can be placed in any location that fits your current campaign with almost no effort at all.

Plot Synopsis

The characters are instructed by their employer to follow a certain Isaac Fender to the opening of holo artist Shaun Van, where he is showing his latest work. This opening takes place in the Vanderste Art Gallery, a very fancy location in the city centre in a high-profile area. Access to the Opening is by invitation only, which can be arranged. During the event, Fender will meet Charles Dingerman and exchange the suitcase for a card containing hard currency. Dingerman works for a collector of occult objects. The suitcase contains the writings of LudCrier on angels and demons, a writing that bends reality around itself, creating sharp edges in reality that can harm people and objects alike. It is not common, but it can be observed and be pretty drastic. The writings are rumoured to contain formulae or rituals to cleanse and heal disease of mind and body.

The characters' goal is to track Dingerman, identify his destination and, if possible, the buyer of the case, and apprehend them both. This takes them on a chase, fending off some devil worshippers who are after the prize and ambushing Dingerman's ship to get at him and his patron.

The characters are unaware of the true contents of the suitcase, which they are told are sensitive technical writings that could fall into the wrong hands. In reality, Fender is an employee of the characters' employer who stole the scriptures. The Corp has just unleashed its dogs.

Scene 1: The Briefing

All the characters are gathered at a small little briefing room at the local Corp. Headquarters. There are 3 rows of leather chairs and a small podium for the speaker. Information is projected on the handheld information pads of the characters.

They are briefed by an indistinct looking man in a grey business suit, who introduces himself as Mr. Uhl. He informs the characters that they are tasked with the observation and tracking of a certain Isaac Fender. This Fender has obtained certain sensitive information from the Corp. and intends to sell it to an undisclosed contact at the Vanderset Art Gallery.

The gallery is about to hold an opening of the latest work of Mrs. Shaun Van, an artist doing holographic installations. This event is invitation only, something that has been handled, there are invitations provided for all the characters. The invitations consist of an intricate QR, suggesting the whole invitation handled electronically. Invitations also double as access to the car park under the gallery.

Why an invitation only opening is chosen as the transfer point remains a bit of a mystery.

The contact should be identified and followed. It is believed that this contact is just an intermediary for the involved second party. In the end, the undisclosed contact and its handler shall be apprehended, securing the sensitive information and options to shed light on the events that led to the stealing of the information. No information is given to the characters about the nature of the sensitive information. They are instructed not to inspect the information.

The characters are to prepare themselves with what they deem necessary, do preliminary observations of the location. The opening is in 7 days.

Unknown to both the Corp and to the players, the Vanderset Art Gallery does not only trade in the completely legal areas. They also act as fixers for certain items, both rare or illegal, sometimes both. They brokered the deal between fender and Dingerman. This can become clear and proven with the apprehension of Dingerman later, or be suspected by the characters once they witness the proceedings at the opening.

Scene 2: The Opening

The opening takes place at the Vanderset Gallery. It is located on the top of a cliff on the seaside within a small and luxurious recreational area just outside the metropole of Greytown. It is pretty cold outside, right around freezing point. The rain of the last few days left everything soaking wet. There is constant spray and fog rolling in from the sea, sometimes reducing visibility to just a dozen meters.

The Gallery borders on a large plaza lined with shops and closed down cafés waiting for warmer times. The window front belies the spaciousness of the rooms behind, just teasing at what is to be seen inside and protecting more precious paintings from the environmental influences created by visitors leaving and entering the premises.

Below the building is a two-story car parking to be accessed from the backside. There is access from the car park direct into a passage inside the gallery building. There is also access to delivery areas for the gallery and the building block.

The doors to the delivery area and service room are locked and secured with a key card magnetic lock. There is a camera monitoring the area. At the night of the opening this is closed down, during more normal hours sometimes the backdoor is left open with a door stopper. If this is the case, there are usually people about going after their work.

At the night of the opening

The gallery will be full of people, in elegant dresses with eloquent voices. Mrs. Van's holo art is the latest and hottest topic in the local art scene, and many people come to see that.

There is minimal security in this quiet area, just two bouncers flanking the entrance area and two more supervising the exhibition area. The bouncers wear thin bulletproof vests and carry telescope batons on their belts. No more weapons are deemed important.

At the entrance area, the invitations are checked. Right behind the entrance is a tended wardrobe for leaving the weather required wardrobe.

As this is a gallery that sells high-priced art, all rooms have surveillance cameras installed. This goes as well for the backdoor areas. All cameras have wired connections to the main server of the business, located in the spacious back-office area.

The installations are installed on stellas placed inside the room, as well as holographic pictures on the wall. The visuals are mind dazzling to watch, the brain deciding if there is truth or just two-dimensional space.

There are waiters and waitresses around to serve beverages and offer fine, art friendly finger food.

At about 21.00 hours, Mrs. Van enlightens the guests with a speech about her vision for the holo installations, something that might interest a student of modern art. There is strong applause anyway.

A not so fitting guest

Observing the crowd and getting a feel for the surroundings isn't too hard. The invitations are only in part of a personal nature, they also include wealthy customers of the gallery as well as personal friends of the owners. As these groups not necessarily know each other. It is pretty easy to blend in. What they do have in common is a certain demeanour and aura of style.

One of the guests is not fitting in very well. Yes, he wears the dress, but he looks tense and nervous. Engaging him in a conversation can reveal distinctive behavioural patterns marking him out, not being upper class as the rest of the guests.

This is Iskander Deerson, member of a cult of Devil worshippers based in the city. They have information that an item of occult importance is being traded tonight. They are intent to intercepting it on the way back to the city, Deerson being there to identify the buyer and the item. He will try to tag them electronically for interception on the way back to the city. The Devil Worshippers got the information by being tipped off by an informant, usually working for the Vandersets. Not Deerson nor the later interceptors are aware of this.

Arrival of Isaac Fender

At about 21:45 Mr. Fender arrives at the scene. He is not seen entering the building through the front entrance, he just seems to appear. He arrives at the main exhibition rooms through the tract leading to the restrooms, the small kitchen and the back-office. This is due to the fact that he has been waiting for the meeting in a small meeting room leading to the vault of the gallery. The suitcase containing the item is securely stored inside the vault until right before the transaction takes place.

Meeting of Dingerman and Fender

Mr. Fender walks through the exhibition until he meets with Dingerman, a man in his 30s identified by the characters as a guest, having arrived around 19:30 hour. If they have set up outer surveillance or can gain access to the building's security feed, they can identify the car of Dingerman, a deep blue Ariol Thunderbird. This is a luxurious, pretty heavy limousine. The security system of the building is not to be confused with the one in the gallery.

Both men talk a bit, they clearly do not know each other. It is small talk about the arrival, the weather, and the art. Listening in, the characters can deduce that Dingerman arrived at the cities' spaceport. After a short while, they are talked to by a waitress and start to drift towards the back office area.

That's when Deerson makes his move. He tries to bump into Dingerman and slip a tracker inside his jacket pocket. If he does not succeed and is detected, a small tumult breaks out involving the bouncers. Whatever the outcome, he has taken pictures and sent them to his accomplices before. If a failure thwarts the interception is up to the Suit.

In any case, Fender and Dingerman enter the back-office and conclude their deal under the supervision of Mr. Vanderset junior, who is not at the exhibition at all. This proceeding in this room should be hidden from the characters, if they find out, they still have to stick to the mission briefing to track Mr. Dingerman.

Concluded Business

After everything is said and done, Mr. Dingerman will leave the exhibition through the front door, take the stairs in the outer passage to reach his car and leave the scene.

While he walks the suitcase through the exhibition hall, a tall, handsome man suddenly clasps his eye, blood welling up through his hand, starting to yell. This brings the party to halt. Just as silence falls over the room, a light in the ceiling sparks out of existence, showering some guest in glass.

If medical attention is given by the characters, they can observe that the eye of the man and part of the skin seem to be cut, as with a razor sharp knife. If no help is provided, the paramedics arrive shortly after that.

Scene 3: Intercept

Dingerman leaves the gallery in his car, directly heading to the city spaceport. Unknown to him, an ambush is set on the road leading from the resort to the city.

The intent is straightforward. Subduing Dingerman and securing the suitcase after the cultist Deerson on stakeout identified him as the target.

The plan is to provoke an accident by letting Dingerman run into the boot of a sharply breaking car and force him to hand over the suitcase. The first car is backed by a second car closing the distance from behind.

First car is manned by 2 cultists, the second by three. One of the five cultists provides heavy firepower with SMG.

At first, everything goes as planned, Dingerman is forced to run into the lead car and even pulls over. But instead of playing their cards right, the cultist exiting the car draws his gun before Dingerman lowered the wind shield which is, Ariol Thunderbird standard issue, at least partial bulletproof. Dingerman makes his move, trusts into the wind shield protection and hits the cultist first with the door, then with his 9 mm hollow point in the shin. The second crew opens fire from the second car, threatening the rear window. The Thunderbird pulls out into the street with smoking tires.

It now lies in the hand of the characters concluding the scene. Their objective is to enable Dingerman to meet up with his employer and not to reveal their hand too much. It is not looking too good for him, as the cultist pack a bit of a punch. If the characters do not intervene first, he will lose control of his vehicle and try to escape into the woods in the freezing cold, upping the ante for the characters. They know he will not make it if they do not intervene. Their choice, the primary mission, fails if Dingerman either dies or gets caught bei the cultists. The Suit could come up with a salvage mission retrieving the book.

If they do take care of the remaining cultists, Dingerman will get his trouble organized, getting warm clothing from the car and trying to hitch-hike to the city. He attempts to avoid police because of the hold-up, not out of fear. Arriving in the city, he checks in to his hotel, the Marlin.

Scene 4: Spacebound

The further proceedings are up to the characters. What is planned out by Charles Dingerman is the following.

After arriving at the hotel, Dingerman initiates his emergency plan. He packs up his things in the Marlin and either drives to the Spaceport or calls for a taxi. The spaceport has a massive terminal building and security around the port is pretty heavy. He deducts that he and the package will be pretty safe here. He is absolutely correct, armed security forces roam the area and video surveillance is just about everywhere.

He tries to use his contacts and organize a private captain to carry him off planet. Doing that takes him about 24 hours to organize. He also uses this time to send out a notice to his employer and cancels the planned transfer. Once he goes on the chartered vessel, he will have received rendevue coordinates in space with the waiting vessel, Dao´s ship "Starspear". The transfer will be completed there after ferrying Dingerman over.

The characters have some options here. Again, they can try to bug Dingerman, attempting to catch his communications. They could get his cover identity from the Marlin, this is the same he uses to look for a private captain. Characters could use that and take this job themselves. They could take and make him reveal contact data with his employer to set up a new

rendezvous point, making the later waste his IRHEC Power and rendering him into a sitting duck.

Scene 5: At Gunpoint

Dingermans Employer is Alon Dao, a filthy rich upper echelon Corp Manager working for Quantum Technologies (or another of the Big 12 if Quantum is the Patreon of the characters, this part of the background is not relevant in this case). As a side hustle, he invests his money in occult objects and texts, trying to find a spiritual cure for his imbecile son. His love for him cost Dao his compassion for other human beings and moral, as his hunt takes precedence above all else. Dao arrives at the meeting point in his personal vessel, a sleek looking and modern cruiser called the "Starspear". He is accompanied by a crew of 3, a 4-man security detail and his son Jonathan. His affiliation with Quantum is not openly visible.

The task of the characters is pretty clear. Apprehend Dingerman and Dao and secure the package containing the scripture.

Depending on the prior actions of the characters, three scenarios may be possible.

The first one has the characters tracking Dingerman and his hired vessel to the prearranged meeting point. We got one hired, neutral vessel and the Starspear loaded and ready to use its projector. The projector needs about 10 minutes to power up.

The second scenario is the characters have hired themselves out to Dingerman and arrive with him at the prearranged meeting point. Star Spear is also ready to jump.

In the third scenario, they have been able to change the meeting point. In this case, the Starspear has an empty IRHEC making it impossible to jump away. This will also be true for the character's ship.

Boarding and Ferrying

In deep space, there are different ways to get from one vessel to another. The most basic one is just open the airlock, fly over to the other vessel and enter it. Usually, this is done with a safety line attached.

Second possibility are so - called soft or hard docks. It is basically an extendible bridge spanning the distance between two airlocks. These bridges can be made of soft, foldable materials that can cross a wider gap but provide no real bond. The other is made of hard materials that provide a strong connection between two vessels. These connections are shorter and sturdier.

The third method is using shuttles, this is reserved for larger ships as a hangar is needed.

In this scene either ferrying or docking is possible, the Starspear supports both hard and soft docking.

The Battle for the Starspear

Once the characters managed to enter the Starspear the gloves will be off. It is their task to get a hold of the

suitcase, Dao and in extend Dingerman. Dao will have realized that something is very wrong and may chat with the characters and make them an substantial offer for a retreat. This may take place over ship intercom while his IT Officer tries to hack into the characters comms. This is very difficult for him.

He will also bring his security detail into position to fight them off, using deadly force. Despite carrying missiles The Starspear is no dedicated combat vessel, it´s interior quit fragile. The detail tries to steer firefights into less critical compartmens to avoid damge to the infrastructure.

Lighting and visibility is good, most likely the Starspear is under artificial gravity and pressurized. Look at the plan of the starspear to get a feel for the ship.

Final Confrontation

The time will come the characters will pin down Dao and his son Jonathan. Dao will try to interposition himself between the threat and his son. He will not go down without a fight and utilize his last line of defense, opening the Vial of bottled Darkness. Instantly the temperature will drop and darkness decend like a night with a full moon. From the shadows nightmarish creatures emerge clawing their ways into the souls of all aboard the Starspear without protection, namely Dao and his son.

The way to stop this nightmare is to knock out the conciousness of the vials creator Mr. Dao. Killing him also does the job. If the characters manage to get

through this ordeal they have to face the question of what to do about Jonathan if they take Dao into custody. Do they leave the boy behind?

Debrief

Having completed the mission the characters should return to their home base for debriefing. They are to hand over the suitcase and the captives Dao, Dingerman and, if aprehended, Jonathan Dao to the caring hands of their employer.

It will be Mr. Uhl in the same little briefing room they started out where they will be interviewed about the actions taken on the way to acertain the mission goal.

There will be individual interviews later on regarding the circumstances on the Starspear and in paticular the decending Darkness of the Vial. They will also explicitly asked if they opened the suitcase and inspected the contents. There will be reprimands if they did so.

Dramatis Personae

Isaac Fender

Isaac Fender is a man in his middle 40s. He is a small person which is slightly overweight. His brittle hair starts to get lighter and is trimmed short. His features are homely and friendly, he himself has a high self-esteem.

His wardrobe is bleak, a bit too colourful most of the time. It is just not high enough on his priority list to be any good. For the opening, he is dressed in a deep blue business suit. Nothing wrong here.

He has no wife nor kids, and due to recent fluctuations and miscalculations lost a lot of money to the financial markets. He is a restorator in the empty of the character's Patreon.

Coming into the possession of the scriptum provided Fender with an option. Reading it and observing the strangeness around the book, he considered it to be a chance and organized the disappearing of it. He does not know exactly what is written but feels it is the real deal.

He has approached the Vanderset Galery to broker a deal. The Gallery knew of Mr. Dingermans interest in occult writing and contact was made.

Charles Dingerman

Charles Dingerman is in his late 30s. He has a athletic physique and stands a good height. Always tanned and well kempt and manicured he makes an impression of a successful businessman, he is, kind of.

He always wears suit and tie, shoes and jacket of the finest sort. He is well aware of his appearance and strives to keep it impregnable.

Charles Dingerman is a professional freelancer for shady deals of all kinds. Outright wetwork is not his thing, he is more into transport, acquisition and invoicing. In these jobs, he is happy and efficient.

Dingerman is always armed with a 9 mm pistol and wears a thin kevlar vest. He has a combat knife in an ankle holster.

Dingerman was recruited to acquire the scriptum and transport it to Mr.Dao because of the discretion and his ability to set things right should the seller Mr. Fender have any funny ideas. Dinger knows absolute nothing about the contents of the Package.

He has contact information for Mr.Dao, channels set up just for him. Mr. Dao is known to him only in his unofficial position as a collector of the occult. They both repeatedly had dealings with each other.

Iskaander Derson

Derson is unremarkable in body and physique until he takes his clothes off. His whole body is tattooed with occult and satanic symbology, being deep into the cult of the "Darkest Light".

For the occasion of the opening, he has acquired half decent clothing and avoids sticking out as a sore

thumb. Usually, in the city he would have fitted right in with the hip and wild art scene, at the retreat of the rich, not so much.

He is a pretty ruthless person, having learned that his prayers finally start to work. Not for him, for now, but word is spreading that there a strange and wonderful successes, answers to prayers by devoted acolytes of the left hand.

He is not informed why his leaders want to acquire the contents of the suitcase, but he also understands that it is not his place to ask. He just follows orders.

Alon Dao

Mr. Dao is a distinguished looking man of undiscernible age. His features hint at his Asian ancestry, being fine cut and delicate. His skin looks like porcelain, and he has a scent of cedar wood on him. He wears his hair bound to a ponytail with an undercut right above his ears. The eyes are of a deep, dark brown and betray his age and sorrow.

His demeanour is always polite and reserved, stating his will and demands in a matter-of-fact voice. He is used of getting what he wants.

He is dressed in plain black clothing of the finest cut and material, the hem and neck trimmed with deep, dark red.

Mr. Dao has a mentally challenged son he cares deeply for. He is convinced that the universe played a cruel trick on him as he considered himself untouchable

by dark fate during his rise through the ranks of Quantum Nova. He has tried most treatments he considered half save and nothing helped his son so far.

This is when he turned to spiritualism and occultism, not differentiating between dark or light to further his goals.

He gained information about the writings of LudCrier and his book about angels and demons and their power to elevate and heal those who can commune with them. This is when he sends out Dingerman to find this book and acquire it for him.

Mr. Dao is an accomplished occultist and able to summon darkness and creatures from beyond due to his studies and the creation of a Vial of bottled Darkness. He will hesitate to do so until he or his son are threated personaly with bodily harm. He knows the cost and danger to wield his powers.

Jonathan Dao

Jonathan Dao is 24 years old. Despite his age his face always wears a childish and surprised expression, not really comprehending what is going on around him.

His has very short trimmed black hair and is of a very slim and tall physique. Sometimes there is a slight drool in the corner of his mouth. He constantly mumbles incomprehensive words, if confronted with fear he starts a high pitched very unnerving shriek.

He wears the same expensive plain clothing as his father, grey with a white trim on hem and arms.

Jonathan is mentally challenged from birth and has the mind of a 6 year old. His father is absolutely convinced that his real son hides inside and there are means to free Jonathan of his mental prison. This is no rational thought and Alan Dao will not be convinced by actual facts.

Items of Note

The Scriptum

Bound in smooth, brown leather, there is just a title embossed into the cover. It is, in fact, just called "Of Angels and Demons". There is no print date or anything to be found, but the inside pages are printed in a simple and common font. There is a kind of introductory text by the author LudCrier, stating that he has found insight in the deserts of KaTha, he has been visited by the messengers of Love and Hate and these are the writings of their communion.

The book never feels cold to the touch, laying a hand on it lets one feel the own pulse echoing back through the pages. It is too noticeable to just be an illusion, but that cannot be, right? To technological measuring this book is, it is just a book.

Trying to reveal its age is pretty easy, taking a page sample and carbon dating it reveals an age of about 200 years. The leather of the binding is deer leather, nothing infernal here either.

Flipping through the pages there are many drawings of angle like creatures and the fires of hell as you would expect from the drawings of Dante or Hironimus Bosch, interspersed with occult symbology. The book speaks of healing and mending, and of torment for those not enlightened above the others.

The book has some weird effects on its surroundings, creating distortions in the fabric of spacetime. Colliding with these distortions is like walking into a razor wire, cutting and bruising objects and flesh alike. Usually this a faint and random effect, at random times it also can have dramatic effects.

The Vial of bottled Darkness

Alon Dao used an ancient ritual to bind Darkness and Nightmares into a small vial he always wears around his neck. It looks like a quartz crystal filled with black ink and small silver flecks. Very close inspection will show that these specks seem to move on their own accord.

Opening the bottle has dire effects. Almost instantly, the surroundings darken and cool down to freezing point, everything looks like bathed in silver and oh so cold moonlight.

Then from the shadows the haunts appear, nightmares spun from silver lights trying to embrace the living and taking their souls by kissing and ripping. These haunts are insubstantial, the characters having no means to directly harm them.

As Dao has fed the bottle with his nightmares, he is the source of all this. The only way to stop the haunts and the darkness is by taking out the consciousness of its creator, knocking him out or killing Dao will do the trick.

The 8 Haunts attack each person on the ship except Alon and Jonathan Dao. For each Highlight each Haunt attacks with a Terror Value of 4.

The Starspear

An elegant looking vessel, the Starspear is a utilitarian vessel suited for a multitude of roles. She is fitted with state-of-the-art equipment, giving her good capabilities in portal creation, energy management and sensory input. Packing a little bit of a punch by carrying 5 medium range missiles, she can also fend for herself in unknown territory exploring the darker parts of the universe.

She is almost unarmoured beyond the necessities of radiation shielding and micrometeor protection, and her innards are susceptible to damage by small arms fire or explosions. In critical areas like Bridge, Engine Room and Energy Control this may lead to problems with weapons packing a Penetration Value of 10 and up.

Communication throughout the vessel is by access points in every room and an encrypted network. It is difficult to hack into

the system with a Software Ongoing

Check <TN 10, 3 min, 3 Marks>. This is to hack into communication only.

All Security Doors can be controlled from every station except the Bridge Door that can only be controlled from the Bridge. Each Security Door has an access point for local control. This can be opened up with Hardware Ongoing Check <TN 6, 2 min, 2 Marks>. They can also be breached by Plasma Torch, taking about 30 minutes to cut.

Legend

1. Bridge
2. Privat Quarter
3. Airlock Chamber
4. Front Corridor Section
5. Back Corridor Section
6. Missile Magazin
7. Crew and Detail Sleep Quarter
8. Mess Hall
9. Kitchen
10. Sanitary Rooms
11. Energy Management
12. IRHEC
13. Recreational and Acceleration Seats
14. Engine Room
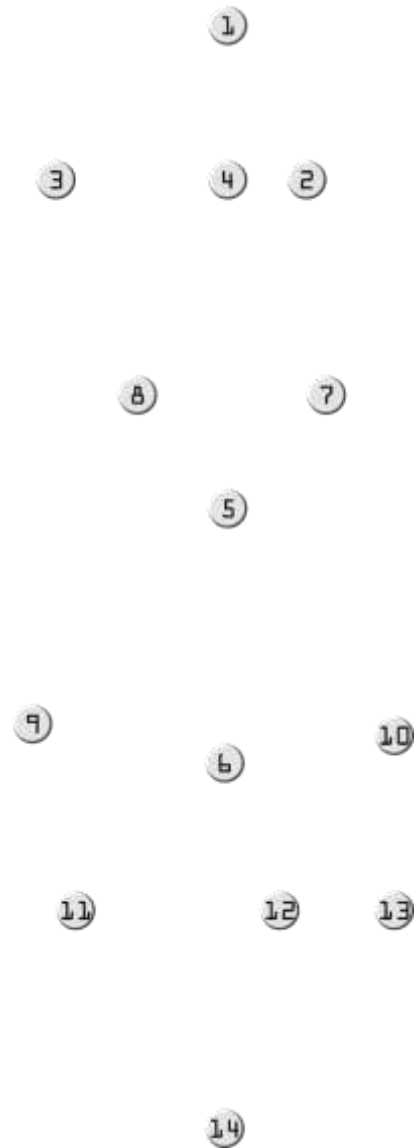
NPC´s

Cultists

Assailants hitting Dingerman on the road. These are tough but rather simple girls and guys, armed with pistols and SMGs and no notable body armour

For 6 Nim 5   Ded 6   Mnd 5

Spd 3 m/s

PhE 5   MeE 5

Expertise Areas

Combat 4; Medical 3; Pilot 5; Survival 3;

Equipment

- Pistol PV 4 Standard rounds

- SMG PV 5 Standard rounds

- Knife

- Various occult paraphernalia without any real power

Combat Tactics

The worshippers fight very dedicated to the cause. They tend to be too eager and rush things, giving away their intentions. Suffering serious wounds, they try to disengage.

Security Detail

The Guards of the Starspear are a personal security detail to Mr. Dao. Aboard the Starspear they secure the dealings between Dingerman and Dao.

For 7   Nim 6   Ded 6   Mnd 5

Spd 3 m/s

PhE 6   MeE 5

Expertise Areas

Combat 5; Medical 3; Pilot 5; Survival 3;

Equipment

- SMG PV 7 (Armour Piercing)

- Knife

- Light Bulletproof Vest

- Comm Equipment wired into the Starspear

Combat Tactics

These are trained bodyguards with the sole purpose of protecting Mr. Dao´s life. They will fight defensivly and retreat in the face of superior firepower. If with Mr. Dao they will give their lives for him.

Alon Dao

Mr Alon Dao is the employer of Charles Dingerman, having him tasked to retrieve the Scriptum for him to heal his imbecile son. He is a skilled practioner of dark arts.

For 5   Nim 5   Ded 6   Mnd 7

Spd 3 m/s

PhE 5   MeE 6

Expertise Areas

Combat 2; Medical 3; Pilot 5; Survival 3;

Equipment

-    Vial of bottled Darkness

-    Knife

Combat Tactics

Dao will leave the fighting to his security detail. If they go down fast or defeat is at hand otherwise he will use his last line of defense, the "Amulett of bottled Darkness"

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