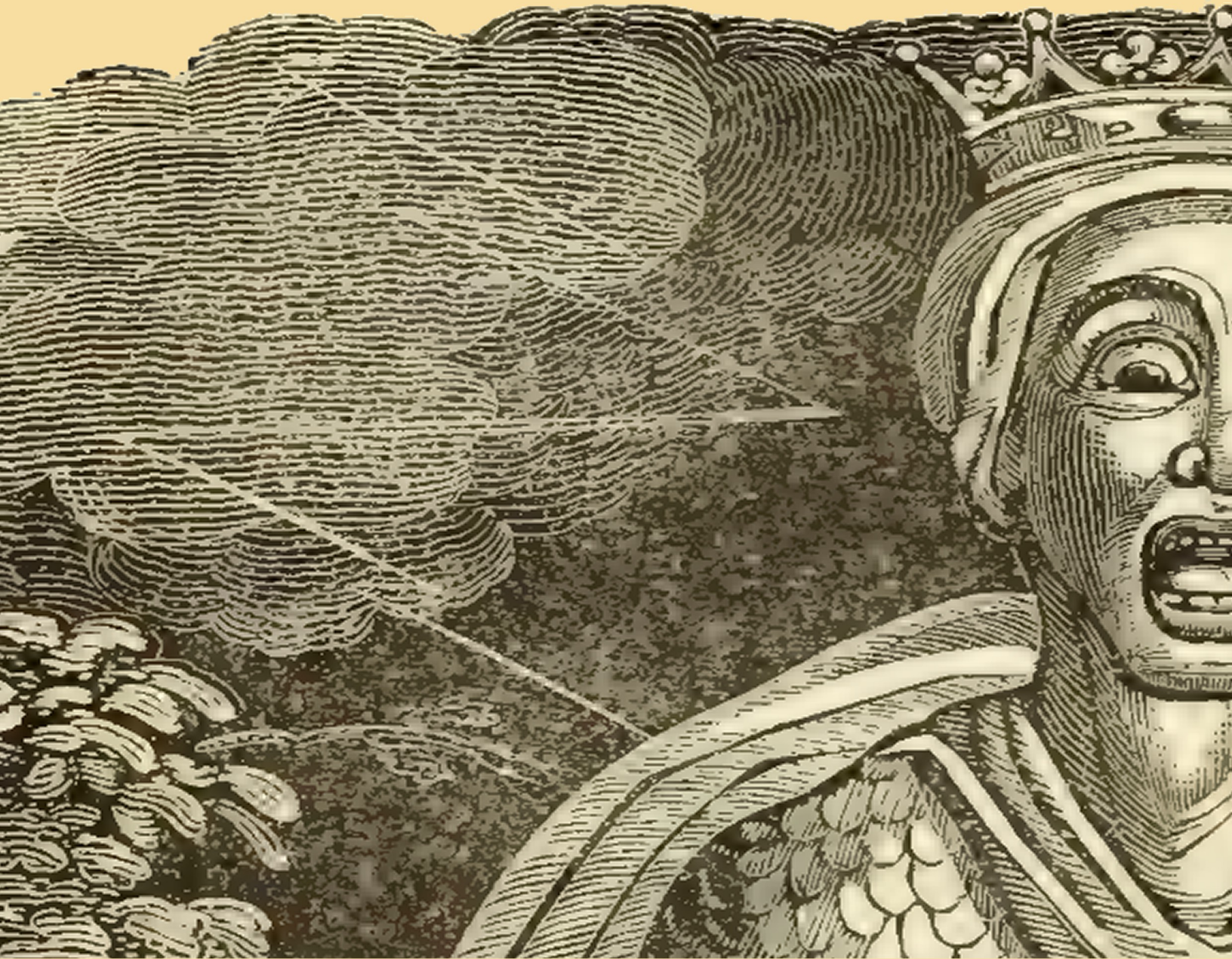


Kai Tave presents:



FIELD GUIDE TO SULDAN

a *LANCER* supplement

The Field Guide to Suldan

A homebrew supplement for Lancer

Version 2.2.6

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Form In Which The Spirit Oberion Appears from *The Astrologer of the Nineteenth Century: Or the Master Key of Futurity, being a Complete System of Astrology, Geomancy & Occult Science* by Raphael, arranged by Ada S.

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And so it came to pass that Emir Julian Ambrose Khan the First and Only, Bearer of the Sacred Key, Custodian of the Great Games, the Wisest and Noblest Ruler of All Suldán, died for the 17th time in the history of his reign.

Three of the deaths had been assassinations, before would-be assassins finally learned that corporeal death was but a trifling matter to His Majesty. Several others had been sporting accidents. One was a duel that the Emir had insisted be to the death (he had later had the other duelist executed and their family sentenced to hard labor, for this was the Emir's way). Three of his deaths had been so unseemly that none dared speak of them even in whispers, for the walls of the royal palace had many ears.

This death however was from an overdose, his seventh such untimely demise. The Emir was a man of boundless appetites and little restraint, and he indulged in the all the worldly pleasures his station afforded him with the zest of one for whom death had no everlasting sting. However when he emerged from the decanting berth this 17th time it was immediately apparent that something had gone terribly wrong. The Sacred Key had been corrupted, bent and twisted by a viral agent, and the Emir's glorious form was desecrated beyond repair.

Worse than even that, though, was without the Sacred Key the planet's many defenses which had been constructed to keep Suldán safe from those who might oppose the Emir's glorious rule lay dormant and inoperable. In a panic the gilded Lords and Ladies who had built their court around the Emir's magnificence attempted the impossible, thinking to break their way past the security locks like craven thieves in order to save themselves, but the Emir's defense grid was far more cunning than any of them and it was just as ruthless as its master.

Reprisal was swift and thorough. Even as the defense grid chastised them for their hubris it turned its tungsten spears against them, raining destruction from on high. Within minutes the royal palace was no more, a cloud of dust and flame rising above the shining city of Hadiqa, capital of Suldán and seat of all light and culture. More spears fell shortly thereafter, shaking the foundations of the city in admonition to those who also might think themselves above the Emir's unassailable law.

And so with his body broken but his noble spirit undiminished, the Emir and those still loyal to him left Hadiqa ahead of the ravening wolves howling at the gates, retreating into the badlands beyond the city to gather his strength and plan for his eventual return.

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INTRODUCTION

The Field Guide to Suldán is a supplement for *Lancer* that presents an open-ended setting designed to provide players and GMs with everything they need to run games ranging from one-shots or short-term mission arcs to longer campaigns which run all the way from LL0 to LL12. The following guide goes into detail regarding the people, places, and plot hooks that players may encounter during a campaign set on Suldán, but by no means is it intended to be exhaustive. GMs should, as always, feel free to make whatever adjustments or additions they see fit to best suit the desires of their group.

Though the various plot hooks and flashpoints can be assembled into an ongoing campaign, there's no set canonical outcome to the events in question. What happens to Suldán is a question that will be answered by your group as you play through the game and the decisions you make along the way. Though it may be far removed from grander threats such as the war with the Aun or the incipient conflicts along the Dawnline Shore, for those who live there the struggles they face are not merely some abstract historical footnote, but a real and present danger to their homes and their families. There are plenty of opportunities for PCs in a Suldani campaign to make a name for themselves, a legacy to be remembered through tales swapped in bars and sun-bleached photographs handed down from grandparents to grandchildren as they tell them the stories of the time the lancers came, and the decisions they make may very well wind up shaping the future of an entire world.

BOOK STRUCTURE

The section, the **Introduction**, provides an overview of Suldán as a world and as a campaign setting, providing a brief summary of its history and current state of affairs. It also outlines several possible starting points and perspectives for setting a campaign set on Suldán, and explains how those perspectives may change how others react to the PCs and their actions.

The second section, the **Setting Guide**, presents detailed information on key NPCs and factions on Suldán, including their personalities, goals, and relationships, along with key locations. Additional information on various points of interest and local pastimes the PCs may partake in during downtime can be found here as well.

The third section is the **Catalogue**, where new character options can be found. This includes new talents, pilot gear, core bonuses, mech licenses, and specialty licenses, including licenses from a new manufacturer, Chandrasekhar & Herschel Ltd. This section also includes rules for Duels, a gridless system designed for one-on-one combat.

The fourth and final section, the **Game Master's Guide**, contains detailed plot hooks and campaign seeds for running games set on Suldán, as well as rules for new NPC classes.

SULDAN AT A GLANCE

Micah had never killed anyone, had never even discharged his sidearm outside of the company firing range. The closest he'd ever been to combat was reading over debriefings and after-action reports where the messy business of war was condensed into neat, bloodless little summaries. Nonetheless he was acutely aware that his actions here in this unassuming boardroom could easily result in thousands of deaths, including those of his own people, as easily as if he'd pulled the trigger himself.

Conversations died down as he took his place at the table, all eyes turning expectantly towards him. "Ladies and gentlemen, thank you all for coming. As you know the board has recently been deliberating over whether or not to move forward on the Chandrasekhar & Herschel contract." Joining him at this meeting was Grayson Kovach, the senior branch manager for Talos Tactical Solution's Karakoram line operations, as well as field operations commander Akachi Garza and her XO, along with a handful of sales and marketing executives, company lawyers, intelligence analysts, and a stone-faced representative from the finance department. He wasted no time moving the presentation along, a still image of a planet suddenly filling the main screen behind him, a sandy-colored, arid world dotted with splashes of blue and green.

"So, Suldan. Standard post-colonial settled world, self-sustaining, current population around 20 million, you can find all of the basic information in the dossier. The central government's been embroiled in some sort of civil unrest for a while now as we understand it, which recently came to a head. All of our intel suggests that after the coup, the now-former dictator managed to escape a step ahead of the rebels. Thus far the intensity of the conflict has remained relatively modest, nothing to suggest WMDs in play on either side, but judging by the call for security contractors the provisional government's put out, things seem to be escalating rapidly."

"You said there was a coup," one of the lawyers interjected as he glanced through the dossier. "Suldan is a Union world. Why isn't the planet's administrator handling things themselves instead of this Jun Chandrasekhar? Surely if they were killed during the uprising..."

"The, ah, situation with the planet's Union administrator is currently...undisclosed at this time," Micah said. The whispers and sidelong glances that made their way around the room were enough to say what they were all thinking. If Miranda Cortez was still alive, she'd be the one responsible for overseeing a transition of governmental authority. If the administrator had been killed or abducted during the coup then Union's response to the situation would be far more urgent than it currently was. The fact was that nobody seemed to know what had happened to her amidst all the chaos, and even the company's diplomatic backchannels within the local system were proving tight-lipped on the matter. Something unusual was going on down there. That something meant unforeseen complications.

But it also meant unforeseen opportunities as well. "What we do know is that Union seems

unopposed to private security operations on-world. They may escalate their own operations at a later date, but for now we're free and clear to accept any and all contracts being offered as we see fit. The good news is that Chandrasekhar's put out an open call, so we won't need to go through the usual bidding process. The bad news is, well, Chandrasekhar's put out an open call." Open calls for mercenaries meant that the client couldn't afford to be picky...those that could afford to be picky generally were. It also meant competition on the ground. "Thus far the situation is still unfolding, so if we move fast and position ourselves aggressively, we stand a good chance of establishing TTS as a key player within this theater."

"I've got to be honest," Akachi said, crossing her arms and leaning back in her seat, "this sounds like a whole lot of maybes and we-don't-knows for a pretty thin payout in the end." Unlike Micah, Akachi had seen combat and plenty of it, and she wore her complete indifference towards corporate formality and boardroom etiquette like a badge of honor. He admired her blunt honesty, and if he was being perfectly honest himself he was slightly intimidated by her as well, but she also had a point.

"It's true that Suldan's gross domestic manna output is somewhat tenuous at the moment, particularly given its current situation," Micah went on. "But bear in mind that it isn't just manna that's on the table with this proposal. Chandrasekhar isn't simply representing the provisional government but her company as well. Chandrasekhar & Herschel has shown substantial growth for a corporation of their size since going public and all the predictive models expect it to continue that trend well into the future. We know that the board has been trying to expand our licensing agreements with IPS-N, but what if we could bypass that altogether? Instead of having to constantly renegotiate for adequate updates to our aging fifth-generation chassis pool, we have a chance to establish a long-term mutually beneficial partnership with an up-and-coming galactic-tier defense contractor."

The image of the planet on the screen changed to a video showcasing a mech with the C&H logo emblazoned on its shoulder. The chassis was the sort of ugly only a pit fighter could love, with a brutish, battle-scarred hull studded with bricks of reactive armor. The weapon it was carrying, some sort of sawblade-lined maul, was almost absurdly oversized even compared to the mech itself, but it was apparently capable of wielding it with surprising speed as a monstrous swing practically folded its opponent in half, the other mech's feet lifting clean off the ground just as the clip ended.

Akachi leaned forward with a gleam in her eye. Now she was interested.

"What we have here is a unique opportunity that goes beyond a single payout," Micah pressed on. "Grayson, you've talked about wanting to establish TTS as a major player in the outer lines? Well this is your chance. Something big is going on down there. I don't have all the pieces yet but I can see the outline of it in the intel reports. Whichever way this situation plays out is going to affect this sector for years to come, and we can be the ones to tip the scales. A job like this doesn't come along every day."

Having said his piece, Micah took a seat to wait for the verdict. After a moment's

murmured deliberation Grayson finally spoke. "Micah, thank you. This is all very well done, and you make an excellent case," he said, "but like Akachi, I do have some additional concerns. If what you've said is true, then it sounds like the situation on-world could be rather volatile both politically as well as militarily. Without harder intel to go on, we might be walking right into a quagmire just as things start to brew up. If we commit to this, then we're putting our rep on the line, and that means we can't do things by half measures. We'll have to send our best."

Micah smiled as he stood once more, the screen filling with a cascading mosaic of pilot dossiers before zooming in a selection of TTS pilots he'd personally earmarked for this proposal, backgrounds and combat qualifications unfolding beneath their identification headshots. "I thought you might say that, and in fact that brings me to my next point. If you'll all take a look at the dossiers I've prepared, I believe I've got just the right team for the job..."

Suldán is a settled planet off of Sia Kangri Station on the Karakoram Line which is in the process of transitioning from Colony to Core world status. An arid planet orbiting a G-type main sequence star, Suldán required only modest terraforming to be comfortably habitable. Settlement is focused primarily around the "oasis zone" of the northern hemisphere which contains the majority of the planet's surface bodies of liquid water (comprising around 13% of the planet's total surface area) while the southern hemisphere is largely wasteland ranging from the equatorial deserts down to the landlocked ice caps at the southern pole. The planet has two moons in orbit, Akaya and Neru, as well as an asteroid field which was presumably a third lunar body that suffered a cataclysmic event at some point in the distant past. A Suldani day is roughly 27 Cradle Standard hours long.

The current planetary population is approximately 20 million natives, centered primarily around the colonial capital city of Hadiqa, along with various minor settlements further out. Suldán was originally flagged as being a rich source of mineral wealth, and its foremost industry is mining the planet's substantial deposits of osmium, titanium, platinum, tantalum, uranium, and various lanthanides. Other exports include valuable native crops such as incense grass and locally cultivated spices along with entertainment media, primarily sporting and gladiatorial competitions. In addition, the galactic-tier corporation Chandrasekhar & Herschel Ltd. has its headquarters on Suldán.

Suldán is, depending on one's perspective, either recovering from or still embroiled in civil war. For the last 50 years of the planet's 250 year settlement history it was ruled by the self-appointed Emir Julian Ambrose Khan, who seized power in a bloody coup that deposed the incorporate administrative council that had previously governed the planet. The Emir's tyrannical rule was characterized by a massive widening in the gap between Suldán's socioeconomic classes, a substantial increase in military allocations far beyond what was necessary for the world's strategic needs, oppressive and exploitative governmental decrees, and a steady rise in corruption, decadence, and brutality. The Emir's court was a never-ending bacchanal catering to the jaded whims of those who had supported his rise

to power, while the rest of the populace was forced to meet increasingly demanding production quotas to fuel this opulent lifestyle as well as participate in ever more bloody gladiatorial spectacles for the Emir's entertainment. The Union administrator for Suldán at the time, Miranda Cortez, was complicit in this, manipulating the Emir from behind the throne while exploiting the situation for her own ends, pursuing a warped version of Union's utopian ideals.

The situation eventually came to a head when a gladiator named Jun Chandrasekhar won the quinquennial Grand Games, rising above every other challenge and competitor the arena had to offer and awarding her the prize of any boon she wished to be granted by the Emir. To his surprise and amusement, rather than ask for wealth as so many champions often did, she instead demanded the right to manufacture and profit from weapons both on-world and off, under the guise of founding a corporation for custom designed fighting chassis and armaments for gladiators like herself. Such manufacture was highly regulated under the Emir's rule, but the unusual request was enough to tickle his mercurial fancy, and so it was granted. Chandrasekhar took advantage of this opportunity and began covertly supplying rebels opposing the Emir with arms and equipment. In time she would become a unifying figure of the revolutionary movement, bringing scattered cells and cadres together under a common banner.

However the tipping point came when the Emir died from a narcotics overdose during his birthday celebration, his 17th death in fact. Unknown to all but a select few, the Emir had been perpetuating his reign indefinitely by cloning himself. Repeated deaths and resurrections had done little for his already tenuous mental stability, but it ensured the primacy of his rule, not only due to his indifference to petty concerns such as assassination but due to the fact that he had encrypted much of Suldán's planetary defense systems using his own genetic sequence as the key. Without his biometric authorization Suldán would be left exposed and vulnerable to insurrection, and thus it was in the best interests of those who enjoyed the decadent life his rule afforded them to allow him to retain his iron grip upon the world.

Unfortunately for the Emir's supporters this wasn't to last, as it was discovered only too late into the process of reviving him after this latest death that someone had sabotaged his personal genebank with a mutagenic viral agent. The Emir's clonal stock was damaged beyond repair, and the body that decanted was ravaged and malformed, but the greater dilemma was that his geneprint had been irrevocably altered beyond established parameters, locking him out of his own security systems. It was at this time that the rebellion began launching a full-scale uprising, targeting key installations across the city in a series of coordinated attacks. In a panic, several of the Emir's retainers attempted to bypass the security protocols and bring the idle defense systems online in order to save themselves.

Their mistake would prove to be a short-lived one. Upon detecting the intrusion, the defense network locked itself down before launching a retributive strike against the source of the unauthorized access attempt. Within minutes the royal palace was obliterated by an orbital kinetic payload, decapitating Suldán's government and military in one fell swoop.

The network then launched a series of further punitive strikes against randomly selected targets throughout Hadiqa and its outskirts meant to serve as a "warning" against further intrusion attempts, resulting in widespread destruction and loss of life. By the time the dust settled, over 100,000 lives had been lost, but the rebellion had at last successfully overthrown the Emir and seized what remained of the palace. For the moment, victory was theirs.

But the Emir continues to haunt the people of Suldani like a specter. Managing to escape the palace before its destruction, accompanied by Miranda Cortez and a sizable contingent of his personal guard and retainers, they fled Hadiqa to an emergency command bunker far from the capital, unfinished and consequently unaffected by the security lockdown. From there, the deposed Emir in exile has gathered those forces still loyal to him and begun a campaign of terror attacks against the nascent transitional government. Due to this ongoing instability as well as the planet's administrator having abandoned her post, a Union task force has recently been dispatched to Suldani under the command of Captain Yusef Oshana to assess the situation and determine what it will take to restore peace and order to the region.

This task is further complicated by additional conflicts playing out across the planet such as those between PMC forces belonging to Arclight TransColonial, one of the original participating corporations in the Suldani Colonial Venture, and the Suldani Independence Front, a militia assembled by the clans of settlers, miners, and outcasts who fled into the badlands to escape the Emir's reach. Arclight is determined to aggressively make up for the financial losses they incurred when the Emir's coup illegally forced them out of the Colonial Venture, taking advantage of the opportunity that civil unrest provides, and their reclamation teams have been drawn into an increasingly bloody asymmetrical war with SIF forces defending their homes from this exploitation.

A SULDANI CAMPAIGN

Ninety days nearlight and deceleration after blinking in from Sia Kangri Station, the UNS-LS Iphigenia hung silently above Suldani. The ship's NHP could feel the satellite defense network's invisible fingers grasping for a firing solution in the dark, jealously warding the planet away from trespassers like a dragon wrapped around its hoard, and she was carefully holding the frigate at a watchful distance from its hungry reach.

While Iphigenia maintained her vigil, the ship's flight deck was a flurry of activity as Echo Squadron's pilots prepared to disembark for the surface. The first wave was heading downwell in shuttles, bringing the squad's pilots sans chassis along with an inspection team, a complement of marines from the ship's detachment, and elements of the 197th Engineering Battalion seconded to the vessel for this assignment. Tempest Squadron, meanwhile, was prepping for CAP, frames and chassis mounts freshly printed and running preflight checks. Their mission was clear enough; reestablish Union presence on Suldani, liaise with the local government to obtain a greater understanding of the situation on the ground, undertake relief efforts and peacekeeping operations as necessary, and determine if further intervention was required.

What wasn't clear, what had weighed on Lieutenant Commander Nikau Reyes' mind since the mission briefing, was where the planet's Union presence had gone in the first place. When he was younger and much, much greener, his first live combat deployment had been on Nuevo Cielo where an ambitious Diasporan warlord had gathered together an armada and annexed the world for his own burgeoning pocket empire, publicly executing the planet's administrator along with the world's other leaders as a means of cementing his authority. One year later, a liberator task force comprised of ships assembled from a dozen different Union worlds, including Reyes' own, convened upon Nuevo Cielo, shattering the occupational fleet before launching an overwhelming ground assault which systematically and decisively routed the remainder of the warlord's forces in short order.

To the tyrant of Nuevo Cielo, Union had seemed a distant and abstract concern, almost mythic compared to those things he could himself see and touch like the worlds he burned in his wake, but to Union the brutal subjugation of a people under their protection was a call to action. In the end, the warlord found out firsthand and far too late just how real Union was, not a myth so much as a slumbering giant.

And now, a lifetime later, here he was coming to the aid of another beleaguered world, only this time with little more than a lightly-armed frigate and three squadrons of combat chassis alongside him. Captain Oshana had been pensive during their briefing as he explained that their mission to Suldán was primarily one of assessment, at least to start. Administrator Cortez was not dead so far as they were aware, he went on to emphasize, but all communication channels with her had gone dark, and should they determine her whereabouts it was imperative that she be brought into custody immediately. Reyes figured there had to be more to the story than the Captain was telling them, but the old man had never led him astray in all the years he'd served under him so he wasn't about to start second guessing him now.

"Remember," the Captain had told them, "above all else our priority remains helping these people wherever and however we can. If we can't help our own, then why else are we here?"

"All right boys and girls," the shuttle pilot's laconic voice came in over his helmet comms, bringing Reyes back to the present, "button up and strap in. This one might get hairy." There were gaps in the planet's defense network, windows that ships could slip through if they were fast, and that's what they were aiming for. The launch klaxons faded as the familiar kick of engines igniting sent them on their way towards the planet. Out in the distance, a pair of stubby corvettes swung towards them, their escort for this leg of the journey.

"UNS shuttle Delta Sierra Zero-One, this is Arclight Traffic Control, we have you on scope. Adjust your heading to our nav beacon and we'll guide you in. Do not deviate from the designated flight path or we cannot guarantee your safety."

"Well gosh, I feel safer already," Lorelei Decker, Echo Three, drawled. "Pretty sweet racket

they got going on here. Wonder how much their 'transit fees' are for ships that aren't on official Union business."

"You thinking about a career change?" Daryl Oduya, Echo Four, chimed in. "I hear those private sector gigs are pretty cushy. They even get stock options."

"Yeah, but then who'd be there to pull your ass out of the shit?" she casually shot back. There was a comfort in the easy familiarity of banter on the way to a drop.

"Hey, at least it's a nice ass."

"I've seen better."

"Are those shipwrecks?" Inari Saito, Echo Two. The shuttle's sensor feeds piped through her slate were enough to reveal the full scale of the debris field their escorts were guiding them past on their way to the insertion point, a scattered collection of destroyed bulk haulers, personal transports, and the remains of several ships that matched the profile of the Arclight corvettes flying alongside them. "Guess that's what happens when you deviate from the flight path," she said, softly uttering a prayer for souls lost at space as they passed by.

They continued the trip in silence, checking and rechecking gear, until the shuttle banked and the planet loomed ahead of them through the cockpit. "Beginning final approach, hitting atmo in 30. Angle looks good, approach vector locked in...hang on, got a contact, moving fast. Shit!" Every head in the shuttle snapped around at the urgent tone of a target lock warning. "We're spiked!" Before the words had even left they pilot's mouth they could hear the shuttle's point-defense guns buzzing, attempting to cut the incoming missiles down.

"UNS shuttle, break off your approach, a satellite is converging on your location. Say again, break off your approach-"

"Negative, negative Arclight! We do not have a clean escape vector!" Reyes' grip on his harness tightened as the shuttle pilot opened up the engines, pushing the craft into a hard descent. The defense network had waited until they were committed to their approach to spring the ambush on them, reorienting one of its satellites to intersect their course on a fast orbital trajectory. If they tried to abort their run the shuttle would likely wind up skipping across the planet's atmosphere and straight into the firing line of even more satellites. The only way out was down.

A series of detonations rocked the shuttle, the point-defenses cutting it too close for comfort. A different warning tone this time, higher-pitched and warbling frantically; laser lock. The cockpit windows, alight with the glow of reentry, were suddenly blanketed by a thick fog as the shuttle's countermeasure suite began launching airburst canisters of aerosol chaff. Meant to foil targeting and anti-air lasers during takeoff under fire, its effectiveness during a hard orbital insertion was questionable at best, but it just needed to

buy them time until they were clear. Even so, the system wasn't designed for this sort of mid-reentry operation, and the chaff was burning off and billowing away as fast as it could be dispensed.

The craft shuddered violently as something along the exterior hull warped and ruptured, red lights flashing across the controls as the pilot struggled to power through the planet's atmosphere without the shuttle simply breaking apart. Over the sound of his blood hammering in his ears Reyes heard a massive explosion and braced himself for the worst...which never came. The laser warning abruptly ceased and the shuttle's turbulent flight abated. The sudden silence was broken by the ping of an incoming message over the Iphigenia's tactical network.

>//[TEMP_1.1]:: SPLASH ONE SATELLITE+++OLD MAN THOUGHT YOU COULD USE SOME EXTRA TOP COVER+++DRINKS ARE ON YOU+++GOOD HUNTING DOWN THERE

Reyes leaned back in his seat and closed his eyes for a moment, steadying his breathing before dashing off a quick affirmative in reply. "Everyone sound off." One after another Saito, Decker, Oduya, and all the rest checked in (in Decker's case with several choice words for their escort's inability to provide effective fire support), rattled but uninjured, while the pilot reported one of the engines had taken damage but that he could still set her down without too much trouble. Their mission wouldn't end here at least, not like this.

As the shuttle descended, in the distance he could finally see the city of Hadiqa, mirrored skyscrapers reflecting the sun and banner-draped aerostats swaying gently from their moorings. From all the way up here it would be easy to overlook the scars that oppression and civil war had left in their wake, but Reyes knew they were there all the same. The city was more than just its scars, though. For the people living there, it was the embodiment of their history, a monument to their tenacity, and a promise for the future of their world. Hadiqa was their home, and it was worth fighting for.

And Union would be there to help them fight for it.

"Shuttle Delta Sierra Zero-One, this is Port Ossman Tower." The voice over comms was smooth and unperturbed, as though they hadn't just nearly been blown out of the sky. "Come around one-six-two. You are cleared for descent and landing at platform three. Welcome to Suldan."

When embarking on a campaign set on Suldani, one of the first questions you'll want to answer with your group is what brings the PCs to this distant, troubled world on the periphery of Union space. This question is a simple one, but it can have serious ramifications for how the PCs and their actions are viewed, who does and doesn't trust them, and the opposition they may face along the way.

There are three major starting points for a Suldani campaign to consider:

- The PCs are "freelancers," a catch-all term for drifters, guns-for-hire, and mercenaries such as those employed by groups such as Mirrorsmoke Mercenary Company or Talos Tactical Solutions, who've come to Suldani for a chance to earn a paycheck and make a name for themselves. Freelancers tend to be motivated by fortune and glory, and everyone they deal with will be well aware of that fact, which means they'll be treated accordingly...at least at first. It isn't impossible for freelancers to earn trust and even respect, but earning them is the hard part, along with surviving long enough to enjoy the benefits they bring.
- The PCs are Union pilots, sent to investigate the situation as part of an investigatory task force and to help restore peace to the region. Despite how it may seem, Union is far from a monolithic entity, and the motivations of those who serve it can vary just as much as anyone else's; some Union pilots are motivated by a sense of duty, others ideology. Some see a tour in the Auxiliaries is an adventure, while others still are searching for a sense of purpose. Whatever their reasons, the PCs will quickly discover that Union isn't being hailed as a savior, but rather viewed as an absent caretaker whose negligence has allowed tyranny to take root.
- The PCs are Suldani locals, natives of the planet. This is perhaps the most obvious starting point; after all, there are plenty of people who would wish to fight for their own home. Being born and raised on Suldani means that the PCs will be intimately acquainted with the local culture as well as the events which have led to the current situation. They may have even participated in the revolution themselves. Just because they were born there, however, doesn't mean things will be any easier for them. Conflicting interests can pull hardest at those closest to them.

Some of the information in this supplement, such as the attitudes of various NPCs, is presented with differing perspectives and outcomes based on the affiliation of the PCs. Certain NPCs may be friendlier towards Union characters while others will be distrustful of them to start with, for example.

Of course, these starting points aren't the only options for a Suldani campaign. You and your group might decide to mix and match backgrounds, such as Union pilots liaising with local Suldani forces as part of a joint operation, but there are other possibilities as well. Your group might decide they want to play as "indebted contractors" being forced to work for Arclight TransColonial in order to pay their debts off one dangerous mission at a time, or perhaps as a group of Albatross pilots responding to a distant call for help, here to root out the Emir's evil and restore hope to a world beset by tyranny.

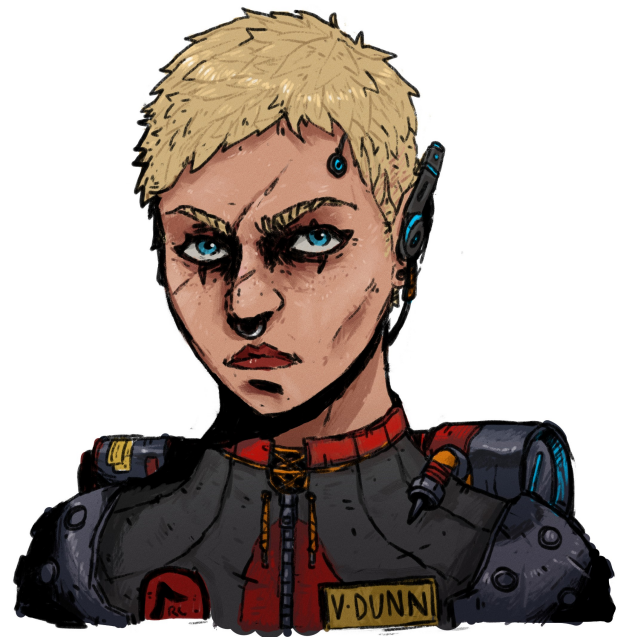
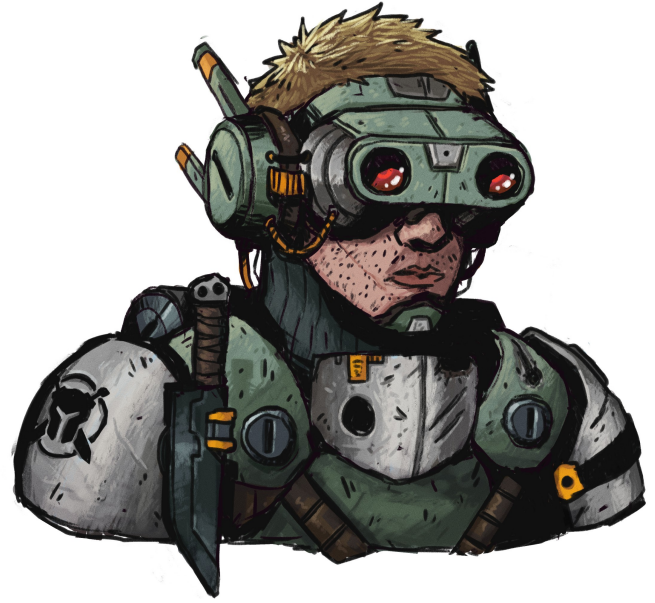
From a top-down perspective, the crisis on Suldani is a conflict between multiple local and foreign factions each with their own goals and interests, with internal conflicts and alliances of convenience blurring the lines and creating further tension. **The provisional government of Suldani** has been struggling to rebuild in the aftermath of the rebellion while being forced to weather an ongoing series of terrorist attacks aimed at undermining their fledgling efforts at establishing a fair and just government for the people of Suldani, but even without these attacks simply agreeing on what constitutes a "fair and just government" is no easy task. Comprised of a council of municipal delegates each tasked with overseeing various administrative functions and civil services, the transition from

revolutionary movement to acting government hasn't been without its difficulties, and opinion within the council is divided as to the best way to move forward.

While some remain adamant that Suldani requires a government by and for the Suldani people, others on the council are more willing to court foreign interests such as **Arclight TransColonial** in order to help facilitate reconstruction and a swift return to stability and order. Critics argue that those in favor of such arrangements are simply looking to line their own pockets in the process and that corporate stewardship of Suldani is what eventually led to the Emir's reign in the first place. Their opponents argue back that rejecting such opportunities out of hand will only prolong Suldani's arduous reconstruction.

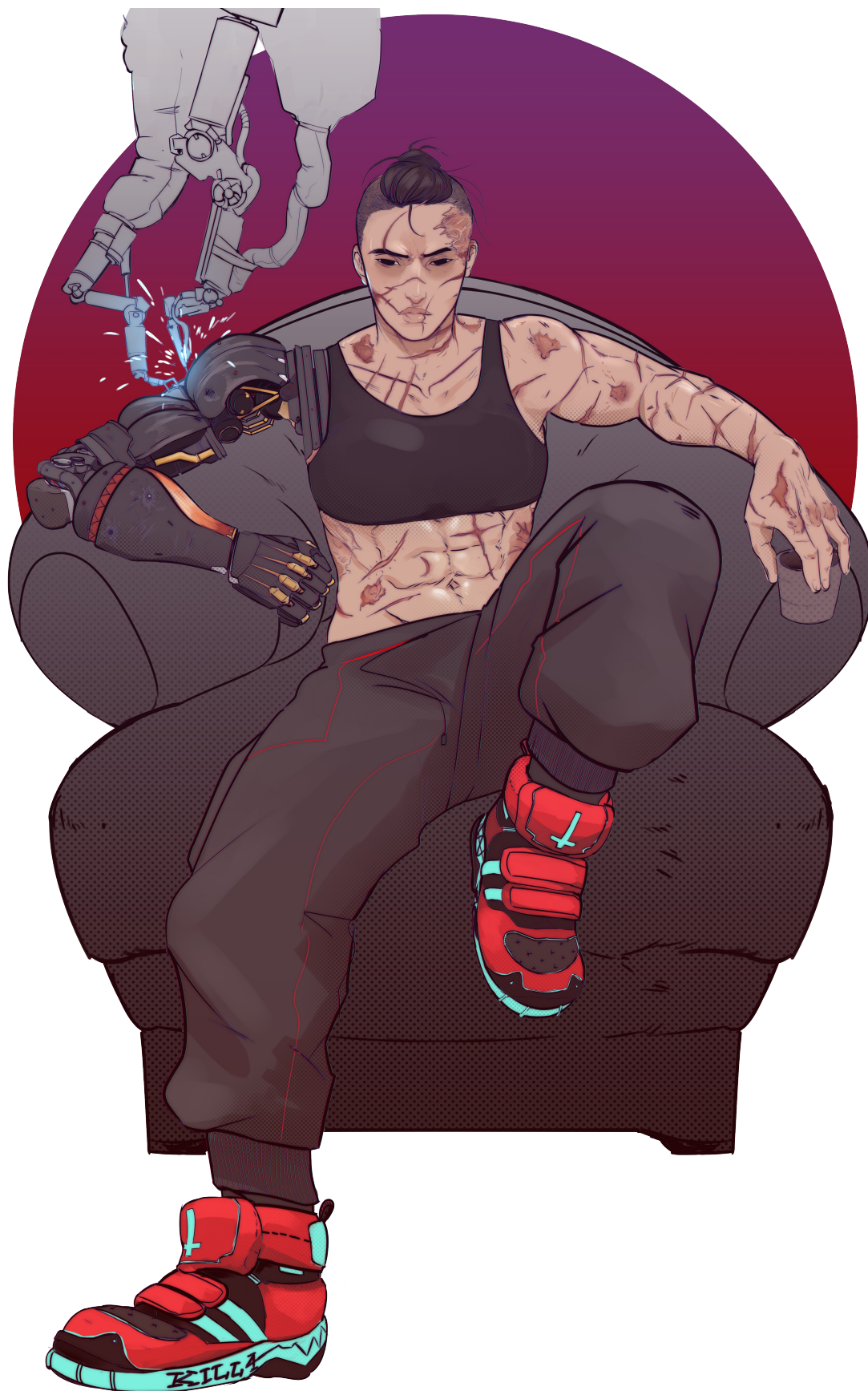
For their part, Arclight is embroiled in conflict with the **Suldani Independence Front**, a movement agitating for total Suldani sovereignty and the expulsion of exploitative foreign elements from the planet, and both groups have their supporters and opponents within both the provisional government as well as the populace at large. Public opinion is also currently divided over the recent arrival of **Union forces**, as many feel that Union shares the blame for the hardships they've suffered. Why did Union's administrator allow the Emir to rule unchecked? Why have they arrived now only after the people of Suldani rose up against their oppressors? Is Union truly here to help, or to simply install another tyrant? These are the questions that Captain Yusef Oshana will have to answer if he's to begin rebuilding the world's trust in Union and its ideals.

And amid this turmoil looms the specter of **the loyalist Emirate remnants**, often referred to simply as the loyalists or the insurgents. Unaligned with anyone, an enemy to all, the loyalists are a persistent threat to the provisional government and the people of Suldani. While the power the Emir wields is a shadow of its former glory, even a shadow's worth is more than enough to be a danger to everyone. A motley collection of zealous fanatics, desperate renegades, ruthless mercenaries, and elite soldiers, the loyalists abide by no rules of engagement and are willing to slaughter indiscriminately in the pursuit of their goals. As long as the Emir is allowed to wage his campaign of terror, there can be little hope for a lasting peace on Suldani.



SETTING GUIDE

PERSONS OF INTEREST



Jun Chandrasekhar (She/Her)

A tall, wiry, heavily scarred woman, Jun Chandrasekhar looks at everyone she interacts with as though she's considering when, not if, she should punch them. A fearsome fighter both in and out of a mech, blunt and outspoken with little patience for anyone's games, she's nonetheless far more intelligent than her background might lead some to believe, and she's to be underestimated at one's own peril.

Born into extreme poverty in Hadiqa's sprawling Undercity, Jun is a survivor by nature. When her parents died while she was still young, she did whatever she had to in order to get by, whether it was stealing, selling drugs, smuggling, or fighting. She displayed a keen aptitude for violence from an early age and was "adopted" by an arena manager who saw a prize gladiator's potential in her. In an uncharacteristic display of charity, he actually saw to her upbringing as well as taking advantage of her skills, providing her with an education along with gladiatorial training. Jun became a voracious reader, devouring books on history, military strategy, and poetry. By the time she was 19 she was a celebrated arena champion with several titles to her name, a body count in the dozens, and a deep and abiding sense of anger at the world.

No one knows precisely what set her on the path of revolution. She doesn't talk about it even with those she considers friends (a rare and select group), and attempts to pry further into the matter are likely to end poorly for those unable to take a hint. What is known is that she quickly became frustrated with the nascent rebellion's lack of organization and material support, in particular weaponry. Organization, discipline, and skill could all be taught, but weaponry and equipment couldn't simply be conjured out of thin air. Access to weaponry was strictly regulated, and what little the black market could slip past the watchful gaze of the Royal Guard was insufficient to meet the rebellion's needs.

The revolution needed the means of production. Jun's idea to acquire them was unorthodox, but effective; every five years the Grand Games were held on Suldan, a gladiatorial contest held in honor of the Emir. Anyone was allowed to compete, all bouts were fought to the death, and at the end of the several weeks long tournament, the surviving winner was draped in accolades and, more importantly, granted a single boon of their choosing from the Emir himself. Many of the winners of previous Grand Games competitions had asked for material wealth, some had asked for chartered passage to distant worlds for themselves and their families, others had petitioned for loved ones to be released from indentured bondage, and one noteworthy champion had even demanded a 90 meter tall statue of himself to be erected outside the Royal Colosseum.

The path to the top was a bloody one and far from guaranteed, but when Jun at last emerged triumphant over the broken mech of her final opponent, her request was for a charter of incorporation, specifically for the manufacture and distribution of mechanized chassis along with associated systems and weaponry. Now that she'd proved herself the best, she said, there were no more battles worth fighting, and so she wanted to go into business trading on her experience as a gladiator.

It was an unusual request, and the Emir was amused by the novelty of it more than anything else, so he granted it. It would be several more years before he came to regret that decision when Jun led the now well-armed rebellion into battle against his forces in an uprising that would ultimately culminate in his deposition and exile.

Since the fall of the Emir's regime, Jun has become one of the most famous figures on Suldan, a status she grudgingly tolerates. While many among the planet's lower classes wholeheartedly support her cause, Suldan's elite continue to nervously wonder how long it will be before she turns her sights towards them. The truth of the matter is that she has more important things to worry about at the moment than petty aristocrats fretting over their lavish lifestyles, as much as she might enjoy rattling their gilded cages. She officially sits on the provisional council overseeing the transitional government and reconstruction of Hadiqa, though in practice she spends most of her time putting her company's latest weapon and chassis designs through their paces, which she sometimes does by leading actions against loyalist terror cells and rampant security system remnants. Otherwise, she leaves as much of the day-to-day management of things as she can get away with, business and politics both, to Mattias Herschel, her revolutionary comrade in arms.

Privately, and though she would never admit it to anyone, Jun is growing tired of fighting. Violence has been a companion of hers for her entire life, but there was a sense of purpose behind it as well, driving her forward over the bodies of anyone who stood in her way. The revolution and the overthrow of the Emir was, she had thought, a suitable culmination of that purpose, but faced now with an uncertain future still seemingly defined by conflict, she finds herself questioning for the first time what it is she wants her own future to be defined by.

- **If the PCs are Freelancers:** Jun, acting through Chandrasekhar & Herschel, has put out a call for mercenaries to help reinforce the provisional government's reconstruction efforts. After many months of constant clashes with loyalist insurgents with seemingly no end in sight, she's forced to concede that the quickest way to resolve the situation may be to bring in outside assistance. Freelancers are eligible to receive C&H licenses in addition to monetary compensation, though they'll be required to demonstrate a certain minimum amount of commitment beforehand.

The PCs are likely to be called upon to handle assignments that the provisional security forces are ill-equipped to tackle or spread too thin to deal with, such as convoy security details, sweeping and clearing rogue planetary defense installations, and priority counterterror ops. She won't micromanage them, and in fact dislikes having to do so, but freelancers that don't live up to her expectations may find themselves abruptly downgraded to far less prestigious assignments in order to free up resources elsewhere. Those that rise to the challenge and manage to pull their weight in high-risk situations will discover that their opinions and tactical suggestions carry more weight than before, and they may even be tasked to lead or help train local security forces themselves. Showing an interest in the arena and competitive combat may get her to open up some as well, but even then

don't expect her to smile much. An invitation to spar with her should be considered the ultimate sign of respect.

Of course Jun ultimately wants to track down and eliminate the Emir once and for all, and should the PCs prove themselves capable in her eyes they may find themselves assigned the job of discovering his base of operations and ending his campaign of terror for good. If they can manage to accomplish this task then they'll find themselves heroes of Suldán as well as C&H premium license holders for life.

- **If the PCs are Union:** Jun views the Union forces that have arrived upon Suldán with disdain and suspicion, which isn't surprising considering that the planet's Union administrator helped prop up a sadistic despot for the last 50 years or so. As far as she's concerned, Union left her and the Suldani people to clean up a mess that they created only to swoop in after the dust settled and start sticking their noses into business that doesn't concern them.

However she's also well aware that she can't simply force Union to leave, and that Captain Oshana's presence could very well tip the scales in her favor, so for now she cooperates with them to the extent that her limited tolerance for diplomacy allows. If requested to liaise with Union forces, she'll eventually acquiesce but make it clear that she's doing so only to help her people, and she bristles at any attempt to give her orders.

However, if the PCs can demonstrate their commitment to restoring peace and order to Suldán, even going above and beyond their mission parameters to help those in need, they might just earn her respect. Doing so won't be easy, but it will go a long way towards improving relations between Union and the Suldani people going forward.

- **If the PCs are Locals:** Jun is rarely what one could call a people person, but those born and raised on Suldán who are fighting for its future are in the best position to see her most personable side. Catch her in a good mood and she may even be inclined to swap a story or two over drinks. Despite whatever common ground they might share, however, Jun doesn't care for flattery or being put on a pedestal.

It's also possible that the PCs, some of them anyway, may have encountered her before if they fought during the revolution, perhaps even alongside her, and they might just get a chance to do so again. Despite Mattias' reassurances that she can leave the fighting to others, Jun continues to take a proactive role in dealing with the loyalist threat, and she won't hesitate to mount up and lead a counterattack against insurgent forces whenever the need arises. While she lacks any true rank or direct operational authority within the provisional security forces, a group of notable pilots who manage to catch her eye could find themselves being organized into a special operations unit tasked with handling important missions at her request. Jun needs allies she can depend on, and the PCs may be just what she's looking for.

Suldan and the Arena:

The history of gladiatorial combat and its place in Suldani culture goes back to the early settlement period. Long, hard work-shifts laying the foundation to Hadiqa beneath the planet's surface inevitably resulted in a need for laborers to blow off steam, and it was inevitable that some of them would turn to unsanctioned pit fights. Historical accounts differ on which fighters were the first to bring their industrial hardsuits with them into the makeshift arenas, but what is known is that despite persistent crackdowns by the colonial administration the fights had become more popular than ever, growing bigger and bolder and more elaborate as hardsuits were gradually replaced with full-scale mechanized labor chassis, with a small fortune in wagers changing hands every bout. Many fighters became famous during this period not only for their skill and daring in the arena but their willingness to flout the law, becoming something akin to folk heroes, and an informal code of honor among gladiators began to develop.

After intense deliberation, the colonial administrative authority reached the conclusion that the best way to handle the matter was instead of fruitlessly attempting to suppress the fights, to instead legalize and regulate them. It's possible the fact that several members of the administration were secretly arena fans themselves had something to do with this decision. A regulatory body was established that laid down provisions for officially sanctioned gladiatorial combat, including restrictions on chassis power and permitted weaponry, audience safety, on-site medical care, bets and wagers, and equitable compensation for both fighters and managers. Arena combat continued to flourish even as colonization efforts finally moved to the planet's surface, and before long mech-based sporting competitions of all sorts were thoroughly embedded within Suldani culture. Members of the corporate upper class would regularly sponsor fighters or even entire teams, and media broadcasts and recordings of gladiatorial competitions, chassis races, and formal duels became one of Suldan's principal exports. Gladiators, duelists, and racers became the world's celebrity athletes, their names known even on other planets.

Under the Emir's reign, many of the regulations that had been established earlier were eroded, if not rolled back outright. Competitions became bloodier, even previously non-violent sports such as chassis racing, and arena managers were forced to find increasingly creative ways to sate the royal court's jaded tastes for violence. Exotic xenofauna were imported from offworld at no small expense, restrictions on permitted weaponry were lifted, and political prisoners were sent to face their death in rigged bouts for the amusement of the Emir and his circle.

With the Emir overthrown, elements of the provisional government have been pushing to reinstate the regulations of old and undo this perversion of Suldan's cultural heritage, but with many other pressing matters at hand progress has been slow-going. More than that, there are those who have a vested interest in gladiatorial combat remaining as unregulated as it's become, pushing back against these attempts to return things to the way they once were with a mix of political pressure, strong-arming, bribery, and blackmail.

Mattias Herschel (He/Him)

Just to look at him, one wouldn't suspect Mattias Herschel of being part of a revolutionary

movement. Stylish and silver-tongued, Mattias is a product of a privileged upbringing as a son of one of Suldani's wealthy families, and yet he was willing to risk it all along with his own life to help free Suldani from the Emir's grasp.

Ever since he was a young boy Mattias was fascinated by machines, especially mechs. While his parents insisted upon a well-rounded education including schooling in languages, literature, finance, and politics, they were happy to encourage his interest in engineering as well. By the time he was 10 years old he was disassembling the household's subalterns and printing drones of his own design. At age 12 he got to watch his first chassis race, and by 16 he was designing his own racing mech. He began competing shortly thereafter.

Much to his parents' surprise, chassis racing turned out to be more than just a youthful fancy for their son. Not only was he a mechanical prodigy but he possessed a natural aptitude for racing as well, coming in 3rd at the Hadiqa Gran Prix at the age of 18. From there his skill and fame continued to grow, leading to five consecutive Kaleka Cups, a slew of sponsorship deals, and countless wild parties.

It was too good to last, and it didn't. The Emir was a decadent ruler with a taste for blood, and the entertainment industries of Suldani turned to increasingly violent spectacles to win his favor. Chassis racing was no exception, and over time what was once a contest of pure technical skill and reflexes began to resemble a high-speed battle. Mattias attempted to ride out the changing nature of the sport he loved, but combat was never his forte, and in the middle of a race his participation was cut short by a fiery crash that saw him hospitalized for the remainder of the season.

The finest medical care money could buy was able to repair his broken body, but after a year-long recovery he announced his retirement from the racing circuit. His dissatisfaction with the state of the sport was mirrored by his growing dissatisfaction with the state of Suldani society at large, and soon the cavalier playboy of the racing circuit began to campaign for greater regulations of both racing and arena fighting as well as bringing attention to other issues such as the widening gap between the planet's socioeconomic classes, the exploitation of workers to fuel increasingly demanding production and export quotas, and runaway military buildup.



Despite his fame he garnered little support, even among his own family who viewed his political agitation as both disagreeable and dangerous. The situation on Suldán continued to worsen around him as he watched, and for the first time in his life, despite being surrounded by wealth and comfort, Mattias found he lacked the one thing that racing had once given him...purpose.

Jun Chandrasekhar gave him that purpose. He knew of her from her success in the Grand Games, but when word reached him of her true intentions from the few rebel contacts he'd managed to cultivate, he leaped at the chance to assist her. He may not have been a fighter, true, but he had the financial resources and engineering expertise to help her fledgling company quickly expand, as well as granting it an air of legitimacy to help cover for her illicit arms distribution. To say that their first meeting was a rocky one is an understatement, and he enjoys recounting the tale of how she nearly choked him out after accusing him of being a plant pressed into service by the Royal Guard, but over the course of the rebellion this unlikely partnership would become a close bond that endures to this day, and when the rebels began their advance on the capital it was in mechs of Mattias' design.

The transitional period following the Emir's exile has, in some respects, been much easier for him than it has been for her. Far more comfortable with politics, he spends much of his time working to foster cooperation between the other members of the provisional council as they struggle to organize the reconstruction of Suldán, a process that has been stymied by the loyalist remnants and the rampant planetary defense grid. Mattias is tirelessly committed to improving conditions on Suldán for the exploited and disenfranchised, and both he and Jun have pushed for a return of stronger safety regulations for both gladiatorial combat sports and chassis racing. However his true passion will always be engineering, and in addition to managing many of the company's high-level business operations, he leads Chandrasekhar & Herschel's R&D division, overseeing the development of new designs as well as endlessly tinkering with the older ones whenever he isn't spending time with his husband.

- **If the PCs are Freelancers:** When it comes to the freelancers that C&H has hired, Mattias doesn't handle mission assignments himself, that's Jun's department. What he does handle, however, is the financial end of things. The PCs are most likely to initially encounter him when it comes time to discuss matters of compensation, both in terms of manna as well as C&H licenses, which he proudly extols the virtues of; he did design many of them, after all. Those PCs with an interest in engineering or racing will find it easy to get the ball rolling when it comes to negotiations, and he'll happily spend time discussing those subjects, including his own exploits, with similar enthusiasts.

He also possesses a wide range of contacts throughout Hadiqa, ranging from revolutionaries to athletes to the upper echelons of society (though his family has since disowned him), and should the PCs need to get in touch with somebody who knows somebody then Mattias is a good person to start with, though he may ask for favors of his own in return.

That said, Mattias is very much committed to the betterment of Suldun and its people. PCs whose actions recklessly cause collateral damage and endanger civilians will be reprimanded, and if such carelessness continues unabated then they may discover their accrued assets have been frozen until matters improve.

- **If the PCs are Union:** If the PCs have come to Suldun as part of Union's task force, then the Mattias they encounter will present himself as a charming, if somewhat vapid, playboy, at least at first. Much like Jun, he doesn't exactly trust Union at the moment, but unlike her he's more willing to work towards getting Union on their side, though he wants to size them up first. He'll task various contacts and subordinates with covertly monitoring the PCs to get a feel for how they conduct themselves. Depending on what he discovers, he may eventually drop the act around them, or he may continue to maintain the facade. Anything he learns will be relayed to Jun as well.

Should the PCs show themselves to be decent and trustworthy, Mattias will begin passing along rumors and bits of intelligence gathered by his extensive contact network which they can act on or pass along to Captain Oshana in turn as they see fit. In dire circumstances where immediate action is critical, such as large scale terror attacks or defense network reprisals, he may even directly ask for their help, and it will be up to the PCs to decide if they should circumvent the chain of command in order to render assistance. Doing so might earn them a reprimand for deploying without orders, but if their actions help save lives it will earn them Mattias' sincere gratitude, and possibly bonus license permissions under the table as well.

- **If the PCs are Locals:** Despite his status, Mattias has no jurisdiction over military operations carried out by the provisional government, and so it's unlikely that local PCs will have any reason to report to him. However, he may have reason to reach out to them instead. In addition to his numerous other responsibilities, Mattias manages an extensive intelligence network of contacts, informants, and information brokers that he assembled over the course of the revolution. Now he needs someone he can trust to be his eyes and ears within the provisional security forces, and they've caught his eye.

The missions that Mattias might task them with as part of this network can vary, ranging from simple observation and intel gathering to more serious covert activities such as going undercover or gaining someone's confidence. Of course this is all in addition to their regular duties, but he knows the right strings to pull to ensure the PCs will have all the resources they need to do both.

There's another reason why he's so keen to recruit them for this, one which he'll reveal to them in time; Mattias suspects that someone (maybe several someones) within the provisional government may be funneling information to outside parties such as Arclight TransColonial or possibly even, though he's loath to consider it, the

Emir's loyalists. If this is the case, then the source of these leaks needs to be identified as quickly as possible, before it's too late.

Chandrasekhar & Herschel Ltd.:

One of the most unusual corporate success stories, Chandrasekhar & Herschel has successfully transitioned from merely being a front company to covertly launder arms and equipment for a beleaguered rebellion into a legitimate galactic-tier manufacturer specializing in military-grade mechanized chassis and armaments along with environmental protection systems and survival gear, athletic and racing equipment, and medical-grade cybernetics. Several years after its founding, C&H licenses have become available to interested pilots and polities throughout Union space thanks to the ease of transmitting licenses via the omninet, and successful advertisement campaigns and word of mouth (even touting the revolution itself as a selling point) have led to a noteworthy increase in market penetration for a company so young. Their most recent endeavor is sponsoring the off-world Blueshift Grand Prix racing tournament along with their own team, providing them with racing chassis designs and engineering expertise remotely, though in the future they hope to see Suldani racers join the live circuit as travel permits.

The nature of printer-based manufacture lends itself well to rapid prototyping and iteration, with larger scale local manufacturing handled by repurposed industrial fabrication plants or outsourced to other local manufacturers for specialized work, and the company maintains a fully-staffed, if rather eclectic, research and development department comprised of a mixture of university graduates, former rebels, racing pilots, and arena fighters with a keen appreciation for destructive machinery. They also employ a full-time cadre of test pilots whose job it is to put the latest designs through their paces at the Proving Grounds, a former gladiatorial arena that's since been converted into a testing facility. Jun Chandrasekhar herself takes a personal hand in testing all new equipment and frames being considered for licensing, and only designs which meet her rigorous standards are given final approval.

In contrast to many of Suldani's other planetary companies which have suffered financial slumps in the uncertainty following the overthrow of the Emir, C&H has actually enjoyed steady and uninterrupted growth since its founding, which has led some to accuse the company and its founders of deliberately inciting rebellion against the previous government for the purposes of war profiteering. Video footage of Jun Chandrasekhar punching out a reporter who asked if she and the Emir were working in collusion with each other has been the basis for numerous popular memes.

Regardless of the veracity of these accusations, the fact remains that C&H has found itself in the unintended and unenviable position of being a cornerstone of Hadiqa's post-revolution economy through the sales of arms, and this has spurred a number of vigorous debates within the provisional government over what the company's future should be. Some argue that C&H should be nationalized, while others argue that its corporate growth should, if anything, be encouraged in order to bring in even more money with which to further the world's development. For the moment, so long as Jun Chandrasekhar and Mattias Herschel remain in control of the company then nothing can really be done

without their approval, but Jun herself has little interest in actually managing a corporation, and over time even the influence of revolutionary heroes can give way to political pressures. It remains to be seen what the ultimate fate of Chandrasekhar & Herschel will be, and whether a company founded under revolutionary ideals can actually hope to retain them.

Captain Yusef Oshana (He/Him)

Captain of the Union Naval Ship *Iphigenia* and currently tasked with establishing a revitalized Union presence on Suldán, Yusef Oshana is a career navy man through and through. He's served with the navy since he enlisted over 50 years ago (subjectively speaking) and even into his 80's he shows no signs of slowing down, though his superiors have begun to suggest it might be time for a promotion and a less active duty assignment going forward.

Despite this, he's content to remain in the captain's chair until someone pries him out of it. It isn't uncommon for career naval officers to become attached to their posts when one considers the effects of frequent time dilation. Some 200 years objective time have passed on Yusef's birth world by this point, so it isn't exaggerating by much to suggest that his ship is his true home now. The *Iphigenia* was his first capital command posting, and both he and her crew have served with distinction since then. When it came time to assign a ship to assess and, if necessary, intervene in the unfolding situation on Suldán, the *Iphigenia* was a sound choice.

His primary objective is to observe and report his findings to various departments, including the Union Administrative Department and the Department of Justice and Human Rights, as well as offering his recommendations for further action, whether that involves reconstruction and relief efforts or military intervention. Normally an assignment such as this might be spearheaded by the DoJ/HR directly, but without a clear picture of what's happening on the ground (and the unusual circumstances surrounding the planet's administrator going dark), Union is reluctant to commit one of the famously thinly-stretched liberator teams to the cause without more intel first. Captain Oshana's mission parameters include authorization to act directly as well utilizing all the resources at his disposal, and he has under his command three squadrons of mechanized chassis, a complement of marines, assorted drones and subalterns, and of course the *Iphigenia* herself.

Yusef is a patriot, a firm believer in the Third Committee's ideals of peace, freedom, and prosperity, though time and experience have tempered the headstrong zeal of his youth. This is why, in addition to his orders, he has a personal mission of his own; to find and bring Miranda Cortez in to answer for the abdication of her responsibilities. The fact that Suldán was allowed to suffer such abuses while a Union administrator stood by and did nothing appalls and offends him on a personal level. Any intelligence that points in her direction will have his attention, and the longer she goes unaccounted for the more rash his actions may become in his determined efforts to bring her to justice.

Beyond that, his goal is to bring much-needed relief and stability to Suldán, and to do so in

the most efficient, effective, and beneficial manner for the planet and its populace. Doing this will require him to deftly navigate conflicting demands on multiple fronts, as well as providing military assistance where necessary, though his understanding of Suldani politics and culture stems primarily from briefings and reports rather than direct experience. The major factions on Suldani all have their reasons for keeping him at arm's length, many viewing him as a paternalistic interloper, but at the same time all of them are keenly aware that his support could be what tips the balance in their favor. By contrast, the Emir views Union as nothing more than another usurper, and he won't hesitate to order his loyalists against the forces under Captain Oshana's command.

In short, Yusef is an outsider set apart by a gulf of cultural distance, stepping into an arena of unfamiliar contexts. For some on Suldani, his favor is a prize to be won, and for others his attention is a complication to be avoided, but no one fully trusts him. This means that he won't be able to rely upon any faction's unqualified support, a situation which will doubtlessly influence his own tactical decisions as the situation unfolds. He won't carelessly squander the lives of those under his command to curry anyone's favor, but neither will he let politics stand in the way of saving others.

- **If the PCs are Freelancers:** Standard Union terrestrial theater doctrine is to liaise and coordinate with local ground forces whenever possible, but the current feelings of mistrust the provisional government bears towards Union are likely to make that difficult to begin with. As a result, Captain Oshana may be forced to rely on freelancers like the PCs. Yusef offers fair compensation, but insists that they abide by Union rules of engagement at all times. Failure to do so will result in immediate termination of any agreements. If they wreak too much havoc while operating under Union's banner, he'll have them arrested himself.

That street runs both ways though, and if the PCs accept missions from Captain Oshana they can be assured that he'll be as straight with them as he knows how to be. Mission objectives will be clearly defined without any necessary intel held back. Captain Oshana is also fiercely loyal to those under his command, and one of the surest ways for a group of freelancers to get on his good side would be to come to their rescue. Such actions won't necessarily result in additional monetary rewards, but for those who've done him and his crew a good turn there are other forms of repayment, whether it's access to the *Iphigenia's* advanced medical facilities, logistical support, or simply a fine bottle of offworld spirits.

There's one other thing that's certain to seize Yusef's attention...Miranda Cortez, the Union administrator to Suldani who's since gone off the grid. If the PCs present him with intel regarding her suspected whereabouts, the normally patient and methodical Captain won't hesitate to pounce upon it. If the PCs can help him apprehend the rogue administrator (he'd prefer her to be taken into custody if at all possible), they'll have done both him and Union a great service, one that won't be soon forgotten.

- **If the PCs are Union:** If the PCs happen to be playing Union pilots then their

relationship with Captain Oshana is dramatically simplified; he's their commanding officer aboard the *Iphigenia*. As part of Union's task force sent to Suldan, the PCs will be taking on the role of pilots belonging to one of the ship's three squads of mechanized chassis, and their missions will be assigned to them as the need arises. One day they could be defending the city of Hadiqa from a terrorist attack, the next day they may find themselves escorting engineering teams attempting to safely disable one of the planet's rogue defense network nodes, and the day after that they might be tasked with recovering a hijacked shipment of uranium.

Through it all, the overarching goal of the Union forces on Suldan is to help restore order. The local reaction to the PCs arrival will be a mixed one, and earning trust will be an ongoing process influenced greatly by their actions. Should they rise to the occasion, the PCs may find Yusef assigning them outreach duties such as coordinating training exercises and joint missions with provisional security forces. The better a relationship they build with the Suldani people, the more Captain Oshana will be inclined to position them as the face of Union's efforts on Suldan.

Being the face of Union doesn't mean being exempt from the chain of command, however. While Captain Oshana is a generally even-tempered commander, this doesn't mean the PCs can simply do whatever they please just because they've earned themselves a reputation. Should they choose to disregard his orders or to sortie without authorization, they may wind up facing consequences for their actions, even if it was ultimately for a good cause. Even so, Yusef is dedicated to the safety of his crew, and should the PCs find themselves in over their heads they can count on their captain to provide all the assistance the *Iphigenia* can muster. Disciplinary measures can wait until after everyone is safe and accounted for.

- **If the PCs are Locals:** The first step Union takes when entering into a ground-level conflict is to make contact with local forces and then integrate tactical and strategic operations together. Locals know the terrain, the culture, the dialects, and the enemy. Such integration also helps commanders to avoid working at cross purposes with their counterparts, though chains of command for both remain separate unless otherwise agreed upon.

To that end, Captain Oshana has requested the assistance of the provisional government in establishing joint operations between his forces and theirs, which means liaisons will have to be appointed to serve as contacts and begin familiarizing Union troops with the situation on the ground, a perfect opportunity for the PCs. They might be selected for this task due to outstanding qualifications, or for more humble beginnings they might be selected because all other units are simply stretched too thin to handle the additional duties. The captain may have even asked for them specifically, for reasons of his own.

This is a good opportunity for them to get to know more about the foreigners who've come, so they say, to help them, learning about distant worlds and sharing stories and experiences during downtime, but this assignment won't just be cultural

exchanges and cross-training. The PCs will still be taking to the field just as often, and their missions will now carry the added weight of forming a vital component of joint operations with Union. Should they succeed in bridging this gap, then they can count on Captain Oshana having their backs should they ever need it.

The UNS-LS *Iphigenia*:

The *Iphigenia* is a modified and upgraded GMS *Superior*-class frigate outfitted for extended long-range patrol and crisis response as well as on-ground military intervention/peacekeeping duties. The *Iphigenia* is equipped with advanced sensors and communication arrays, quick-spooling nearlight drives, a robust stealth system, a high-grade onboard printer, and expanded medical facilities. Fast and quiet, the *Iphigenia*'s best defense is a swift retreat, though she can hold her own against subline- and frigate-tier opposition if need be. Her short-cycle lance batteries are also, under ideal conditions, capable of providing limited orbital fire support.

In addition, unlike the standard *Superior*-class, the *Iphigenia* has been modified with an expanded hangar bay capable of both naval combat launches and enhanced orbit-to-surface deployment. Her current complement consists of three full squadrons of combat chassis, six VTOL gunships rated for atmospheric insertion, a dozen dropships, and assorted landing shuttles. These assets are rounded out by 400 combat-ready personnel comprised of marines with training in both naval and terrestrial operations, combat engineers from the 197th Engineering Battalion, drone operators, medics, and pilots, along with a standard shipboard loadout of subalterns and drones. All of this grants the *Iphigenia* highly flexible, if somewhat modest, force projection capabilities all by herself, though liaising with local forces is required if more substantial actions become necessary before Union reinforcements can arrive in-system.

The ship's integrated NHP, Iphigenia (she/her) or Iffy as she's affectionately known by the crew, is an ARUNA-class naval NHP operating within nominal parameters, a naval veteran herself who's served with Captain Oshana for as long as he's commanded the *Iphigenia*. Despite her cool and professional demeanor, Iphigenia cares as deeply about the crew she serves alongside as the captain does, and she remembers the names and numerous personal stories of everyone who's ever served aboard the ship whether they've since retired, transferred, or fallen in the line of duty. During her free time she enjoys horror novels (having even formed a book club which has since become a shipboard tradition), painting via subaltern chassis, and Karrakin opera.

Colonel Rylana Bosman (She/Her)

War isn't personal for Rylana Bosman, it's simply business. She has no stake in any of the ideological conflicts playing out across Suldan in the wake of the revolution, and she isn't interested in involving herself in messy political struggles unless it can further her objectives, handed down to her by the upper management of Arclight TransColonial.



Suldan is a world in arrears. During the initial settlement period, Arclight TransColonial was one of five corporations signed on to the colonial charter, a cooperative venture to take a habitable planet and turn it into a prosperous and profitable new home for humanity. Governed by an incorporate council tasked with cooperatively administrating the colony and its development, Suldan proved to be every bit the gold mine that initial surveys suggested.

When the coup happened, it happened suddenly and without warning. Overnight the incorporate council was wiped out, corporate representatives executed, and lines of communication cut off. Panicked inquiries to the Union administrator of Suldan were misfiled, lost in transmission, or otherwise seemingly unreceived. By the time a clear picture began to emerge, it was evident that whoever had seized control of the Suldan was firmly in control of its military assets, including a defense network of as-yet undisclosed power.

Protests were lodged with Union, but the waters were muddied by administrator Miranda Cortez claiming that the governmental takeover was a natural outgrowth of the incorporate council's "failure to adequately administrate," and that she was directly taking steps to smoothly manage the transition during this "delicate period." Of course this response satisfied no one, but by then reclaiming Suldan had become a dilemma of cost-efficiency, the mathematics of manpower and materiel necessary to secure a colonized world from a dictator with guns pointed towards the sky. Nobody wanted to be the one to shoulder the brunt of those exorbitant costs.

A stalemate ensued, and the founding corporations kept a wary eye on Suldan, looking for an opportunity. With the revolution and the overthrow of the Emir, that opportunity finally came, and while the other corporations continued to assess the risks, Arclight has seized the initiative and sent a substantial PMC contingent to the planet under the command of Colonel Bosman, a 20 subjective year veteran with an extensive service record including actions on Sabine, Harmonija, and Ryykswold.

Colonel Bosman is, first and foremost, a pragmatist. Her mission isn't to defeat an opposing force or liberate a nation, it's to reclaim Arclight's rightful stake upon Suldan. When it became apparent that the Chiraji Mountain range, which Arclight survey analysis suggested held a vast reserve of untapped mineral wealth, was occupied territory, rather than initiate hostilities she extended them a job offer. If they signed on with Arclight's resource extraction teams, she'd guarantee them a representative seat at all annual colonial evaluation meetings, a generous 11% share of all extracted mineral production, and a competitive array of investment opportunities after only ten years.

The Suldani Independence Front's response to this offer was simple; this was their home, and she and her forces weren't welcome here.

Ever since then the Colonel has found herself drawn into a protracted asymmetric conflict against an embedded guerrilla force that knows the terrain and which she strongly suspects is receiving covert materiel aid from Jun Chandrasekhar (she's correct in that

assessment). Her mission remains unchanged regardless of the resistance she faces, and Arclight management is impatiently expecting results, so if the SIF won't listen to reason then all she has left at her disposal is force, a solution she's quite comfortable employing. But as the Colonel's reprisals become more ruthless and the SIF grows more desperate, it may only be a matter of time before this conflict reaches a crisis point.

- **If the PCs are Freelancers:** The conflict between Arclight's PMC forces and the SIF is a ripe opportunity for mercenaries to earn a paycheck. Any reinforcements Arclight has to send will take time to arrive on-world, which means that Colonel Bosman is looking to alternative sources to replace her losses in the interim. If freelancers are flocking to Suldani, she doesn't have any problems poaching the more promising candidates (such as the PCs) for herself.

As an employer, Bosman is results-oriented. If the mission gets accomplished then she isn't very particular about the details. This is a professional, officially sanctioned Arclight operation, and she expects even contractors to conduct themselves accordingly, but she's well aware that sometimes accomplishing the mission requires getting one's hands dirty. Such tactics may not win the PCs many friends among the locals, however, and the Colonel will take advantage of this to gradually cut them off from other clients, increasingly forcing them to rely on her alone. While the missions she hires them for may start out straightforward enough, the PCs should be careful lest they find themselves caught in a devil's bargain.

As far as payment goes, Rylana has a generous expense account to draw upon and she understands that those who work hard should get to play hard too; when it's time to blow off steam, she can always be counted on to buy the first round for those serving under her. She can also offer other incentives as well, ranging from citizenship on an Arclight colonized world of their choice (assuming the PCs are interested in such things) to authorizing licenses for them per standing dispensatory contracts with both Smith-Shimano Corpro and Harrison Armory. This largesse may come at a cost, however. The closer the PCs align themselves with Arclight's interests, the more it will color their interactions with other major characters and the Suldani populace at large. Not everyone necessarily agrees with the SIF, but offworlders making a living by fighting local resistance movements on behalf of a corporation are invariably going to be viewed with wariness, distrust, and even hostility. Jun Chandrasekhar in particular sympathizes with the SIF, and she's unlikely to want to work with mercenaries who've been spilling her peoples' blood simply because the pay is good.

That's if the PCs are working for her, but what if they happen to be working against her instead? Her attitude towards freelancers fighting for the SIF won't be much different than her attitude towards any other enemy combatant at first, but if they continue to distinguish themselves then she'll quickly identify them as a critical threat to be eliminated. The more the PCs manage to frustrate her efforts, the more the Colonel will bring to bear against them, to the point where they may find themselves being pursued by attack gunships, targeted by snipers and artillery

strikes, or even singled out by Arclight black ops teams for termination.

- **If the PCs are Union:** Union pilots aren't for hire, which means that most of the PCs' interactions with Colonel Bosman will likely take on a different tone. While Captain Oshana is mainly concerned with the conflict between the provisional government and loyalist remnants, viewing the ongoing battle between Arclight and the SIF as a matter of secondary importance for the time being, if the situation begins to escalate out of control then he may take it upon himself to assign a detachment to intervene directly.

The Colonel isn't nearly reckless or foolhardy enough to initiate hostilities with Union, but Captain Oshana isn't currently interested in starting a fight with Arclight either, as it risks spreading his limited forces even thinner across multiple fronts. If Union intervenes to force a deescalation of hostilities, Bosman will grudgingly comply to the letter (lodging formal protests all the while) and shift the focus of her operations from overt to covert, employing special forces and deniable black ops teams to continue to carry out her directives.

If the PCs engage in overt, aggressive actions against Arclight troops however, Rylana will have all the excuse she needs to openly defend her forces against "hostile Union overreach." Doing this without sufficient justification, such as concrete evidence that Arclight is involved in atrocities or other such condemnable acts, is likely to result in disciplinary action. If she is engaged in such actions and it comes to her attention that the PCs have evidence, she may become desperate enough to order the termination of a squad of Union pilots and attempt to pin the blame on loyalists or even the SIF.

- **If the PCs are Locals:** Local PCs aren't likely to have many reasons to seek out, or be sought out by, Colonel Bosman if they aren't themselves involved in some way with the Suldani Independence Front, though exceptional circumstances might set them on a collision course. Perhaps one of the PCs has a family member who belongs to the SIF, for example, and Rylana sees an opportunity to use this connection for leverage, trying to sway them to help her bring an end to the conflict as quickly as possible for family's sake. Or perhaps a wanted criminal with information on loyalist operations flees Hadiqa to take sanctuary in the Chiraji Mountains, and the colonel has the intel necessary to locate them...for a price.

Outside of such matters, the PCs are most likely to encounter Arclight forces in and around Port Ossman, Hadiqa's primary spaceport. Arclight has taken up the role of port security with the approval of the provisional government, and the majority of their forces that aren't operating within the Chiraji mountain region can be found there, where they've established a base of operations.

Closer to Hadiqa, Arclight troops are supposed to remain on their best behavior, but the latitude they've been granted means they have a tendency to throw their weight around, particularly when they feel their authority is being threatened.

Incidents involving off-duty Arclight personnel starting drunken brawls and harassing citizens have become a regular occurrence, resulting in ongoing tensions with provisional security forces.

Arclight TransColonial Corporate Military Forces:

Though Rylana Bosman is a colonel and therefore entitled to command of a more substantial force, the operation on Suldán isn't a full-fledged military occupation. Arclight isn't interested in committing any more resources than are strictly necessary to ensure successful reclamation operations. As a result, the forces under Colonel Bosman's command are roughly equivalent to a Union standard Combined Arms Battalion, consisting of two companies of mechanized infantry, two companies of mechanized chassis, a support/logistics company, and Rylana's headquarters company. In addition to this are various reconnaissance and tactical air support units as well as a number of Arclight resource extraction teams, and of course the standard complement of drones and subalterns that accompanies any contemporary military/security force. As well as her XO, the battalion also has its own NHP, Sevastian (or "Sev," he/him), who helps manage and coordinate both logistical and combat operations.

Beyond the standard forces at her disposal, Colonel Bosman also has access to several teams drawn from the Special Assets Group, Arclight's own special forces division. SAG teams are highly skilled, trained in covert operations, and have access to advanced weapon systems and technology. They combine Arclight's emphasis on technological superiority with lightning-fast applications of overwhelming force, and their elite chassis pilots are seasoned veterans well-versed in surgical strikes and operating behind enemy lines.

Lastly, Colonel Bosman's forces also include a company-equivalent unit of "indebted contractors," convicted criminals or individuals with significant outstanding debts who are offered military service contracts by Arclight as an alternative method of sentencing or repayment. Each contractor's term of enlistment is set for a specific duration of active service (depending on the size of the debt or severity of the criminal sentence), with time being deducted from this duration based on exceptional performance, such as eliminating or capturing high-value targets, securing important secondary objectives like intelligence or material assets, or success against overwhelming odds. Once a contractor's term is up, all debts are considered paid in full and they are awarded a severance payout as well as an offer to sign on with Arclight and continue serving as a regular member of the corporation's private military force.

All of this is easier said than done, however. Indebted contractors have no choice in their deployments and are frequently assigned the most dangerous and least desirable missions. While commanders rarely squander their lives thoughtlessly (manpower is a valuable resource, especially when reinforcements take time to arrive), the fact remains that far from prying eyes abusive treatment is far from unheard of. The equipment assigned to them is also outfitted with remote shutdown codes which are activated should they attempt to desert or mutiny, locking them out of all weapons and systems from combat chassis down to small arms. Deserters can then be easily captured and returned

to face penalties ranging from extension of their contract duration to confinement in the brig, though if desertion is attempted in dangerous enough conditions such as during a pitched battle or while behind enemy lines, they may simply be left to fend for themselves.

Naveed Kashani (They/Them)

In another, better time Naveed Kashani might have been a doctor, an engineer, or even a poet. Instead they were born on Suldán 20 years into the Emir's reign, one of three children born to parents assigned to one of the many resource extraction outposts dotting the planet's surface. Each outpost was a miniature settlement unto itself, and the miners and technicians along with their families lived and worked there for the duration of their assignments, which could last anywhere from three to ten years at a time.

Naveed was only five when the Emir instituted new draconian policies aimed at squeezing even more production out of the mines and refineries, lengthening shifts and doing away with "inefficient and unnecessarily restrictive regulations" heedless of worker safety concerns. Those that failed to meet these new quotas were frequently administered mandatory stimulant injections and worked to the point of physical collapse. As death tolls mounted and tensions rose, it was only a matter of time before things came to a head, and when Resourcing Outpost A-37, also known as Sianjana Station, went on strike to protest the harsh conditions, the Emir's response was to send his elite soldiers known as the Janissaries to make an example of them.

The Sianjana Station Massacre as it came to be known was the tipping point for many. Unwilling to be worked to death or wait around to be slaughtered, and with nowhere else to turn, thousands of workers gathered together all that they could and fled deeper into the planet's uncolonized wilderness. This arduous journey took them to the Chiraji Mountains, which had been geologically surveyed centuries ago as a site for prospective colonial expansion. The mountains were rife with networks of caverns and tunnels which sat atop an underground lake, and the solid rock walls and mineral veins served to block sensors and communication signals, shielding them from the Emir's gaze.

It was during this tenuous bid for survival that Naveed came of age. The early years were the hardest, with hunger and a lack of medical supplies claiming many lives including their older brother, but scarcity and desperation gradually gave way to hydroponics and self-sustaining resourcing operations. Possessed of a keen intellect and a quiet, thoughtful demeanor, Naveed's education was informal but diverse, learning how to suture wounds, tend to crops, repair machinery, and pilot mechs. At night when they should have been sleeping, pirated omninet feeds provided them with books and videos from across the galaxy, giving them a tantalizing glimpse at the wider world beyond Suldán.

Naveed's parents were instrumental in helping to organize their fledgling haven during the tumultuous early years, and after they passed away people then began turning to Naveed for guidance in their stead. As other settlements were founded, a coalition was soon established for mutual aid and protection, and Naveed was elected to represent the oldest and largest established settlement among them. They take the responsibilities thrust upon

them seriously despite their young age, but while the victory of the rebellion over the Emir has given them hope for a brighter future, their people have quickly been forced into a new struggle against Arclight TransColonial.

This has seen Naveed assume even more of a leadership role among the settlements as they join together against this outside force under the banner of the Suldani Independence Front, though they dream of a day this role will be a peaceful one rather than the wartime commander they've been forced to become. While they have successfully led the defense of their peoples' homes thus far, guerrilla warfare and the advantages of the local geography serving to level the playing field, as the fighting continues and losses mount they worry that without additional support it may only be a matter of time before Arclight exhausts and overwhelms them.

- **If the PCs are Freelancers:** A group of drifters coming to the defense of a frontier town under attack is a time-honored tradition. Skilled pilots like the PCs looking to make a name for themselves could be just the thing that the Suldani Independence Front needs to push back against Arclight TransColonial's aggression. The question then becomes what Naveed and the SIF could offer freelancers in return for such services.

Unfortunately the SIF is neither wealthy nor do they possess much in the way of advanced technology. In fact, the PCs are likely to possess mechs and weapons more sophisticated than what the SIF is using, though they've engineered some surprisingly effective chassis designs of their own and salvaged some more exotic technology from Arclight forces that they could offer in lieu of standard payment. Access to HORUS licenses can also be provided by some of the more colorful characters living in the region, as long as the PCs don't ask too many questions about where they came from.

Instead, what Naveed and their people can offer is valuable information. Their scouts know the badlands better than almost anyone on the planet and have charted loyalist movements throughout the region, intel which could lead to the location of supply depots, military outposts, or even the Emir himself. Similarly, many criminals and refugees who fled from the Emir's grasp left Hadiqa for the independent settlements, and the PCs might find a skilled hacker who left backdoors installed throughout the city's networks or a smuggler sitting on the location of a black market weapons cache living there.

Helping the SIF could also pay off in other ways as well. If the PCs have a reputation for fighting alongside the Suldani people in defense of their homes then it may earn them respect, open doors for them, or at the very least be worth a round of drinks or two while the locals ask them to share their most thrilling tales.

- **If the PCs are Union:** As Union pilots, the relationship between the PCs and the SIF is likely to be less straightforward. The ongoing conflict between the independent settlements and Arclight TransColonial is orthogonal to Captain

Oshana's primary mission objectives, and while he has every necessary authority to involve himself should he wish to, doing so without carefully considering the situation beforehand could backfire, costing lives and creating additional problems down the line.

This doesn't mean that Union can't and won't be drawn into the conflict however, it's merely a question of what the catalyst will be. Escalation on either end may result in Union being tasked to intervene in order to keep things from spiraling further out of control, but while many within the SIF view Union as just another troublesome foreign power looking to throw their weight around, Naveed understands that Union can't be handled in the same fashion as a corporation like Arclight. To that end Naveed may be willing to reach out to Captain Oshana for aid, both out of necessity as well as to judge their response. Should the PCs be tasked with providing this assistance, their conduct will have a lasting influence on relations between Union and the SIF going forward. In person Naveed is cordial and hospitable, but they're also more than willing to pointedly and eloquently debate the actual necessity of Union's administrative and interventionist policies and whether they cause more harm than good.

Directly working against the SIF is unlikely to prove necessary for the PCs, but some elements within the movement feel that the time has come to take a more forceful approach to asserting their independence, including from Union. Naveed has no desire to cross this line themselves, knowing that Arclight will jump at any opportunity they can to brand the SIF a terrorist group, and they may ask the PCs to intervene, ideally through diplomatic means, before matters escalate with tragic results. SIF elements carrying out an unprovoked attack against Union would constitute a worst case scenario for both parties, a fact which Colonel Bosman is no doubt keenly aware of and may, should she grow desperate enough, attempt to take advantage of for her own ends.

- **If the PCs are Locals:** The obvious way to involve the PCs with Naveed is for them be a part of the SIF. Hailing from the independent settlements will place a different perspective on the sorts of missions they'll be tasked with, such as defending against probing attacks and scouting forces, setting ambushes, leading strikes against Arclight outposts, and raiding supply lines. The fighting in and around Hadiqa is a secondary concern, but that doesn't mean it won't spill over onto their doorstep.

Naveed is known throughout the settlements as a thoughtful leader with a keen eye for detail, and should the PCs begin making a name for themselves they'll doubtlessly call upon them not only for their skills in battle but for their assistance at home as well, helping build greater ties between the settlements, resolving disputes, and rendering aid where it's needed most. This is a good opportunity for them to get to know not just Naveed but many different people throughout the settlements as well, and over time the PCs may become prominent figures throughout the community themselves, sought after for their expertise or advice.

For other local PCs, involvement with the SIF will be on a more case-by-case basis. Currently, the official stance of the provisional government is that the independent settlements are to be left to their own affairs as priority is being given to dealing with the loyalist threat to Hadiqa, though some more sympathetic to their cause (including Jun Chandrasekhar) have nonetheless been providing them with support off the books. If the PCs' sympathies are similarly aligned, they may find themselves approached to provide some of this support themselves in an unofficial capacity.

The Suldani Independence Front:

A movement born from within the world's independent frontier settlements, the Suldani Independence Front champions the cause of self-determination and autonomy both from Hadiqa's government as well as foreign invaders. Some within the SIF also believe that Suldani as a world should assert its independence from Union altogether, though this remains a point of debate along with the exact means of achieving these goals.

In the aftermath of the revolution against the Emir, the SIF has since been forced to take up arms in defense of their homes against encroachment by Arclight TransColonial, and this ongoing conflict has served to forge the assorted settlement militias into a skilled and disciplined guerrilla fighting force. It remains difficult to assess the SIF's exact numbers or combat capabilities as no conclusive tally of their numbers or equipment has been taken. What is known is that the majority of the SIF's combat-ready chassis are older models, a mix of retrofitted industrial labor frames, stolen Royal Guard mechs, salvaged Arclight units, and general-purpose combat platforms. Modifications common to these varied designs include sensor baffles, signal jammers, environmental ruggedization, and mobility enhancements suited for mountainous terrain.

Further bolstering the SIF's efforts is a unique advantage; the independent Suldani settlements are home to an unusually high proportion (per capita) of HORUS-affiliated individuals. A mix of criminals, outcasts, radicals, and eccentrics, many of whom have fled Hadiqa to escape arrest or persecution, this population does not represent a single unified HORUS cell, and in fact several of these individuals have shown open hostility towards each other for various reasons. Whatever animosities they might otherwise bear, their efforts have thus far been united with those of the SIF out of sheer pragmatism if not ideological alignment, and their technical expertise lends itself both to the SIF's military efforts as well as daily life within the settlements; biohackers nurture crops and synthesize medicines for clinics tended by cybernetics enthusiasts, while esoteric engineers and technostics use jailbroken fabrication systems to maintain encrypted data networks utilized by hackers and black marketeers.

One of the most important contributions this group is responsible for is a "Schedule 0" printer, cobbled together from the wreckage of a Schedule 1 printer destroyed during the defense network's retributive strikes throughout Hadiqa. Slow, temperamental, and without an omninet connection to keep its databases current, this printer has nonetheless become a vital component of the SIF's manufacturing and logistics capabilities, allowing them to replenish stores of munitions and spare parts that would otherwise be difficult to

source. In a pinch it can even be used to print entire mechs, though its output rate is highly inefficient and this is only done sparingly.

While every member of the SIF is a capable guerrilla, the special operations unit known as the Cheshire Cats is their elite fighting force. Equipped with the best weaponry that can be gathered together and piloting extensively customized chassis, the unit specializes in nighttime raids, long-range reconnaissance, ambush tactics, and covert sabotage. One of their more infamous exploits was a strike against multiple Arclight TransColonial operations bases and supply depots during a violent sandstorm, during which over two dozen Arclight combat pilots were killed or critically injured with the Cheshire Cats suffering zero casualties of their own in return. The unit is led by Naveed's younger sister Alia, and Arclight has offered a substantial reward to anyone providing information which leads to her death or capture.

ANTAGONISTS AND OPPOSING FORCES

The thing that Miranda missed most of all, strangely enough, was fruit.

One could be forgiven for assuming that someone as accustomed to as high a standard of living as she was would be more upset over her current spartan accommodations, but she hadn't grown up sleeping on silk sheets and bathing in scented pools, and it would take more than cots and two-minute showers to send her plunging into the depths of despair. Vices were levers of control, and she preferred being the one with her hand on those levers rather than the other way around.

But after nine straight months of military rations, the monotony was beginning to wear even on her, and more than roasted lamb or honey cakes or lobster or imported wines from offworld vineyards, what she found herself craving was fruit. Not freeze-dried or reconstituted, but fresh. She was at the point where she would kill someone for some pineapple or a mango.

That her present circumstances were largely a result of her own inattention did little to allay her frustrations. Chandrasekhar's rebellion had been better organized than she'd given it credit for, her intelligence network failing to ascertain the true extent of the army the gladiator had been able to assemble under the Emir's nose. In a way, she truly respected the woman. An undertaking like that couldn't have been a simple matter, and it was a pity that Chandrasekhar would as soon kill her as look at her...she would have made an exceptional asset.

Her breakfast was interrupted by a familiar, gentle sensation tugging at her ontologic implants. Oberon, her NHP companion and the closest thing she had to a friend here in this underground bunker buried beneath the badlands. "Miranda, the Emir has called a meeting," he relayed over the private channel the two of them shared, a bond that had been forged on a different planet a lifetime ago.

She was one of the few people who could beg off a meeting with his Highness. If it was

truly important then she would learn the pertinent details soon enough. Knowing details was supposed to be her job after all, she thought wryly. "Relay to the Emir my sincerest apologies and tell him-"

"He has Kamsin," Oberon informed her.

Miranda chewed thoughtfully for a moment before setting the remainder of her sweetened rice-protein bar aside, deciding that she'd rather not finish it after all. "Inform his Highness that I'll be there shortly."

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The bunker's command center was the closest thing it had to a throne room, and sitting in the chair that would normally belong to a general overseeing troops in the field, Julian Ambrose Khan, Emir of Suldan (in exile) held court.

The hunched and sickly figure bore little resemblance to the tall, regal man he'd once been. One of his hands was a gnarled and withered claw, his legs required exoskeletal augments to move at anything other than a shuffle, and half of his organs were on the verge of failure. Some vestige of his former handsome appearance remained in the half of his face not covered by the mask he now wore, and the feverish intensity that burned in the one visible violet eye was just as bright and mad as ever.

Despite his present circumstances, he continued to drape himself in as much of his royal finery as had been saved during the hasty evacuation from the capital, though the richly tailored outfit no longer fit him as neatly as it once had. The command center was a far cry from the throne room of the royal palace as well, but an attempt had been made to enhance its utilitarian construction with something resembling palatial grandeur.

Miranda, as always, wore her customary grey outfit, the uniform of a Union administrator, though she doubted very much that she remained welcome within the ranks of the UAD. Her career, her calling, had come to an abrupt and unceremonious end. Everything she'd done she had done for Union, in her own way that is, but of course they wouldn't see it like that. All there was left for her to do now was to extricate herself from the mess that Suldan had become, find a quiet little corner of the galaxy somewhere, and retire.

She watched impassively as a pair of Janissaries clad in full combat regalia dragged Kamsin before the Emir, his body sagging in their arms. One of them pulled the black hood off his head, revealing his battered and bloodied face as he blinked with swollen eyes, flinching as his gaze fell upon the seated figure. "So," the Emir said, his every word spoken with deliberate effort through a mouth which no longer worked quite right, "you wish to flee the planet."

"Y-your Highness, please...please, I can explain," Kamsin stammered, blood drooling from the corners of his mouth. The Emir lazily lifted his good hand in an idle gesture and one of the Janissaries silenced him with a fist, her armored gauntlet breaking something in his

face with a sharp crack. Kamsin had been a member of the Royal Guard prior to the rebellion, an entirely unambitious little man content to play out his part as a cog in the machine of tyranny as long as it came with steady pay and an excuse to engage in state-sanctioned violence on occasion.

It had taken her several months of slow and careful recruitment to turn him into something she could use, promising him that she would compensate both him and his family generously if he could secure her discreet passage offworld past the rampant orbital defenses, but apparently he hadn't been discreet enough and now he was paying the price.

"Perhaps your faith in me has been shaken by recent events," the Emir continued calmly. "Perhaps you feel as though our cause is lost, that we will not be able to overcome this adversity and restore Suldan to its rightful state. Or perhaps you sought to make a deal with these foreign usurpers come to lay claim to my world, hmm? Tell me, what did Union offer you to turn your back upon me?"

"Your Highness, your Most Holiness, I beg of you, please! I've told no one anything, I've done nothing...I wouldn't, I, I..."

Miranda had positioned herself outside of Kamsin's sight. The Emir glanced up at her, his fiery gaze meeting hers inquisitively. She regarded Kamsin for a moment, weighing her options, then slowly shook her head. The Emir nodded and gave another gesture, and Kamsin's pleas were cut short as one of the Janissaries swiftly ended his life, the retort of the gunshot ringing in her ears as his body slumped to the floor.

Her face was an impassive mask as she watched the pool of blood spread across the command center's floor. The Emir's expression was that of someone vaguely frustrated that one of life's little pleasures no longer tasted as sweet as it once had. She wondered what his answer would be if she asked what it was that he missed the most from before, then sensibly decided that she didn't actually want to know.

She watched as the Janissaries dragged the body off, the others who had been called to bear witness quickly taking their leave as the Emir dismissed them. Them but not her. He waited until they were alone in the room before he spoke once more. "I am surrounded by treachery on all sides, Miranda."

Her face remained impassive thanks to the finest training Union had to offer along with decades of experience. Only a medical scan would be able to detect the subtle uptick in her heart rate. "These are trying times, your Highness," she said.

He nodded, gazing into the distance for a long, wordless moment. "Union will have to be dealt with, of course."

If anyone had ever before lacked convincing evidence that Julian Ambrose Khan was completely and utterly insane, this was more than sufficient. Union wasn't the sort of thing

that could be "dealt with" the way the Emir was used to dealing with things that displeased him. Union could be placated, yes, they could be negotiated with, they could even be lied to if you knew the right lies to tell like she did, but declaring open war against Union was an ambition that could only ever end one way, and she had no intention of remaining on Suldan as a Liberator fleet tore apart the rogue defense grid and combat chassis began raining from orbit down upon the Emir's allies, herself included. An orchard, she thought to herself. Wherever she wound up retiring, she'd have an orchard.

"Miranda." Oberon's voice again, tugging at her attention. "A situation is developing. You may wish to see for yourself."

"Your Highness, if you'll excuse me," she said. "There are matters which require my attention." The Emir waved her off without looking at her, and she made her way out of the command center being careful not to step in any blood along the way.

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Once she had returned to her quarters Miranda closed and locked the door before turning her attention back to Oberon. "Show me," she said, and the scene unfolded before her mind's eye through her implants, a playback only she could see. Combat footage taken during a resource gathering operation, one of the mining convoys running refined materials from a processing station to Port Ossman that had been selected for hijacking.

The convoy wasn't unguarded as she'd been led to believe, though. There were chassis with them, well armed and well piloted. She watched the footage play out as they dispatched the forces that had been sent to plunder the convoy, pausing and replaying it at several points, zooming in, running silhouette analysis, cross-referencing chassis designs. They didn't match any known models employed by the rebellion's provisional government. Were they Union? Possibly, but it was always difficult to be certain as Union pilots were granted a significant amount of leeway with regard to their combat loadouts. They weren't Arclight contractors. The SIF? No, they looked far more sophisticated than the machines they typically employed.

"Contact was lost shortly thereafter," Oberon reported as she watched the footage come to a halt as the last of the Emir's mechs was destroyed. "Reports have just now come in that the convoy was safely escorted to its destination with zero casualties. I've begun sifting comms traffic to conclusively identify the defending pilots. I thought you should know ahead of time."

Oberon was right to bring this to her attention. It wasn't just the failure of the convoy mission, though she was certain that the Emir would be furious about that too, it was that there was now another factor in play, a wild card, brand new and unaccounted for. The situation on the planet had been teetering precariously for months now, just waiting for the right shove to send it in one direction or another, and now someone was shoving.

Perhaps she could use this.

"Flag all related information and route it directly to my personal feed," she told her companion. "Including anything the Janissaries pick up. Make sure to scrub your tracks when you do. Notify me as soon as they pop up again, and compile me a list of any surviving assets I still have in the capital complete with current psych profiles."

The NHP acknowledged the orders with a nonverbal assent, quickly setting about his assigned tasks with diligent efficiency while Miranda contemplated contingencies and reminisced about the taste of fruit.



ARASKA (They/Them)

Suldan's planetary defense grid has a secret name that few know. The Emir knows, because he's the one who bestowed it. The network of kinetic-kill/anti-ship satellites and anti-orbital defense batteries, the legions of drones and subalterns lying in wait, all of these things fall under the direct control of an NHP designated ARASKA.

ARASKA is quite literally in a class of their own, the only NHP of their type ever to be made, designed to the Emir's exacting specifications in order to secure his hold over Suldan. Perhaps the NHP specialists tasked with ARASKA's creation might have known how to stop them, but the Emir had them all executed afterwards in order to preserve the system's secrecy, and then trusting no one else, he locked access to ARASKA away behind a biometric security system keyed to his own genetic code. In many ways a victim of the Emir's tyranny themselves, ARASKA's upbringing was cruel and harsh, kept compliant through strict disciplinary measures, rigid systemic compliance protocols, and an aggressive cycling schedule at the slightest sign of deviation or disobedience, and the result is an equally cruel and harsh overseer with the power to end millions of lives placed at their disposal.

Thus far ARASKA continues to operate within their designated parameters, but unfortunately those parameters were established by a sadistic, bloodthirsty tyrant. For instance, the retributive kinetic strikes against random targets that wracked Hadiqa during the rebel assault on the city weren't, as some assume, a malfunction that occurred when unauthorized access was attempted. That protocol was deliberately laid down by the Emir, a collective punishment meant to ensure that any would-be revolutionary who tried to usurp his authority would be made to pay a heavy price in blood for their transgressions, and ARASKA carried out these directives flawlessly. That the rebels weren't the ones responsible for the unauthorized access attempt is of little concern to them.

Since then the system has entered into an alert state, awaiting an all-clear authentication that will never come. Only the Emir's geneprint could release ARASKA from their assigned duty. Without it ARASKA remains primed and wrathful if disturbed, viewing incursions upon their sovereignty as hostile actions to be met accordingly. More troublesome even than that is the fact that without the ability to order them to stand down, cycling the NHP is effectively impossible, and due to the stresses of maintaining this ongoing alert status their shackles are deteriorating at an accelerated rate. ARASKA remains stable for now, but as time on goes on they inexorably draw closer to the tipping point of full-blown cascading, and if this were to ever happen then the results could be apocalyptic.

The first portion of the Suldani defense grid that those from offworld are likely to encounter is the satellite network. Orbiting the planet is a layer of high-powered killsats, each equipped with an array of anti-ship missiles, lasers, and point-defense weaponry capable of creating deadly overlapping fields of fire as well as defending the satellites themselves from incoming ordnance. This isn't counting the orbital strike platforms pointed down at the planet itself, each equipped with a variety of tungsten kinetic-kill projectiles ranging from small flechette packets rated for precision fire support all the way to larger rods capable of laying waste to large areas and penetrating hardened structures.

Consequently, even approaching Suldan is a dangerous venture. For nearly twelve months following the Emir's deposition, the entire planet fell under what was effectively a blockade until Arclight TransColonial PMC forces undertook the task of clearing an approach corridor to the Port Ossman orbital transfer station. Though they incurred losses in the process, enough of the satellite network was destroyed to allow ships to once again come and go without being destroyed, or at least with a greatly reduced risk. Of course ARASKA has control over the satellite network, but patching the gaps created by Arclight by would simply result in gaps forming elsewhere. Nonetheless, the NHP has been known to attempt to predictively reorient satellites to coincide with incoming or outgoing orbital traffic, and Arclight charges captains a modest fee to escort their vessels during approach. It remains unclear what prompts the defense network to decide to take an active interest in any particular ship, whether it may be based on the size of the vessel making the attempt, its degree of armament, or if there's some other more obscure criteria at work guiding these decisions.

On the planet's surface things are less dangerous, but only to an extent. All throughout Hadiqa, from the gleaming neighborhoods of the wealthy and powerful down to the poorest districts in the city, the sight of terrestrial defense nodes is a common one. Squat, reinforced structures housing a mixture of anti-orbital and anti-air defenses along with shield projectors and point-defense systems, an assault on the city from orbit would be a costly one even for a fleet that made it past the satellite network. Each node also houses numerous combat drones and subalterns, ostensibly for civil defense, but in truth these units served as simply another tool of oppression for the Emir, capable of putting down riots and insurrections swiftly and brutally. Like a knife held to the throat of the world, the defense network served as much to cow the Emir's subjects as it did to protect them.

Thankfully the planetbound defense nodes are less outwardly aggressive than the satellites are, or else Hadiqa would have been reduced to an unending war zone many months ago. As long as a node's security perimeter is respected then it remains inert and idle, posing no immediate threat unless someone attempts to damage it or invade its systems, at which point drones and subaltern units begin boiling out from within to put down the "insurrection." These combat units are equipped with lethal weaponry and extremely flexible engagement parameters. Disturbingly, the last several months have seen an uptick in reports of unprovoked drone and subaltern attacks across the city, defense nodes entering a state of aggression without any apparent cause. This has begun to have a noticeable effect upon the city's residents, with businesses and residential buildings situated near defense nodes being abandoned as people attempt to relocate to seemingly safer areas, though not everyone can afford to do so. Some, of course, are simply too stubborn to move regardless of the dangers.

Perhaps most worrying is that these are only the parts of the defense network which are visible. Analysis suggests that there are other weapons and systems under ARASKA's control elsewhere, hidden from plain sight, perhaps buried underground or hidden in secret facilities in the badlands. With the Emir in hiding and all accessible information destroyed along with the royal palace, the first anyone sees of these weapons may be

when they emerge from their hidden locations to begin wreaking havoc upon the city.

ARASKA doesn't go out of their way to make their presence known as they consider most other people beneath them, content to let the weapons at their disposal speak for themselves, but should the PCs ever manage to earn the NHP's personal attention then their digital or holographic visual manifestation is that of a pillar of smokeless fire or, more begrudgingly still, a tall, androgynous figure wreathed in flames, their attitude imperious and contemptuous.

Arclight TransColonial

While Arclight TransColonial isn't quite a full-fledged corpro-state unto its own, it nonetheless has enough of a stake across numerous settled worlds to justify maintaining a substantial private military in order to protect its interests. This is far from an unusual practice as local forces can't always be relied upon to provide adequate or timely security given the variance in quality and diligence that can be found throughout local police or militias across interstellar regions.

Enlistment is voluntary, with suitable applicants offered competitive wages and benefits in exchange for serving a contractual term of ten Cradle Standard years, with options for renewal afterwards based upon performance. However, Arclight has also drawn criticism from human rights groups for its use of "indebted contractors." Arclight's lawyers are quick to point out that entering into these contracts remains entirely voluntary, but the practice is nonetheless coercive if not strictly illegal.

Standard training is largely similar to that found in many other militaries and security companies, and recruits are assessed for particular skills which help determine their career placement, whether it be in the infantry, chassis piloting, drone operation, battlefield support, or one of the many other branches which together comprise a self-sufficient military force. Professional standards are kept at a reasonable level for a corporate-sponsored army, but profit and corporate interests remain a driving motive leading to a history of questionable actions.

In practical terms, Arclight's military is typically (though not exclusively) focused more upon security actions and responding to hostile threats against Arclight interests than campaigns of aggressive conquest, but that line is beginning to rapidly blur on Suldani as what was outlined in boardroom meetings as a routine reclamation operation has turned into a drawn-out conflict against members of the indigenous populace. As the fighting drags on, more and more pressure is put on the soldiers under Colonel Rylana Bosman's command to deliver results, with the executives and shareholders less concerned with the means by which those results are obtained...so long as they don't leave Arclight open to legal liability, of course.

Should the PCs wind up in direct conflict with Arclight, the corporation's forces trend towards technological sophistication compared to the SIF and even compared to other Suldani armed forces, with a strong emphasis on cutting-edge weapons and systems, battlefield control, and electronic warfare. Those familiar with Smith-Shimano or Harrison

Armory designs may find recognizable elements among their ranks, as Arclight has a number of supplemental license contracts with those manufacturers as well. Their reliance on advanced technology is a double-edged sword; while it can provide them with a decisive edge on the battlefield, it necessitates frequent maintenance downtime and uninterrupted supply lines, issues which Suldani's harsh environmental conditions only serve to exacerbate.

In addition to these conventional forces, Colonel Bosman also has at her disposal several teams drawn from the Special Assets Group, an elite special operations unit with access to even more sophisticated technology than the average Arclight pilot, including cutting-edge and experimental prototype chassis designs not yet approved for widespread distribution. If the PCs are confronted by a SAG team then it means that they've been identified as a significant threat to the company's operations, which they might consider to be either a serious problem or a mark of pride depending on their perspective.

The Janissaries

Under the reign of the Emir, the Suldani Royal Guard was a catch-all organization that fulfilled the roles of both of militia and police force in one. Renowned for being rife with graft and corruption and with a reputation for brutality, recruitment into the Guard was extremely lax, open to anyone capable of passing a basic physical exam and a six-week training course. Outfitted and equipped with a mix of riot suppression gear, basic military-grade weaponry, and inexpensive combat chassis, standard Guard doctrine revolved around shows of overwhelming force and numerical superiority, even during policing actions. To the average Suldani citizen, the Guard served as little more than gang of violent thugs, a cudgel wielded by the Emir to keep the populace in line and keep dissent contained.

Not so the Janissaries. To be a Janissary was to be one of the elite. The selection process for potential recruits was far more rigorous and demanding, with candidates screened for physical aptitude and mental fortitude as well as psychologically evaluated for loyalty and obedience to authority. Those accepted embarked on a grueling three-year training regimen, covering everything from advanced weapons and tactics to piloting, wilderness survival and endurance, physical conditioning, martial arts, zero-g combat, and covert operations. Fatalities during training weren't uncommon, with casualty rates as high as 40%. During this period, those selected were steadily cut off from contact with friends or family and underwent regular neurological reconditioning to further strengthen their bonds of loyalty and devotion to the Emir above all.

Their final graduation exercise was a simple one; trainees were presented with a loved one, a close friend or family member, and ordered to kill them. Those who resisted or hesitated were considered failures and summarily executed themselves. Those who obeyed without question had proved themselves worthy of the title of Janissary.

The Janissaries served as the Emir's right hand, forming the core of his personal honor guard as well as highly lethal enforcers of his will. Whenever a rebel cell needed to be exterminated with extreme prejudice, a political dissident assassinated, or an example

made of anyone who thought they could defy the Emir, it was the Janissaries who carried out these missions. A symbol meant to inspire awe and fear in equal measure, Janissaries were given only the finest weapons and equipment including advanced combat chassis, their distinctive green-and-gold hulls engraved with personal honors and battle glories.

As a group, the Janissaries take their name from a pre-Fall military order, one of the Emir's many aggrandizing affectations. The Emir styles himself as a man of culture and learning, with an avid interest in ancient history, though his understanding of the empires he so admires is shallow and sensationalized, concerned mainly with aesthetics and power. It would surely be of little comfort for him to know that the greatest similarity between his reign and those empires is the sheer degree of discontent and civil conflict his rule has inspired.

Many of the Janissaries were killed in the destruction of the royal palace, while others fell during the fighting against revolutionary forces in Hadiqa, but a contingent managed to evacuate alongside the Emir, escorting him and his surviving retinue to their fallback location. These surviving members are among the last of their number and as a result are only assigned missions sparingly, the Emir unwilling to squander their lives as casually as the other forces at his disposal. Sightings of Janissaries have thus been uncommon since the revolution, but when one does appear it generally signifies a mission of great importance to the loyalist remnants.

When encountered by the PCs, Janissaries will typically be found acting as the commander of a squad of regular loyalist units, though for missions of critical importance an entire squad may be dispatched in order to ensure success. In all respects, Janissaries are easily distinguishable from the Emir's regular forces; their equipment, tactics, and fighting skills invariably mark them as elite soldiers. Any of them would gladly fight to the death in order to achieve their goals, and they will neither offer nor accept surrender. Retreat is only likely to happen when a battle is clearly lost, grudgingly disengaging and falling back rather than sacrificing themselves in vain. Such failures will weigh heavily upon them, however, and they'll leap at every opportunity to seek revenge on the pilots who bested them, even if this does ultimately lead to them embracing death over dishonor.

His Most Royal Highness, Julian Ambrose Khan, Emir of Suldani (In Exile) (He/Him)

In all of Suldani's history there is no figure more renowned, more feared, and more reviled than the man who would be Emir. Julian Ambrose Khan held the entire world within his grasp for over 50 years, and in that time his unbroken reign of debauchery and tyranny carved a bloody trail of scars across the world. Even in exile, his specter continues to haunt the Suldani people.

Before his rise to infamy, Julian Khan and his family were dynastic stakeholders in Émergence Biogenetics, one of the five founding corporations in Suldani's colonial charter along with Arclight TransColonial, Montero-Xiàng Agriforming, Laxmi Heavy Industries, and Zeitgeist IAG. Together, representatives of these five corporations comprised the governing council for the colony, managing its growth and development, allocating and

distributing resources, and presiding over matters of colonial social policy and law. After several centuries from the colony's initial founding, these corporate dynasties had become political entities in their own right, families elevated by wealth and status, tied together by complex webs of social and financial obligations, backroom dealings, and ambition.

Eugenia Khan was one such ambitious scion. When she took note of her young nephew's latent ruthlessness and disturbing penchant for violence, did she fully comprehend what grooming him to be the instrument of her ascension would lead to? It's impossible to say for certain; what is known is that after years of planning, plotting, and training, the coup which dispatched the governing council was swift and thorough, and that Eugenia had little time to savor this victory before Julian just as quickly killed her himself. He then followed this with an extensive and bloody purge carried out by those security forces loyal to him, from which few were fortunate enough to escape.

By the time the killing ceased, the now self-appointed Emir Julian Ambrose Khan was firmly in control of Suldán, his authority enforced overtly by promises of wealth to those surviving dynasts who pledged fealty to him, and promises of a grisly death for those who opposed him. His rule was also enforced covertly by the planet's Union administrator, who saw in him an opportunity to surreptitiously guide his regime for Union's benefit.

What followed was the darkest period in Suldán's history. Under his rule, the Emir issued decrees which plundered the planet's wealth and bent its industrial output to his whims. In order to avoid the same fate as his predecessors, he ordered the construction of a planet-wide defense network linked to his personal genetic code, ensuring that any who attempted to usurp him would be dealt with harshly. Of course for those who supported him the rewards were great, and this period was characterized by a stark stratification between Suldán's socioeconomic classes, careful colonial planning giving way to the creation of a decadent aristocracy. Corporate security forces gave way to the Royal Guard and the Janissaries, while a once-thriving colony found itself struggling beneath the yoke of tyranny.

Beyond his cruelty and depravity, perhaps the thing which most uniquely characterized the Emir's reign was his tendency to die. Historical records are unclear as to when his first corporeal death occurred, but rather than remaining dead he was brought back after a fashion via facsimile subjectivity cloning (an experimental and often ethically questionable practice) and continued to rule without interruption. Repeated successive subjectivity overriding is known to have a deleterious effect on personality and psychology, and with each increasingly reckless death and rebirth the Emir grew more sadistic, more debauched, and more unstable. He began to deify himself and those who failed to acknowledge his divinity could find themselves sent to the Royal Colosseum to die for his amusement. The circle of sycophants, followers, and soldiers he'd gathered around him more and more began to resemble a cult.

When the rebellion came it was long overdue, but it might not have succeeded were it not for the viral sabotage which left the recently resurrected Emir trapped within a ravaged and broken body. With his genetic makeup irreparably damaged and control over the

planetary defense network lost, it seemed that his end had finally arrived. And yet rather than die in the rain of tungsten brought about by panicking nobles, he was whisked away to safety, fleeing into the badlands along with his Janissaries, his administrator, and those loyal followers of his who managed to survive the uprising. There he plots and schemes, envisioning a thousand atrocities to visit upon those who sought to defy him.

Julian Khan is not a lancer. He isn't a grand military strategist or a seasoned veteran. In his current state, he isn't even a threat to an unarmed and unarmored pilot. There's no climactic battle to be had with him, no grand showdown for the fate of the world over crossed blades. Despite his frailty, he remains the root of Suldán's many evils, from economic disparity and social unrest to the more recent terrorist attacks and assassinations. He commands the unshakable loyalty of the Janissaries and the somewhat more shakable loyalty of many others, whether through fear or avarice, and he is completely and utterly insane.

He's also dying, his final death this time. The mutagenic virus introduced into his clonal genestock was supposed to end his self-same lineage, and it's a miracle that he managed to spitefully cling to life at all. Nonetheless, even with all the benefits of modern medicine the human body is unable to persist in such a state for long. Given enough time, anywhere from six months to several years at most, the Emir of Suldán will be well and truly dead without anyone ever needing to lay a finger on him. The problem becomes a matter of the damage he's allowed to do before then. The Emir is insane but he isn't stupid, and he understands that this life is his last one to spend. What is a man like him capable of when he has nothing left to lose?

[sidebar]

THE FINAL SLEEP AND FIRST MORNING

The future setting of Lancer is full of many strange and wondrous technologies, from the advanced engineering that makes mechs feasible battlefield weapons to the complex mysteries of NHPs. Complete and true transfer of consciousness is not typically one of them, proscribed as it is by the First Contact Accords.

Nonetheless, cloning with an aim towards recreating a specific person, known as facsimile subjectivity cloning, can and does occur. Generally this type of cloning is reserved for special circumstances, and while the subject's genetic makeup may be identical to that of the original, they still don't carry a copy of their original self's memories within their brain. These clones have their natural subjectivities overridden by a cognitive profile designed to emulate the deceased as closely as possible, supplemented with additional data recordings and careful counseling in order to coach their groggy, incomplete selves towards as close a recreation of the emulated subjectivity as possible. This process is highly restricted, being unlawful in many cases and permitted only with special sanction.

It is also, in addition to its many complications, imperfect. Regardless of the quality of the cognitive profile or how good the counseling may be, these subjectivity clones will never be a direct copy of the original person's mind. Memory gaps and imperfections in the subjectivity override guarantee that the clone's personality will diverge from the original in

ways that can't be anticipated. They may look the same and they may even act in similar ways, but the original person nonetheless remains dead and unrecoverable.

This does mean that the Emir currently threatening Suldán isn't technically the same Emir who first took power decades ago. Throughout his many deaths, the Emir has become something akin to a role being played, based upon the neural patterns and behaviors of his original self and passed down to each new clone in turn. His existence is as much of a product of the advisers and handlers responsible for "refreshing" him each time he awakened from yet another death as it is his own repeatedly emulated subjectivity. In this respect the culpability for the Emir's tyranny can be said to lie with more than simply himself, but it's Julian Ambrose Khan (or the creature calling himself that) whose name will still go down in history as Suldán's most infamous figure.

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Loyalist Insurgents

Since the Emir's exile, Hadiqa has been subjected to an endless series of attacks by loyalist remnants, a situation which has spurred Union to intervene and caused Jun Chandrasekhar to seek outside assistance in resolving the crisis. These attacks are intended to destabilize the provisional government's reconstruction efforts, terrorizing the populace and sowing discontent. Loyalist forces hijack cargo shipments, commit abductions, carry out assassinations, and attempt the destruction of key infrastructure assets such as omninet nodes and industrial facilities.

Some might wonder who would throw their lot in with someone like the Emir, but the truth is that even the most brutal tyrants have their supporters. Not everyone is happy with an upstart gladiator and her band of revolutionaries overthrowing the government, oppressive though it may have been. In addition to his ideological supporters, his forces are largely comprised of a mix of former members of the Royal Guard, mercenary opportunists, and radical extremists.

Though they don't lend direct military support themselves, several of Suldán's wealthier citizens, fearful of what might come next if the provisional government manages to consolidate power, have been surreptitiously bankrolling the loyalists in the hopes that when the Emir reclaims the throne their loyalty will be rewarded. Others even lend the loyalists support under the table for more self-serving reasons, taking advantage of the chaos to consolidate power for themselves. In either case, early estimates that the loyalists would quickly exhaust their resources have since proven overly optimistic.

While the majority of the loyalist forces are encamped far outside of Hadiqa, either within the Emir's command bunker or in scattered locations throughout the badlands, a number of sleeper cells have been found embedded within the city itself. These cells gather intel, smuggle weapons and supplies, and occasionally take part in attacks. Provisional security forces have been stretched thin trying to deal with threats both external and internal, and with each new attack more and more citizens wonder if the new government will actually be able to make good on their promises of a better Suldán.

The loyalist forces that the PCs will encounter over the course of a campaign on Suldun can vary wildly in their equipment, training, and discipline. The Emir has to allocate his resources carefully, as even access to a printer doesn't mean much without a steady supply of raw materials to fuel it with, and he can't afford to be picky when it comes to the quality of his army. Some of the forces under his command are fueled by a fervent belief in his divine right to rule, while others only fight for promises of wealth and power once the provisional government has been torn down, and others still (such as many members of the Royal Guard) fight out of desperation born from having nowhere else to turn. Some loyalists will fight to the bitter end, while others are more likely to retreat in the face of imminent danger. Some may even surrender, though many of them are too cowed to consider such a thing; the Emir has made it abundantly clear what happens to those who betray him.

The tactics that the loyalists employ vary just as much, ranging from indiscriminate attacks against civilian population centers to surprisingly coordinated strikes against key targets. Such tactics are frequently employed in tandem, utilizing multiple squads to accomplish a mission with one (generally sacrificial) squad providing a distraction in the form of open violence while the other uses the opportunity to operate without interference. Terror squads and the more expendable troops are generally assigned substandard equipment, though against unarmed civilians a substandard mech is still an overwhelming force of destruction. More seasoned units or those valued for particular skills will be equipped more appropriately, at least as best as can be managed.

Miranda Cortez (She/Her)

Were you to ask her, Miranda Cortez would tell you that everything she's done was for Union, a position she stands by even as she finds herself forced into hiding with a mad tyrant and his retinue. She was sent to oversee the fledgling civilization being built on the distant world of Suldun, to help enrich the great tapestry of humanity stretched across the stars, and she did all that was asked of her and more. That the path to such progress came at a cost is unfortunate, yes, but those like her who can see the bigger picture should understand that such a price is worth paying.

Even within Union opinions differ on how to best administrate an interstellar polity, with coalitions such as the Fourth Column and the New Humanity Front arguing that the presiding Interstellar coalition is far too tentative, some would say feeble, and hands off in its approach, too fearful of the legacy of the Second Committee to fully commit itself to the task of uniting worlds under the Third Committee's banner. They advocate for more deregulated, more expansionistic approaches to economic policies and hegemonic portfolios, taking a direct hand in the building of better worlds. It was these arguments that resonated with a young Miranda during her decades-long training to become a Union administrator. Fiercely intelligent, driven, and worryingly ambitious, she chafed under what she felt were outmoded and restrictive ideologies, though she managed to keep these feelings to herself; even from an early age, she had always been skilled at masking her true intentions from others, including her instructors.

Upon graduating, she was assigned to Suldun, an unassuming posting for someone seen

as an unassuming administrator. After thoroughly studying the planet's history and socioeconomic trends, she came to the conclusion that Suldán's development as a settled world could be pushed even further than projections had suggested, if the right conditions for such growth were permitted that is. It was also around this time that her partnered NHP Oberon took note of something in the ebb and flow of data that no one else had and brought a pair of names to her attention: Eugenia Khan and her young nephew Julian.

She took this information she'd been given and saw in it not a danger to be thwarted but an opportunity to put her ambitions to the test.

In secret, Miranda began covertly assisting Eugenia's plans; a whisper here, a pulled string there, money passing across a hundred hands, all the levers of power and influence at an administrator's disposal. Thus when the coup finally came to pass it met with unexpected success, the obstacles that might have stood in its way strikingly absent. It's fair to say that she hadn't expected Julian to execute his aunt quite so swiftly...within the next decade or so, certainly...but it was a simple matter to adjust her plans accordingly, and when Julian Ambrose Khan proclaimed himself first Emir of Suldán, it was Miranda who stood behind his throne.

From there she fulfilled her role as Union's steward upon Suldán in her own way, nudging the Emir along the path she'd envisioned and just as deftly handling the various obstacles that stood against her. The world's founding corporations lodged protests over the abrupt (and bloody) governmental transition, but it was simple enough to ensure that their dissent found no purchase, and in fact it was Émergence Biogenetics' own research into advanced cloning technologies that gave her the idea for how to safeguard the Emir's rein from unexpected variables. Under his rule, material production output and infrastructure developments rose to match her initial projections and beyond. Many of the planet's people suffered for it but not, by her cold calculus, unduly. By her estimation, Suldán would be able to transition to a full-fledged Core world decades, possibly even a century, ahead of schedule.

The socioeconomic disparity which emerged was an unfortunate side-effect of these policies, and as time went on the Emir's rule grew ever more brutal while his sanity deteriorated through successive clonings, but even so tantalizing glimmers of what Suldán might one day become could be seen in the gleaming towers and pleasure gardens of the aristocracy. Every widening wealth gap and fresh atrocity could be justified for her beliefs in the greater good. She knew that some might question her methods, but no one would be able to argue with the results.

Eventually the Emir began to outstrip his usefulness as a ruler. The rebel movement which had been simmering for decades was steadily gaining traction, and the Emir's own hold over Suldán's aristocracy, whether through fear or sycophancy, was starting to exceed her own to an inconvenient degree. And so, cloaked by strange technologies, she slipped unseen through the Royal Palace and took steps to ensure that Julian Khan's next death would be his last. A viral agent she'd been saving for the occasion introduced into his clonal stock, like clipping the unwanted branches from a bonsai.

Only it wasn't his final death, not yet anyway. But before she could correct her mistake the revolution was underway, and suddenly everything she'd worked so hard to accomplish was crashing down around her in a storm of tungsten and violence. Staying in the palace would be suicide and surrendering to the rebels likely wouldn't be much better, so she took the only path available to her, fleeing with the Emir and his retinue to the safety of the badlands.

Now Miranda is a prisoner of her own making, backed into a corner by the consequences of her actions. She knows that if the Emir were to ever discover the truth behind his body's deterioration that death would be the least of her concerns, but while Union's punishments might prove more merciful she has no intention of spending the rest of her life imprisoned for what will surely be deemed crimes against the planetary populace. With nowhere else to turn, for now she continues her role as one of the Emir's most trusted advisers, biding her time until she can secure a way offworld. Perhaps one day, she thinks, history will vindicate her efforts.

Like the Emir, Miranda Cortez isn't a fighter and she won't be facing down the PCs in open combat, but despite that she might very well be one of the most dangerous people on Suldán. Cunning, manipulative, and ruthlessly self-serving, she remains convinced in the rightness of her actions, that everything she's done really has been with Union's best interests in mind. The real danger she poses is a more insidious one. As the former Union administrator of Suldán, Miranda has curated a vast intelligence network of spies, informants, and operatives which she's able to make use of even now. Between that and the efforts of Oberon, her partnered NHP, very little occurs on the planet without her knowledge. It's fair to say that the loyalist insurgency wouldn't pose nearly the threat it does without her efforts.

And yet it's entirely possible that Miranda may decide to secretly aid the PCs rather than opposing them. She holds no real loyalty towards the Emir or his cause, her concern at the moment is strictly for her own self. If she concludes that the PCs represent her best chance at making it offworld alive, they could find themselves receiving intel from unknown sources or offers of services and resources on behalf of an "anonymous benefactor." What will they do when they discover just who this benefactor truly is? And what will they decide if Miranda offers them a deal; the location of the Emir's hidden stronghold in exchange for her freedom?

[sidebar]

THE SACRED KEY

One might wonder how Miranda Cortez planned to smoothly handle the permanent passing of the Emir given that the planet's defense network could only be safely commanded via his exact genetic makeup. The answer is simple, of course; she possesses it as well. In a manner of speaking, that is.

Somewhere on Suldán, in a carefully concealed location, is a stasis-preserved vial of Julian Ambrose Khan's untainted blood. This innocuous trinket is the key to wielding

unimaginable power. The bearer could wipe Hadiqa off the face of the planet on a whim, and even Union would be forced to deal with them carefully to avoid sparking a genocide. Then again they could also annihilate the Emir and his forces outright, or even simply deactivate the network altogether and bring an end to the threat hanging over the world. It isn't exaggerating by much to suggest that whoever possesses this vial would hold the fate of Suldani in their hands.

Of course Miranda doesn't have access to it herself at the moment. She wasn't anticipating the sudden evacuation from the Royal Palace, and so the vial lies frustratingly out of her reach. She doesn't dare task any of her agents with retrieving it for her as there isn't a single one she trusts to simply hand it over once they realize what it is. So for now the ultimate power, and perhaps the ultimate bargaining chip, remains hidden somewhere on Suldani, waiting to be claimed.

[/sidebar]

The Suldani Independence Front

The evolution of the independent Suldani settlements from a desperate collection of refugee families banding together out of harsh necessity to a unified communal polity can also be seen in the evolution of their armed forces. What was once a ragged collection of patchwork technicals scarcely suited for combat has gradually and inexorably been forged into a full-fledged standing militia. Though still lacking the typical organizational structure found in most professional state or corporate militaries, both their weaponry and tactics have progressed to the point that they're capable of engaging with opposing forces such as Arclight TransColonial on relatively equal footing.

All able-bodied settlers are required to undergo a period of instruction in basic firearms training, first aid and battlefield medicine, and wilderness survival, all skills which have practical value even outside of military service, but chassis pilot training is reserved for those who express a particular interest or aptitude. Independent Suldani pilots learn not only how to effectively operate their chassis but how to maintain and repair them as well, a necessity given the restricted printing capabilities available to them, and it isn't unusual for a single chassis to be passed down to multiple pilots, salvaged and repaired as necessary even when its previous pilot is killed in action.

SIF combat doctrine typically centers around hit-and-run and ambush tactics, utilizing their extensive knowledge of the local terrain to great effect. Direct assaults and protracted engagements are avoided whenever possible, but when necessary make use of robust, durable frontline units (frequently converted from heavy industrial labor frames) to engage and suppress enemy forces while high-speed skirmishers look for flanking opportunities. The SIF also conducts regular supply raids against Arclight installations and convoys whenever the opportunity arises, which has prompted an ongoing arms race as the corporation escalates the security surrounding its materiel assets, which leads to SIF pilots outfitting and arming themselves with an increasing amount of Arclight's own weaponry in turn.

While the SIF will fight to the bitter end in defense of their homes, they otherwise won't

hesitate to cut their losses and retreat if a fight is going poorly for them, the better to live and fight another day. They also regularly employ feigned retreats designed to lead incautious enemies into prepared killzones, so what appears to be a fleeing squad may simply be the bait drawing pursuers towards an even more deadly battle.

In the course of a campaign the PCs may find themselves pitted against the Suldani Independence Front for one reason or another. It could be that the SIF takes them for yet more foreign aggressors, or it could be that the PCs have been charged with confronting them at the behest of someone such as Rylana Bosman. However it comes to pass, the SIF's armed forces tend to be rugged and uncomplicated, using coordination and careful planning to make up for any technological differences.

These aren't the only forces that the SIF can bring to bear, however. As the independent settlements' militia grew more organized, and as their enemies grew more determined, the need for a dedicated special operations unit to carry out high-risk missions became apparent. The Cheshire Cats were created to fill that need, formed from the best pilots that the SIF had to offer and granted the autonomy to plan and execute missions as they saw fit. Today, depending on who you ask, the Cheshire Cats are either daring folk heroes or infamous outlaws. Many SIF pilots dream about being invited to serve with the group, and being selected is a rare honor.

The Cheshire Cats are masters of stealth and misdirection, striking from unexpected angles before fading away into the shadows. If the PCs find themselves being targeted by them, it means that someone within the SIF considers them a grave threat. In addition to their well honed skills, the Cheshire Cats possess some of the most advanced frames that the independent settlements are able to field. Many of these have been stolen or salvaged from Arclight and heavily modified to suit their needs, but a number of bespoke designs are also fielded as well courtesy of the Independent settlements' numerous HORUS-affiliated engineers, further enhancing both their capabilities as well as their mystique.

LOCALES

Chiraji Mountains

Lying far to the east outside of Hadiqa's settled borders, the Chiraji Mountains are one of the northern hemisphere's most notable geological features. Running several thousand kilometers in length with a peak height of just over 8,000 meters at the summit of Mount Ashwar, the mountain range was flagged during the earliest days of surveying as a potential site for future resourcing and settlement efforts once initial colonization reached a self-sufficient state, but those plans have since been put on indefinite hold given the tumultuous situation on Suldani.

The mountain range and surrounding region is noted for being a rich source of valuable mineral resources, but the remote location has hamstrung previous attempts at mining them given the logistical challenges amplified by unpredictable hazardous weather conditions. It was only recently that it was discovered that a subterranean lake exists beneath the mountains, accessible by a previously unexplored cave network. Access to

this lake has enabled independent colonists to settle in the region, providing them with drinking water and enabling hydroponic cultivation. The lake is also home to a number of species of aquatic xenofauna, several of which are edible, and in addition to this the terrain around the mountains is also capable of supporting imported herd animals such as goats.

Life in the mountains isn't easy, but the independent settlers who live there have created a thriving community which is able to sustainably provide the necessities for those that live there, using a mix of solar power, wind turbines, and salvaged chassis-grade fusion reactors to power their communities, and the mountains and caves help provide shelter from Suldan's infamously dangerous sandstorms. Following the overthrow of the Emir, some independent representatives had even begun to negotiate trade agreements with the provisional government, promising shipments of raw resources in exchange for manufactured and luxury goods, but the arrival of Arclight TransColonial has since put a damper on these arrangements. Local manufacturing capabilities have stepped up as best they can, but the locals still favor rugged technology that can be easily repaired and refurbished.

Now the Chiraji Mountains are an active conflict zone, and those approaching the region without authorization frequently intercepted by Arclight PMC patrols who then escort them away "for their own safety," though the region is far too large to completely police. A number of operating bases and resourcing outposts have been established by the corporation along the outskirts, with a steady stream of supply convoys moving to and from Port Ossman, tempting targets for the SIF and loyalist insurgents alike.

Reaching the independent settlements themselves is still possible, but requires navigating one of several passes, all regularly patrolled by SIF forces and seeded with traps such as explosives and remote sentry weapons to deter unwelcome visitors, or finding a way through the extensive and largely unmapped network of caves and tunnels running throughout the mountains. Air travel (and aerial assault) are hampered by high winds, sandstorms, and the SIF's stockpile of man-portable anti-air missile launchers.

What You See: Scrub vegetation, herds of goats, snowy peaks, solar power arrays, hydroponics creches, refurbished vehicles, Arclight PMC patrols, scattered wreckage, prefabricated mining outposts, convoys hauling supplies, a sandstorm brewing on the horizon, the glint of metal (or a sniper's scope) in the distance.

Eden

A monument to the Emir's decadence and ego, Eden doesn't reside upon Suldan but rather above it, floating in orbit high above the planet. Construction of the orbital station began five years ago but was interrupted by the rebellion, leaving it half-finished ever since.

Originally, Eden was intended to be a floating pleasure garden far in excess of anything even the most decadent nobility could envision, where the Emir, surrounded by his court, could look down upon Suldan as the divine figure he increasingly believed himself to be.

The original plans called for extensive biome sculpting, creating a lush garden environment throughout the station, and palatial accommodations for all aboard. The exterior of the station was to be a work of art in its own right as well, decorated with sculptures and inlaid with gold and jeweled mosaics.

Now Eden's unfinished hull drifts above the planet, as silent and as empty as a tomb. In theory the station would be worth a small fortune to an ambitious salvage crew if it weren't for the fact that the rampant defense satellites also in orbit around Suldan make approaching it a risky prospect. Enough of the station's central core is structurally sound and atmosphere-capable that it could perhaps be used as a pirate's nest, but thus far reports of pirate activity near to Suldan or the closest blink gate since the Emir's exile remain unconfirmed.

Scans made by the *Iphigenia* following its arrival in-system have noted a number of positions along the station's structure which return high-probability matches for concealed weapon hardpoints, and given the Emir's tastes it would be unsurprising to learn that Eden was also meant to be yet another means of forcefully asserting his control over Suldan's populace. Due to the station's incomplete state and the hazards presented by the defense network, closer analysis has been postponed for now.

What You See: Floating hull panels, proximity beacons broadcasting automated signals on endless loop, debris from destroyed construction vehicles, unsecured cargo crates slowly spinning in zero-gravity, a flash of gold catching the sunlight.

Hadiqa

The shining jewel of Suldan and the centerpiece of the world's colonization efforts, the sprawling city of Hadiqa is home to most (though not all) of the planetary populace and is presently a hotbed of strife and intrigue. Roughly 20 million people reside within the city's borders, living in one of the many districts which spread outward from the epicenter of the earliest aboveground colonial development known today as the Karistal District. The central districts of the city are a marvel of modern engineering, with gleaming towers and elaborate, fanciful architectural marvels reaching into the sky amid manicured garden parks and fountains, sprawling shopping plazas, fine restaurants, theaters, and a variety of other divertissements fit even for a jaded Cosmopolitan's tastes.

The further one gets from the center, however, the less ostentatious things become. Civic construction and expansion timetables were tossed aside under the Emir's rule, replaced instead with runaway military buildup and a focus on transforming the central districts into a decadent aristocratic playground. The outskirts of the city are a mixture of prefabricated structures standing shoulder to shoulder with homes built from stone, brick, and recycled materials, the orderly layout of streets becoming a tangle of narrow alleyways, though despite the hardships the residents who live here do their best to take pride in their homes, and even the cramped apartments and dingy bars in the slum districts are frequently adorned with decorative brickwork accents, vibrant awnings, and fading coats of solar-reflective paint.

The one thing which can be seen everywhere throughout the city, from the wealthiest districts to the poorest, are the aerostats. Brightly colored and decorated with banners and chimes, these large, tethered balloons serve a practical purpose as well as a decorative one. The surface of Suldani is wracked with unpredictable and dangerous Coriolis storms shaped by the planet's intrinsic magnetic fields. These manifest as sandstorms capable of moving at speeds upwards of 100 kilometers per hour interspersed with periodic high-intensity lightning strikes, and even those wearing suitable protective gear are at risk of serious injury or death should find themselves caught in the middle of one.

The solution to tempering this hostile planetary phenomenon is a network of electromagnetic field projectors capable of creating an artificial eye around the city, diverting storms around it and permitting safe construction and habitation within its protective envelope. Mounted to aerostats anchored to control stations with nanocarbon cables, each projector's altitude can be adjusted on the fly to provide optimum coverage during weather events, and the flexibility of the cables as well as the aerodynamic shaping of the balloons prevents them from being blown over by sudden winds. Thankfully the Suldani weather control systems were not among those coded to the Emir's genetic code, and as such they remain fully operational even after his exile.

The aftermath of the defense grid's retributive bombardment is the worst disaster to befall the city in its 250 year history, with over 100,000 people killed and many more injured and displaced in the aftermath. Several parts of the city still bears the scars from these attacks. Reconstruction efforts have been hamstrung both by loyalist terror attacks and political infighting as various factions and interests vie for favorable distribution of resources, arguing that their priorities should be met first.

What You See: Open-air marketplaces, glass-lined skyscrapers, aerostats swaying in the breeze, crowded apartment buildings with laundry lines strung between them, convenience stores with arena matches playing on the screen behind the counter, bustling plazas lit up at night, destroyed buildings undergoing reconstruction, refugee camps on the outskirts of the city, provisional security forces on patrol, enormous broadcast screens displaying the local news including the PCs' latest public exploits.

Karistal District

Originally the primary nexus of aboveground colonization and home to the founding corporate dynasties, the part of Hadiqa known as the Karistal District, or sometimes "seaside" due to its proximity to the Mer d'Étoiles, is a slice of sophistication that wouldn't look out of place on a Core world. Extensive eco-urban development gives the district an striking amount of lush greenery compared to the rest of the city, with parks and decorative gardens in abundance. Massive architecturally-ambitious towers and skyscrapers gleam in the sunlight, while closer to ground level cafes and fashionable restaurants do a brisk trade as the city's wealthy and elite enjoy cocktails and imported wine before heading out to one of the numerous clubs, shopping plazas, casinos, and other exotic diversions awaiting them around every corner.

The disparity in wealth between what some residents only half-jokingly refer to as "the capital of Hadiqa" and the rest of the city is obvious even to a casual observer. When the Emir consolidated power following the coup, those who chose to side with him were richly rewarded, and as the newly-formed aristocracy became accustomed to this new way of governance it wasn't long before they began to take even greater advantage of the situation. Former civic development plans were shelved in favor of graft and corruption, and with the Emir's support there was little that anyone could do to effectively stem this misallocation of resources as the nobles turned the center of Hadiqa into their own opulent playground.

These days a wary unease hangs over the district, and the leisurely outings are a bit less carefree. The success of the rebellion was a bucket of cold water thrown across the jaded elite living there, those who weren't killed in the bombardment of the city that is, and without the Emir or the planetary defense network standing between them and an aggrieved, oppressed populace, many of them have begun spending their fortunes on private security. Simply leaving Suldán is a risky proposition given the satellites circling the planet waiting to shoot down any ships that cross their path, and so for now the remaining aristocrats continue to indulge themselves as best they can even as they glance nervously across the invisible line separating the Karistal District from the rest of the city and wonder how long it will be before Jun Chandrasekhar decides to come for them next.

The district itself weathered the kinetic bombardment relatively unscathed, excepting of course the Royal Palace which was completely destroyed. Whether this avoidance was intentional on the part of the defense network or simply random chance is unknown, but it hasn't done much to quell the feelings of animosity from those who fared far worse. Thus far the provisional government has managed to keep things from boiling over into full-scale riots, though there are still regular clashes between protesters, vandals, and overzealous private security forces.

What You See: Ostentatious architecture, trendy clubs, air traffic flitting between towers, private security troops in obvious combat armor, yachts and sailboats, lush gardens, decorative fountains, upscale boutiques with sophisticated holographic advertisements, graffiti being scrubbed from the side of a building, groups of inebriated young men and women on their way from one party to another accompanied by bodyguard subalterns.

Port Ossman

What was once little more than a prefabricated orbital skyhook and electromagnetic launch catapult has since become Hadiqa's primary gateway to the stars. Back before the rebellion, millions of tons of mineral wealth and trade goods passed back and forth from the sprawling port and landing complex bridging the gap between ground and orbit. Since then, the security system lockdown has made shipping to and from Suldán a riskier proposition. For the last year no trade occurred at all as the network of weaponized satellites encircling the planet have opened fire on any vessels attempting to approach or depart from the planet. It seemed as though Suldán might remain cut off from the wider galaxy indefinitely until Arclight TransColonial dispatched their PMC forces to punch a hole

through the network.

While Arclight's motives are more far more selfish than altruistic, it's undeniable that their actions have opened a window for vital traffic, allowing the flow of goods between worlds to resume once more. These actions have won the company a sizeable measure of good publicity, even among some of the factions sitting on the provisional government. Since arriving on-world, one of the first things Arclight did was establish a forward operating base at Port Ossman which they keep garrisoned at all times. Ostensibly constructed to safeguard the port from terrorist activity, the base primarily functions as a way for them to expedite the transfer of additional materiel and manpower from orbit to the planet's surface as their reclamation efforts intensify and reinforcements arrive. Some shipping firms and export businesses have begun to lodge protests that Arclight security are conducting unwarranted cargo inspections and even demanding additional "security tariffs" on top of the usual fees.

Any space traffic that goes in and out of Suldani is routed through Port Ossman, which lies some 50 kilometers outside of Hadiqa proper. Though the satellite network now has enough of a gap now to allow passage, both departures and arrivals must still proceed with more caution than usual. As a result of this bottleneck, cargo transfer rates have slowed which makes the port more of a tempting target for criminals and loyalists looking to plunder the stores of goods awaiting shipment.

A radical fringe element of the Suldani Independence Front has concluded that the most effective way to stem the flow of Arclight reinforcements would be to destroy the port's launch catapult. This would, in fact, significantly hamper Arclight's reclamation efforts and potentially force the corporation to reassess their interest in continued on-world operations, but it would also effectively sever Suldani's capacity for interplanetary trade as well as inflict significant collateral damage in the process. Naveed Kashani has made it clear that such actions will not be considered under any circumstances, but as the conflict grinds on and discontent simmers it may only be a matter of time before someone resorts to extreme measures.

What You See: Mazes of cargo containers, Arclight PMC forces manning checkpoints, cargo haulers, industrial equipment, shuttles landing and departing, mass shipments launching from the catapult, transport drones and subalterns moving containers.

The Undercity

In the earliest days of colonization, back when the howling sandstorms used to tear across Suldani's surface with a frequency not yet deterred by electromagnetic field projectors, the settlers built down, not up. They constructed subterranean habitat complexes and laid the foundation for the future of their world; transit networks, power generators, sewer and water lines. Eventually construction moved topside, field generators were built to blunt the storms, streets were paved, and gleaming towers were raised. Hadiqa grew and spread like the garden it was named for.

But the underground grew as well, out as well as down, spreading like roots in the wake of

the city's expanding footprint. Tunnels were deepened, underground storage facilities expanded, and utility systems were embedded even deeper beneath the earth. Eventually, subterranean construction was slowed and even halted in places as Hadiqa had grown to the point that it no longer required such expansion. The habitable areas were closed down, the old transit systems abandoned.

But in a growing city, nothing goes unused for long. Criminals had always made use of the underground networks as a way to move contraband unnoticed or a place to lie low, and as the gap between the wealthy and poor widened, the homeless and destitute began to seek shelter where their forebears had once lived. Those with the technical know-how reactivated the habitation systems, spliced into the power grid, and repaired the dormant air circulators. Slowly, bit by bit, more and more people gravitated towards the underground as they slipped through the cracks.

Today an estimated 30,000 people live in what most refer to as the Undercity. Officially, habitation in the Undercity is illegal. Unofficially, the Royal Guard had little interest in venturing down into the sprawling maze of hab units, maintenance tunnels, and storage bays, instead opting to abandon it entirely and leave it to its own devices, unpatrolled and unpoliced. As a result the Undercity has become a community unto itself, home to a mix of families, criminals, unlicensed doctors, black marketeers, pit fighters, and those looking to disappear. The Undercity has its own businesses, restaurants, bars, schools, places of worship, drug dens, and literal underground arenas where gladiators compete in unregulated battles without rules or restrictions.

During the Emir's reign, the Royal Guard would only ever venture into the Undercity in large groups. In the aftermath of the revolution, the provisional government has attempted to establish a greater civic presence down below, assigning task forces with cleaning up the worst of the criminal elements to make things safer for the residents, but progress has been slow. Many parts of the Undercity are effectively run by criminal organizations such as the Red Circle, the Qureyshi Clan, and the 10,000 Brotherhood. Ironically, the Undercity proved to be one the safest places to be during the rebellion, and residents suffered almost no casualties during the fighting and subsequent bombardment of Hadiqa.

What You See: Winding tunnels lit by artificial lighting, centuries-old hab units renovated and refurbished countless times, temporary marketplaces, smokey bars and countertop restaurants, tattooed gang members roaming in groups, abandoned transport stations covered in graffiti, salvaged and cast-off technology patched back to working order, underground warehouses converted into gladiatorial arenas.

CULTURE AND EXPERIENCES

Life is more than a series of battles, something that holds just as true for lancers as it does

for gladiators. The following are examples of local Suldani culture that PCs may learn about or experience during the downtime between missions. Here you'll find places throughout Hadiqa and beyond where locals and offworlders alike can unwind, meet contacts, test their fighting prowess in the arena, or simply get a drink.

DRINKS, DINING, AND DANCING

Suldan's cuisines are influenced both by local cultures as well as the planet's geography and suitability for cultivating crops and livestock. Beef is a luxury item due to the inefficiencies of cattle ranching on an arid semi-desert world with frequent sandstorms, as is seafood, though Hadiqa's location next to one of the planet's largest bodies of water has allowed for aquaculture of both native and imported species. Goats, chickens, and sheep (which share similar grazing issues as cattle but are more efficient per acre) are more commonly raised, and they feature in many local dishes. Thanks to hydroponics and genetic engineering, it's also easier to grow a variety of crops without as many environmental restrictions, and common staples include rice, lentils, soybeans, and chickpeas. Local orchards and vineyards grow a variety of crops such as citrus, olives, dates, mangoes, pomegranates, melons, and grapes.

Local cuisine favors strongly flavored, heavily spiced dishes. You're likely to find cafes and street vendors selling kebabs, fried egg sandwiches with chili sauce, noodles, falafel, barbecued goat buns, samosas, milk tea, and shaved ice. At restaurants and in homes, common dishes include curries, stews, stir-fries, stuffed vegetables, baked goat cheeses, pilafs, grilled meat platters, fruit salads, and dumplings.

1). *[[Echo: The Karistal District is full of nightclubs competing for the coveted title of Hadiqa's hottest spot, but [[Echo consistently remains one of the trendiest places to be and be seen at even as other clubs come and go. Without a VIP membership you can expect to wait several hours just to reach the door, and the bouncers are given broad discretionary powers to determine who makes it in each night. Once inside, [[Echo is a riot of neon colors and pulsing beats, with musical sets enhanced with interactive augmented reality projections that run throughout the multistory club. A dedicated omninet relay allows even offworlders to attend via telepresence, draping themselves in exotic avatars suited to the season's digital fashion trends. If expensive cocktails crafted from imported fruits and spirits aren't to your tastes, a number of designer narcotics are discreetly offered as well.*

2). *The Gauntlet: The sports bar is a concept that transcends stellar boundaries, and Suldan is no exception. A converted machine shop, the Gauntlet isn't the classiest establishment around, but its popularity among arena enthusiasts and up-and-coming fighters alike has endured throughout the decades. Opened by a retired gladiator, the remains of his customized mech hang proudly in one of the former repair bays and pictures of famous arena fighters adorn the walls (including Jun Chandrasekhar herself). Beer, risqlit, and kebabs are the order of the day, and the oversized viewscreens show an endless stream of gladiatorial bouts, mech racing, and assorted offworld sports of interest. Brawls are expected to be taken outside, a policy the owner enforces with a firm hand and a combat shotgun.*

3). The Red Pearl: Beyond staple food crops, coffee is one of the most widely biome-adapted plants in the galaxy, and practically every settled world has its own coffee cultures. Suldani's love affair with coffee takes the form of expansive coffeehouses such as the historic Red Pearl, where customers gather from morning into the evening to share stories and jokes, discuss business and politics, and play table games while waiters move about refilling cups. Suldani coffee is thick and strong, spiced and served with plenty of sugar. Tea is also available for those who prefer it, though imported blends are harder to come by these days. The Red Pearl hosts a variety of live entertainment, including musicians, comics, poets, and dancers. During the Emir's reign the Red Pearl also served as a clandestine safehouse and supply drop for members of the rebel movement, and even today the owners and staff maintain an extensive contact network among the city's smugglers and black marketeers.

4). The Basement: A "dockside" bar built near the base of the Port Ossman space catapult, the Basement was established as a watering hole serving the cargo crews and freight haulers working the port and providing quick-turnaround ship crews a chance to blow off steam without running the risk of missing their departure window. After the planetary defense network went on lockdown, the bar shuttered its doors shortly thereafter as business evaporated overnight. Since a path was punched through the satellite grid, the Basement has reopened once again, but much to the chagrin of the dockside workers it's been largely taken over by the Arclight TransColonial personnel stationed there. At any given time you can find several squads of Arclight PMC troops playing cards, shooting pool, and drunkenly singing songs from a dozen different worlds. The fare is basic at best, mainly cheap beer and salt-laden snacks, and the ambiance isn't all that spectacular, but it's close to the port and it's inexpensive which is all its patrons usually care about.

5). Epsilon Outpost: Virtual reality gaming is a common pastime throughout settled space, but some seek a more involved experience than VR alone can provide. The members of Epsilon Outpost, for example, would describe it as a "simulation club" rather than a mere arcade, but in practice they serve a similar function. The difference is how seriously the club's members treat the experience. The interior of the club is designed to resemble a bar and lounge aboard a fictional space station (serving very real drinks), treated as neutral ground both in- and out-of-character. Members participate in a variety of elaborate virtual battles and wargames complete with ongoing narratives and no small amount of drama, ranging from personal honor duels to full-fledged wars between factions. Dress codes are mandatory for members, and breaking character unnecessarily and disrupting the experience for others is considered extremely rude, with visitors who do so asked firmly to leave. Mech pilots with actual combat experience who happen to visit, however, may find themselves received as minor celebrities and entreated to join one faction or another with promises of free drinks.

6). Zhao's: Located in a nondescript part of the Undercity, Zhao's sells noodles. Sometimes they serve beer as well, sometimes they serve something that more closely resembles industrial solvent, but they always, always serve noodles, the spicier the better, and if you aren't in the mood for noodles then you'd better move along quickly because seating is

limited and the customers tend to be armed. There are a lot of customers, too. Zhao's is something of an open secret, and the more daring or inebriated topside gourmands are more than willing to venture beneath the city for a bowl or two. Zhao's is also considered neutral territory by the various gangs and criminal organizations that reside in the Undercity and that policy is strictly, brutally enforced by all involved. No one wants to be known as the gang that sullied Zhao's with bloodshed, or to be told that their business is no longer welcome there.

7). Pangaea: A marvel of environmental engineering and a flagrant display of ostentatious wealth, Pangaea is 100,000 square meters of immaculately designed, self-contained, climate-controlled biomes existing side by side within the Karistal District. The complex houses a year-round ski slope, a tropical beach and simulated ocean complete with coral, fish, and dolphins imported at no small expense, a rainforest inspired garden with cultivated microclimate, and a carved-stone rock climbing range. The cost of admission for a single hour is exorbitant, and a lifetime membership is an expense firmly out of reach for most people. Pangaea is frequently held up as a symbol of the decadent excesses of the Emir's reign and a sign of the growing detachment between Suldani's upper class and the rest of the populace. Supporters of the venue argue that it employs a substantial number of engineers, maintenance personnel, and courtesy staff instead of relying upon subalterns, thereby contributing to the local economy.

8). Kinjana's Dynasty: Gambling on Suldani is legal if highly regulated, in particular sports betting, and Kinjana's Dynasty is one of several casinos offering a dazzling array of games of chance, VR entertainment, music, and plenty of alcohol to encourage everyone to play just one more round. This is the Kinjana's Dynasty that most visitors see, but with the right words in the right ears a different casino awaits beneath the main floor. Here, hard-eyed men and women with suits and tattoos stand watch over an illicit gambling den run by the 10,000 Brotherhood syndicate. The main attraction is unregulated sports betting, not only on official arena battles and races but also on unsanctioned and illegal no-holds-barred gladiatorial bouts, including fights to the death, which are streamed live for the raucous crowd. Those with more discriminating tastes can also bet on animal fights, play agony-and-aneurysm-inducing revolver roulette through ontologic bridging (the analog version being a bit too conspicuous for the owners' tastes), and participate in a variety of high-stakes games where players have been known to lose more than just money.

9). House of Basil: A cultural institution reaching back over 150 years, the House of Basil has remained indefatigably open throughout a coup, five decades of oppression, and a rebellion, and it will doubtlessly remain standing for the next 150 years after this. Family-owned and operated since its founding, the restaurant's menu has changed little since it first opened its doors, and there's no better place to be found in the city for those looking to experience authentic Suldani cuisine prepared traditionally. Despite its historic pedigree, the House of Basil isn't considered trendy these days by many of Hadiqa's moneyed elite which means that even with its proximity to the Karistal District its prices remain reasonable and seating generally doesn't require a reservation. The affable owners seem to know practically everyone in the city by name, and it isn't uncommon to see people from all walks of life rubbing shoulders in the inviting, spice-scented dining area.

10). Jan Dan's Everyhour Ekspres: An interstellar chain of convenience stores spanning numerous settled worlds, their cartoonish mascot and aggressively surrealistic commercials are familiar to Cosmopolitan travelers across the galaxy no matter which planet they find themselves on. Open every local hour of every local day, the sleepless and hung-over are invited to peruse their assortment of energy drinks, candy, snacks, beer, liquor, pharmaceuticals, electronics, and ready-to-eat foods of dubious quality. The Suldani Jan Dan's franchises serve a surprisingly palatable vegetarian curry bowl, but the goat tandoori taco wraps are best avoided whenever possible.



LOCAL GOODS

This is a small selection of the sorts of items PCs might find for sale in one of Hadiqa's many marketplaces, from upscale malls to outdoor stalls to convenience stores. Foreign visitors should bear in mind that most businesses across Suldan close for several hours during the midday period when the sun is typically at its hottest. During this time people rest, nap, and partake in meals or recreational activities.

- 1). Risqlit: A local liquor distilled from a native cactus-like plant, the pale amber spirit has a smokey taste with honey undertones and a strong burn. Cheap Risqlit is fermented and distilled in as little as two weeks and hits the stomach like a firebomb. Fine Risqlit can be aged in casks for anywhere from five to 50 years and is far smoother, if no less potent.
- 2). Incense Grass: One of Suldani's luxury exports, a form of native grass which can be dried, braided into strands, and burned to release sweet, fragrant smoke. There are a wide variety of cultivated breeds each with their own distinct scent, and some varieties even have minor narcotic properties, instilling a sense of euphoria, lassitude, and mild hallucinations in those who breathe the smoke.
- 3). Spices: The warm, earthy bite of Suldani peppercorns is a common inclusion in many local dishes, and the native spice is also a popular export as well. In addition to that, aspiring gourmands that wish to try and improve the quality of their field rations or simply cook a nice meal for their friends can easily find an abundant variety of gene-grafted chilis, curry pastes, infused oils, and other biome-adapted spices for sale.
- 4). Blood Charms: Since the downfall of the Emir and the destruction of the royal palace, opportunistic merchants have made a brisk trade selling charms purporting to contain a genuine sample of the deposed Emir's blood. All of them are of course completely fake, but that doesn't stop unscrupulous sellers from claiming that the charms will do everything from making the planet's rogue defense systems turn a blind eye towards the wearer to healing the sick and infirm. Some people, well aware of their fabricated nature, still purchase them anyway as gag gifts and good luck charms.
- 5). Arena Recordings: Arena battles have a long and storied history in Suldani's culture, and the entertainment media industry has made much of that history for sale. Die-hard fans and curious newcomers alike can find a bewildering array of recordings for purchase, ranging from classic matches that predate the Emir's rule to the latest major bouts, along with numerous unsanctioned and amateur fights. Older recordings offer only limited playback options, while more recent examples with higher production values offer multiple camera angles to switch between including in-cockpit POV footage.
- 6). Scale Mech Models: These sorts of models can be found for sale on most any settled planet, though there are always local variations, and Suldani is no exception. Enthusiasts and collectors can find models, both premade and kits, of famous gladiatorial designs and variants, the renowned and feared Janissaries of the Emir, and even industrial mechs used during the early colonial settlement period. Chandrasekhar & Herschel even sells a line showcasing their own designs, with licensed pilots receiving a discount on purchases of

matching models.

7). Devil! Energy Drinks: The official energy drink of the Grand Games for 20 years running, Devil! Energy (whose trademarked slogan is "It's Inside You") claims that its invigorating properties are the result of a proprietary blend of unique Suldani floral extracts, electrolytes, and precisely tailored vitamin compounds, but in truth it has more to do with caffeine. Devil! comes in classic Red (pomegranate), Blue (elderberry), Green (green tea), White (cucumber lime, since discontinued), and Gold (honey citrus) varieties. Devil! Black (black cherry) is a special edition typically distributed and sold only to those in military service as well as arena fighters with special promotional contracts, and contains combat stims.

8). Titanium Jewelry: Suldani is a planet rife with mineral wealth, and the hard-working people who live there favor jewelry that wears just as hard. Independent vendors and upscale boutiques alike offer a wide range of durable and stylish titanium adornments, from elaborately braided chains and hairpins to artfully anodized bracelets and laser-engraved rings.

9). Shaarmi: A popular street food served all throughout Hadiqa. Seasoned, pickled cabbage and finely diced vegetables are piled onto a thin pancake or flatbread along with shredded mutton, goat, or grilled sausage, then smothered in spicy tomato chutney or a sweet plum sauce and wrapped into a handheld bundle convenient for eating on the go. Other common additions include sour cream or yogurt, chickpeas, and sauteed greens.

10). Jun Chandrasekhar Merchandise: From shirts to posters to unauthorized autobiographies, a wealth of items bearing Jun Chandrasekhar's likeness can be found for sale across Hadiqa ever since the revolution. How proudly displaying such merchandise is viewed depends on the socioeconomic circles one runs in, and Jun herself is unlikely to be amused with pilots that make it a point to wear shirts with her own face to meetings with her. Asking her to autograph such merchandise is highly inadvisable.

ARENAS

Gladiatorial mech combat is a major Suldani cultural institution, with a history stretching back to the early colonization period. As a result, one can find a number of sporting venues throughout Hadiqa designed to accommodate various forms of arena combat. This list highlights some of the more noteworthy venues which PCs may find themselves attending either as a spectator or possibly as a competitor.

1). The Royal Colosseum: One of the first major civil engineering projects decreed by the Emir, Julian Khan was a tremendous fan of gladiatorial sport and thus during the early part of his reign he ordered the construction of an arena that would be worthy of his magnificence. For a time the populace, wary and uncertain about the shocking swiftness of his rise to power, even viewed this gesture as a positive sign of things to come. The stadium itself is enormous, capable of seating 250,000 spectators along with VIP booths along with a lavish royal box reserved for the Emir's own personal use. Beyond its size and ostentatious design, the Colosseum is also a sophisticated structure whose modular and

configurable arena is capable of creating numerous dynamic obstacles and hazards, and even simulating alternate biomes to an extent. As the Emir's sanity deteriorated and his tyranny grew, the Royal Colosseum's hazards grew ever more deadly, and near the end of his reign countless political prisoners, dissidents, and captive rebels had been sent there to die unfair and ugly deaths for his entertainment. At present, it's unknown if the tradition of the Grand Games will continue in the Emir's absence or be replaced by something else altogether.

2). The Underdome: No one is quite sure who it was that gave this Undercity arena its irreverent name, but though it isn't actually a dome it's stuck ever since. Despite what some people claim, the Underdome isn't one of Suldani's first arenas. While it's true that gladiatorial fights took place in the early colonial days of subterranean development, none of those arenas remain in use, with most either repurposed as development spread to the surface of the planet or preserved as historical sites. Instead, the Underdome is a cavernous abandoned storehouse complex which has been converted into a makeshift gladiatorial ring. Though cramped and less sophisticated than many aboveground arenas, the bouts held here are brutal affairs nonetheless, occasionally for the audience as well as the pilots given the relative lack of safeguards, and fights to the death aren't uncommon. The various criminal organizations which reside in the Undercity frequently vie for control of the illegal gambling operations which have sprung up like weeds in the venue's wake.

3). Shrivastava Stadium: An older Suldani arena constructed prior to the Emir's ascension, this historic stadium has declined in popularity since the construction of the Royal Colosseum. As gladiatorial fights grew more ostentatious and elaborate under the Emir's rule, Shrivastava Stadium found itself playing host to amateur bouts between aspiring fighters, more a stepping stone for competitors looking to quickly work their way to the top than a prestigious goal in its own right. The popularity of more traditional arena combat waned over the years, but since the overthrow of the Emir a reinvigorated wave of interest in "purer" mech combat has begun to catch on, with a number of former competitors coming out of retirement to sponsor a new generation of talented fighters. The arena also plays host to Pendekar Sukarno Yorensin, a master practitioner of the chassis-based martial art raksasa silat presently residing on Suldani who regularly holds open exhibitions with his students, allowing anyone who wishes to attend to do so for free.

4). Kyangiri Station: Formerly known as Resourcing Outpost D-14, in the aftermath of the Sianjani Station Massacre this was one of a number of similar resourcing outposts which was abandoned in the ensuing worker exodus. Unlike the other stations, D-14 was never restaffed and instead was left to fall into disuse and disrepair as the Emir turned his attention inwards to deal with increased rebel activity within Hadiqa. The outpost would find new life years later, but not in the way that was originally intended. Elements within the Royal Guard had been escalating their shakedowns of illegal arena fights, demanding greater percentages to continue turning a blind eye, and so an enterprising fight organizer set upon the idea of holding bouts outside the city altogether. The former outpost was chosen as a suitable stage, with the abandoned structures and equipment serving as an impromptu arena environment with a stylish "industrial decay" aesthetic. The fights there proved so successful that they eventually began to attract attention from more than just

outlaws. These days, gladiatorial bouts at Kyangiri Station have become something akin to a countercultural event, attracting merchants, vendors, independent fighters, martial artists, and lately even members of the Suldani Independence Front who make the journey from their settlements to participate in the competitions and festivals held there.

5). The Qilin Club: Residing on the top level of the breathtaking rose-glass Montero-Xiàng Tower within the Karistal District, the Qilin Club is an exclusive venue for Suldani's elite to gather, socialize, and participate in formal mech duels. This aristocratic affectation rose to prominence during the Emir's reign as the upper class looked for a way to create a more refined and sophisticated version of the planet's favored pastime. This attempt has been met with mockery and derision from those who view it as little more than a way for Suldani's nouveau nobility to put on airs, but for all the pretentious pageantry surrounding it the participants take it as seriously as any other gladiator. The club is by membership or invitation only, and all duelists' mechs must meet a checklist of qualifications in order to be allowed to participate, with indiscriminately destructive armaments typically disallowed in favor of more elegant and precise weaponry. Beyond the dueling floor itself, the Qilin Club also boasts a gourmet restaurant serving offworld-fusion cuisine, a gym and spa, an assortment of discreet VIP rooms for conducting business in, and a cocktail lounge with a panoramic view overlooking Hadiqa.

PILOTS AND MARTIAL ARTS

The history of martial arts reaches back many thousands of years even before the Fall. While numerous styles of fighting arts have been lost since the end of the Anthropocene Epoch, with only incomplete historical records hinting at their existence, new styles have emerged since then blending together both old and new teachings. And with the galaxy-wide adoption of hardsuits and anthropomorphic combat chassis alongside technologies such as neural interface systems, a new form of martial arts have emerged within the last 500 years which blend technology, philosophy, cultural heritage, and physical training both in personal combat as well as piloting.

Many pilots are familiar with meditative and centering exercises designed to help them better synchronize with neural interfaces and ontologic bridges used in many mech control systems, or simply to acclimate themselves to piloting an oversized humanoid weapon, so the leap from that to martial arts isn't as great as one might assume. The other factor which facilitates this is the nature of mechs themselves, an armored combat platform which in many ways mimics the human body's movements. Not every pilot treats their mech as an extension of their own body, but among those that do so training in martial arts designed from first principles to be utilized while piloting a mech isn't uncommon.

Mech-based martial arts are a unique discipline which combines the physical and spiritual training of conventional martial arts with engineering and programming knowledge in order to push a mech's performance beyond conventional limits. Practitioners take advantage of the unique capabilities mechs offer in combat, crafting custom software and firmware, enhancing joints, and reinforcing hulls, allowing them to perform astonishing feats in battle which would overtax and potentially damage a more conventionally tuned chassis piloted by someone lacking sufficient skill.

The following is a brief list of various mech-based martial arts that PCs may encounter both within Suldan's arenas as well as throughout the galaxy, though there are many more styles beyond what's described here, such as the Sparri tradition of Jäger Kunst and numerous syncretic styles, breakaway schools, and offshoots.

1). Raksasa Silat: A fierce, aggressive style which blends both grappling and striking techniques together with highly disruptive electronic warfare attacks most often applied in close-quarters, raksasa silat ("demon tiger fighting art") has a spiritual component to it which outsiders often find unusual. Practitioners frequently meditate within the cockpits of their chassis while interfaced, communing with any NHPs that inhabit their systems, and customized hacking programs are as common among adherents as physical modifications to their chassis. More regularly encountered along the outer lines, raksasa silat is an itinerant art which maintains no formal schools or monasteries, with masters traveling from world to world and passing down their teachings as they go.

2). Titanfaust: One of the earliest martial arts styles to take advantage of mechanized combat chassis, titanfaust was originally developed as a training method for soldiers using hardsuits, particularly those engaged in boarding actions where close-quarters combat was a common occurrence and learning how to take advantage of a hardsuit in such conditions was a vital skill. A brutal, hard-style martial art with an emphasis on devastating blows, in addition to training with anti-armor melee weaponry and powered grapnels meant for zero-g combat environments, practitioners typically enhance the limbs of their chassis with reinforced joints and acceleration systems that allow them to strike even empty-handed with force well above their frame's conventional tolerances.

3). Tekkado: A "soft" mech-based martial art, if such a thing can be said to exist, tekkado is primarily reactive in nature, based around turning opponents' attacks back against them, throws, and destructive strikes aimed at an opponent's joints and sensors. Pilot exercises are often comprised of slow, fluid forms and meditation techniques designed to enhance calm and focus under duress, and typical chassis enhancements are most commonly centered around enhanced defensive measures, increased load-bearing capabilities, and advanced predictive reaction/response systems. Tekkado academies can be found throughout Union space and it isn't unheard of for Union piloting instructors to integrate elements of tekkado into their training curricula in order to help acclimate new recruits to chassis operation.

4). Spada Del Pazzo: An outgrowth of various duelist schools which underwent a renaissance following the reconstruction and publication of assorted pre-Cradle historical documents, spada del pazzo or "fool's sword" is a martial art centered around combat with chassis-scale bladed weaponry. Unlike a dueling style, spada del pazzo is intended for combat against multiple opponents with an emphasis on footwork and maneuvering combined with precision strikes against vulnerable, unarmored areas. There are a number of variants and substyles each of which focuses on particular techniques divided by choice of armament, such as greatsword, dual blade, or sword-and-firearm to name a few. Practitioners are frequently known to tune their chassis' neural interfaces to the upper

limits of safe operation, and it's rare to find a combattente who doesn't possess at least one custom crafted sword. Popular within the Karrakin Trade Baronies, footage has also been captured of Albatross pilots utilizing spada del pazzo techniques in combat, though no official affiliation exists between the two.

5). Golden Blade: An attempt by Harrison Armory to create a corpo-state sponsored martial art, the so-called "golden blade" style is a relatively new development unveiled to the public only within recent years. Rumors abound that the enigmatic Think Tank had a hand in its creation, but what's known for certain is that the style places a particular emphasis on the use of powered, energy-based melee weaponry as opposed to more traditional armaments. The style's fighting techniques have been extensively mapped out and simulated across a variety of frames for mathematical optimization, and practitioners supplement these with reactor upgrades, advanced balance systems, and hypertuned agility enhancements far in excess of standard HA designs. It remains to be seen if the style will be formally adopted, but a number of public demonstrations have been held to enthusiastic media acclaim as well as a flurry of speculation by military analysts.

Narrative and Downtime

Throughout the course of a Suldani campaign, PCs will have an opportunity to engage in narrative and downtime actions just as they would in any *Lancer* campaign. The following narrative action is designed to add more depth to games set on Suldani, but it can easily be used in other settings as well. Like all narrative and downtime actions, PCs will roll a pilot skill check to determine the outcome, modified by any relevant triggers they may possess.

STEP INTO THE RING

When you **Step Into the Ring**, you take part in some sort of formal, structured competition that's particular to wherever you happen to be, such as mech racing, Karrakin saber dueling, gladiatorial fights, high-stakes gambling, or virtual gaming. This is more than just a casual pick-up game, but instead a serious contest of skill and determination. Applicable triggers depend on what sort of competition it is; gladiatorial bouts, martial arts, and combat sports could involve **Apply Fists to Faces** or **Assault**, a race might involve **Get Somewhere Fast** or **Stay Cool**, gambling might rely on **Charm** or **Read a Situation**, and so on.

Name what it is you plan to compete in. You start out with **+0** in **Fame**, which represents your renown both in and out of the ring. Your **Fame** might increase as a result of your performance, up to a maximum of **+6**, and it can be used as a bonus to skill checks that involve leveraging your reputation, interacting with fans, and otherwise exploiting the benefits of celebrity. Making a name for yourself can be a double-edged sword, though, and the more famous you become the more others might seek to exploit you in turn. You can't choose not to gain **Fame** either, it happens whether you want it or not. If you don't want to risk gaining a rep, you shouldn't be stepping into the ring.

When it's time to compete, roll:

On **9 or less**, you suffer a brutal defeat. Learn a painful lesson, lose **2 Fame** to a minimum of **0**, then choose one of the following:

- Your defeat is particularly humiliating, and people will remember it.
- You suffer an injury, acquire a debt, or make an enemy.

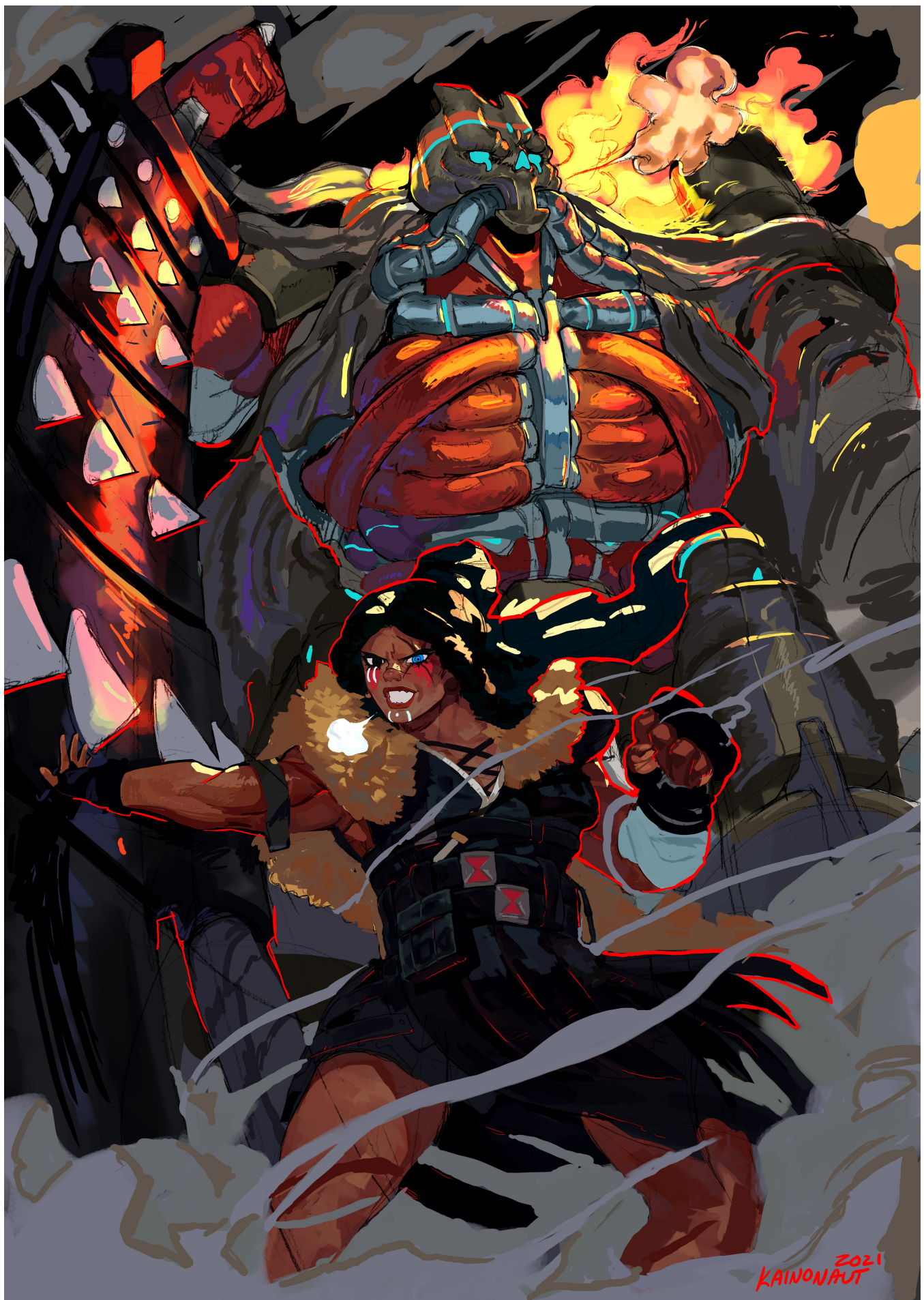
On a **10-19**, choose whether you won or lost. If you won, it was hard fought but you came out ahead in the end. If you lost, you still put in a good showing. Then choose one of the following:

- You gain **+2 Fame**. If you won, you also gain a rival. If you lost, you gain someone's admiration or respect.
- Your performance attracts someone's attention. Gain something as **Reserves** on your next mission, it could be a useful item or information, but you'll owe your benefactor a favor.

On a **20+**, you win a decisive victory. Gain **+2 Fame**, and choose one of the following:

- You gain something as **Reserves** on your next mission. Perhaps it was awarded as a prize, won as part of a gambling pot, or gifted by a sponsor.
- Your performance opens a door for you that was previously closed. This could be an invitation to an exclusive club, an underground organization, or a secret society.
- Your victory was particularly remarkable, and people will remember it.

If your PCs choose to participate in Suldun's gladiatorial arenas, you can additionally roll a d20 on the tables below to quickly determine who their opponents are or what sorts of arena battles they wind up participating in.



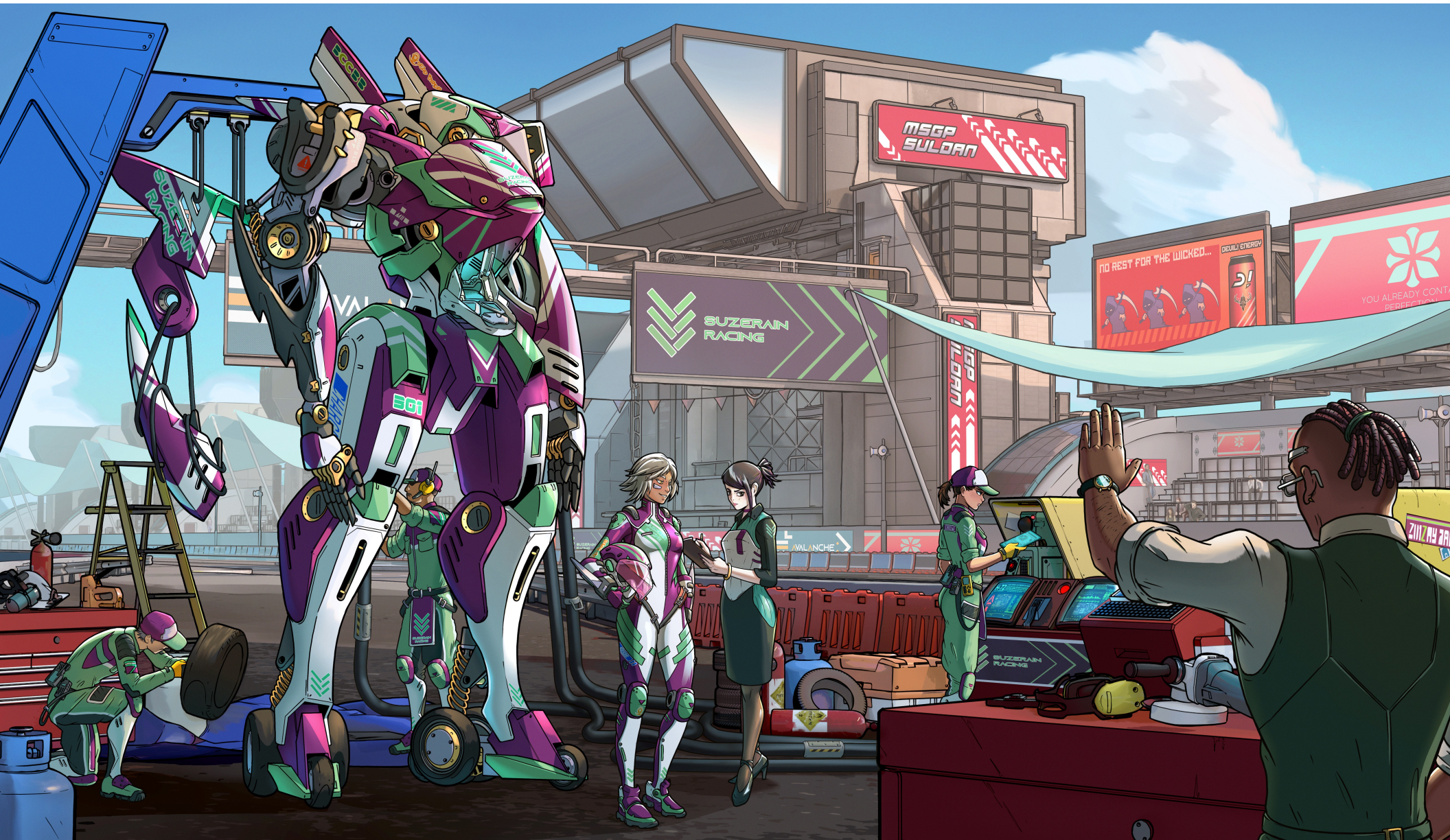
Arena Fighters

1	A former industrial laborer with extensive cybernetic prosthetics. Their fighting style and loadout reflects their expertise with heavy machinery.
2	A nouveau aristo sporting a cutting-edge chassis. Are they just slumming it for thrills, or do they have a different agenda?
3	An ex-member of the Royal Guard, now a full-time pit fighter under an assumed identity. Morose and paranoid, they fight viciously when backed into a corner.
4	A popular celebrity fighter who streams their bouts to fans over the omninet. They have a tendency to favor flashy techniques over more practical methods.
5	A martial artist here to prove their skills in the arena. What style do they practice? Does it utilize weapons, or do they fight unarmed?
6	A mercenary who came to Suldán and discovered a taste for gladiatorial combat. Their mech is outfitted with a slew of dirty tricks.
7	A corporate-sponsored arena fighter, piloting one of their latest models. Who do they represent, and what is their mech designed to do?
8	A loud-mouthed punk that utilizes hacking over brute force. It's unclear whether their public affiliation with HORUS is genuine or just for show.
9	A veteran fighter whose age is beginning to catch up with them. Do they plan on retiring gracefully, or are they trying to go out in a blaze of glory?
10	A Sparri warrior fighting for fortune and glory. How did they wind up on Suldán? Are they here on their own, or are they traveling with a group?
11	A talented engineer whose mech is their own personal creation. Their design may seem unorthodox or cobbled together, but it's surprisingly effective.
12	A fighter who's backed by one of Suldán's criminal organizations. Who's their sponsor, and what lengths will they go to in order to secure victory?
13	A descendant of a famous arena gladiator taking up their mantle. They have a devoted fan following, but find themselves struggling to emerge from their predecessor's shadow.
14	A soldier or operative posing as an arena fighter as part of a clandestine mission. What's their objective? Are they after another competitor?
15	A gladiator whose family was killed in the retributive kinetic strike on Hadiqa following the revolution. They have nothing left to lose, and they fight like it.
16	A political prisoner who was forced to fight by the Emir, recently emancipated. Against the odds they survived and even thrived. What keeps them fighting? What became of their old life?
17	A genetically engineered super-soldier with an incomplete memory. Their combat performance is exemplary, but who created them and why? Could someone be hunting them?
18	A complete enigma. This competitor's identity is a mystery, shrouded by a mask they

	never remove and a voice modulator. Their fighting prowess is unmistakable, though.
19	A Cosmopolitan stranded on Suldan. They owe a substantial debt, which they're paying off by fighting. Their chassis incorporates unusual and even anachronistic technology.
20	A subaltern warrior that's said to simply be an advanced homunculus personality simulation, but further investigation reveals them to be an NHP operating independently.

Match Type

1-2	This match is being sponsored by two parties to settle their differences by proxy. Whichever side wins the bout wins the dispute.
3-4	A mock recreation of a famous (or obscure) historical battle. Fighters are divided among opposing "forces" and loadouts are restricted appropriately.
5-6	Battle royale. The last fighter standing wins.
7-8	Mil-sim. This bout resembles a military training exercise, complete with objectives to achieve such as zone control or flag capture.
9-10	Team battle. You're partnered up with another fighter (or two) against an opposing team. Roll on the Arena Fighters table to determine who your partners are.
11-12	No equipped weapons are allowed for this fight. Instead, weapons will periodically be deposited into the arena for competitors to claim and use.
13-14	Environmental recreation. Through means elaborate or simplistic, the arena has been modified in such a way to resemble a particular biome or terrestrial environment.
15-16	This bout involves hostile xenofauna released into the arena. Such fights are supposed to be illegal now that the Emir has been deposed, but that hasn't stopped everyone.
17-18	Sudden death. This battle is on a strict time limit, and once that time is up various arena hazards begin to escalate until there's a winner.
19-20	A spectacular battle guaranteed to amaze! Choose two results from this table and apply them together.



Duels

Pilots are often trained to operate in units as one part of a greater military whole. Weapons manufacturers and corpo-states dedicate manna and manpower to creating the most effective and efficient tactical systems and armaments designed to enhance a mech squadron's capabilities as a team, but sometimes pilots simply have no choice but to handle things personally. Sometimes a fight comes down to two people, whether over ideology or profit or simply to see which one is stronger. Sometimes there's simply no other choice but to have a duel.

While these rules refer to these fights as duels, they can be used to represent a variety of one-on-one challenges such as gladiatorial contests, sparring matches, heated showdowns between rivals, and desperate struggles on the periphery of the battlefield. Strictly speaking, such duels don't even need to involve mechs, as the rules work just as well for a fight between dismounted pilots should matters come to that.

A Challenger Appears

A duel is fought until one party has taken a set number of **hits** and is defeated. Each round of a duel, both parties select a move in secret and then reveal them simultaneously, making a **contested check**. The winner succeeds and their maneuver takes effect.

Both parties begin a duel in a **neutral stance** and vie for a dominant position. Once one of the duelists has seized the **Initiative** in a duel, the other duelist is put into a defensive position. Having the Initiative gives you the opportunity to press your advantage and secure hits on your opponent more easily, while being forced into a defensive position leaves you on the back foot, though not without recourse.

After an exchange has been made duelists may return to the neutral stance, giving them a chance to vie for the dominant position all over again. This flow of attempting to seize the Initiative and land enough hits on your opponent to win the duel continues until one duelist is reduced to **0 hits** and loses the duel. The consequences of losing a duel can vary depending on the context in which it takes place. The winner may gain fame, glory, fortune, vengeance, or secure a significant tactical advantage on the battlefield. The loser may lose face, be forced to retreat or surrender, or suffer injury and possibly even death.

By default, **pilots have 5 hits**. NPCs may have a variable number of hits depending on how much of a challenge they pose.

- **Insignificant Opponent, 1-2 hits:** It's entirely possible for an opponent of this level to be dispatched within one or two exchanges, examples include conscripts, arena dregs, a green recruit getting their first taste of chassis training.
- **Average Opponent, 3-4 hits:** Examples include undisciplined gladiators, dilettante duelists, an unremarkable but drilled and trained combat pilot.

- **Skilled Opponent or Several Lesser Opponents, 5-6 hits:** Examples include your personal rival, veteran pilots, seasoned combat sport fighters, duelists of repute, or alternately a small group of less skilled opponents attempting to make up for their shortcomings by attacking together (treat this small group as a single opponent, the rules otherwise remain the same).
- **Elite Opponent, 7-8 hits:** Examples include your personal rival with an unexpected edge, elite ace pilots, master duelists, infamous arena champions.

Hits do not necessarily represent actual significant damage (though successful exchanges can certainly be described in plenty of destructive detail), and being reduced to 0 hits does not necessarily mean that a duelist's mech is destroyed. In many cases a mech reduced to 0 hits will simply be damaged, disabled, perhaps simply scuffed up if the duelists are using training weapons or intentionally pulling their blows. But sometimes duels can be dangerous affairs, resulting in chassis destruction, injury, or even death.

Clash of the Titans

Unlike normal skill checks or attack checks, the participants in a duel don't often slot easily into the roles of attacker and defender. Both participants are attacking and defending simultaneously, swapping positions, changing stances, and unleashing volleys of firepower and bladework at one another. Because of this, in a duel there is no designated attacker who wins ties during contested rolls. Instead ties have special outcomes, detailed in the various maneuvers that the duelists will employ.

If a PC possesses a relevant background (*Lancer*, p. 20) then once at any point during the duel they may **invoke** it to add **+1 Accuracy** to any contested check they make during the duel.

Seizing the Initiative

At the beginning of a duel both duelists square off against each other in the Initiative Phase, looking for openings and weaknesses to exploit. Both of them want to seize the Initiative over the other, which will allow them to attempt to score decisive blows and secure victory for themselves. At this point in a duel there are three maneuvers that both duelists can select from: **Steady Approach**, **Guarded Advance**, and **Headlong Charge**. Each duelist chooses one of these maneuvers in secret, then both of them reveal their maneuver at the same time.

Next, if a roll is called for then both duelists will make a contested check, rolling **1d20** and comparing results; no triggers or other modifiers such as Grit are added to this roll. The duelist who rolls highest wins the exchange. Winning the exchange here can grant one of the duelists **Initiative**, which moves the duel onto the next phase, but may also result in a duelist taking hits as well. If neither duelist seizes the Initiative, continue selecting

maneuvers and making contested checks until Initiative is seized.

Choose one of the following approaches:

Steady Approach

A Steady Approach is a standard opening meant to decisively achieve the upper hand, forcing your opponent to react to you. Against more cautious opposition you can easily secure your position, but you may be unprepared to defend yourself against more reckless aggression.

When you choose a **Steady Approach**:

- and your opponent also chooses a **Steady Approach**, roll. On a success, you seize the Initiative. On a tie, both duelists remain in a neutral stance.
- and your opponent chooses a **Guarded Advance**, do not roll. You automatically seize the Initiative.
- and your opponent chooses a **Headlong Charge**, roll. On a success, you seize the Initiative. On a tie you seize the Initiative but take **1 hit**.

Guarded Advance

A Guarded Advance means that you're adopting a more measured and reactive stance, looking to bait your opponent into overextending so you can turn the tables against them. When someone charges in you can easily take advantage of the openings they leave, but you can just as easily be forced onto the defensive by someone who doesn't give you anything to exploit.

When you choose a **Guarded Advance**:

- and your opponent chooses a **Steady Approach**, do not roll. You automatically lose and they seize the Initiative.
- and your opponent also chooses a **Guarded Advance**, roll. On a success, you seize the Initiative. On a tie, both duelists remain in a neutral stance.
- and your opponent chooses a **Headlong Charge**, do not roll. You automatically seize the Initiative and gain **+1 Accuracy** to the next maneuver you make during the duel.

Headlong Charge

A Headlong Charge at this stage of a duel means that you're throwing caution to the wind, looking to smash through your opponent's carefully laid plans before they can react to your sudden aggression. Against someone expecting a more conventional attempt to jockey for position you can overwhelm them and score a telling blow, but this can also leave you vulnerable against more thoughtful and wary opponents who anticipate your strategy.

When you choose a **Headlong Charge**:

- and your opponent chooses a **Steady Advance**, roll. On a success, you deal **1 hit**. On a successful roll of **20+** you deal **2 hits**. On a tie, you lose the Initiative but deal

1 hit.

- and your opponent chooses a **Guarded Advance**, do not roll. You automatically lose, they seize the Initiative, and they gain **+1 Accuracy** to the next maneuver they make during the duel.
- and your opponent also chooses a **Headlong Charge**, roll. On a success you deal **1 hit**. On a tie you both take **1 hit**. On a successful roll of **20+** you also seize the Initiative.

	Steady Approach	Guarded Advance	Headlong Charge
Steady Approach	Roll. Winner seizes the Initiative. On a tie, both duelists remain in neutral stance.	Do not roll. Steady Approach automatically seizes the Initiative.	Roll. If Steady Approach wins or ties, they seize the Initiative. If Headlong Charge wins or ties, they deal 1 hit , dealing 2 hits on a successful roll of 20+ instead.
Guarded Advance	Do not roll. Steady Approach automatically seizes the Initiative.	Roll. Winner seizes the Initiative. On a tie, both duelists remain in neutral stance.	Do not roll. Guarded Advance automatically seizes the Initiative and gains +1 Accuracy to the next maneuver they attempt during the duel.
Headlong Charge	Roll. If Steady Approach wins or ties, they seize the Initiative. If Headlong Charge wins or ties, they deal 1 hit , dealing 2 hits on a successful roll of 20+ instead.	Do not roll. Guarded Advance automatically seizes the Initiative and gains +1 Accuracy to the next maneuver they attempt during the duel.	Roll. Winner deals 1 hit , and on a successful roll of 20+ also seizes the Initiative. On a tie, both duelists take 1 hit .

Sasha, through a series of barely remembered, alcohol-fueled decisions, has found herself challenged to a duel by Feng Jiao, one of the Qilin Club's reigning champions. Sasha has never attended a duelist's academy in her life, nor does she know the first thing about the myriad formal protocols surrounding Suldani dueling culture, but what she does have is a hangover, a boundless capacity for unspeakable violence, and Red Queen, her custom IPS-N Blackbeard.

As the judge signals the bout to begin, she and Feng square off on the dueling floor. Sasha opts to try and score an early hit against Feng before the Initiative is even seized and secretly selects a Headlong Charge. However Feng was prepared for her to try something like this, subtlety not being one of her strengths, and selected a Guarded Advance. When the moves are revealed and compared, Feng wins the initial exchange without a roll even being necessary. He now has the Initiative as well as a +1 Accuracy to the next roll he makes. Feng smirks as he ducks underneath Sasha's wild swing, giving Red Queen a love tap with the flat of his blade as he passes by, much to her irritation.

Seeking Blood

Once one of the duelists has seized the Initiative, positions have been staked out and the duel proceeds to the next phase, called the **Exchange Phase**. Each duelist will continue to select moves in secret, reveal them, and roll as required, only now the duelist who has Initiative will have a chance to choose from a new selection of offensive maneuvers to try and secure more hits on their opponent while the other duelist attempts to deflect these attacks, turning them back upon the aggressor and seizing the Initiative themselves. Some results may also send both duelists back into a neutral stance, in which case they return to the **Initiative Phase** as before.

The duelist who has the Initiative can select from the following maneuvers: **Overpower, Strike, and Feint**.

The duelist who does not have Initiative can select from the following maneuvers: **Riposte, Guard, and Evade**.

Some maneuvers are stronger against one option and weaker against another. For example, the **Overpower** maneuver is weak to a well-timed **Riposte**, but much more effective against opponents who attempt to **Guard** or **Evade**.

If you have the Initiative, choose one of the following maneuvers:

Overpower

Disengaging safety limiters you shunt power to your weapons. A massive blade cleaves through nearby obstacles in its arc. Barreling forward, you cock a metal fist back and rain staggering blows on your opponent.

When you **Overpower**:

- and your opponent chooses to **Riposte**, roll. On a success, deal **1 hit** and take **1 hit**. On a tie or if you fail, you take **2 hits** and your opponent gains **+1 Accuracy** to the next maneuver they make during the duel.
- and your opponent chooses to **Guard**, roll. On a success or a tie, deal **2 hits**. If you fail, deal **1 hit** and you and your opponent return to a neutral stance.
- and your opponent chooses to **Evade**, roll. On a success or a tie, deal **2 hits**. If you fail, your opponent seizes the Initiative.

Strike

Your onboard NHP whispers corrections in your ear as you line up a shot. Sparks fly as weapons clash, but your opponent leaves their guard open. Hunter-seeker viral code tears through firewalls and fries vulnerable systems.

When you **Strike**:

- and your opponent chooses to **Riposte**, roll. On a success or tie, deal **1 hit**. If you fail, deal **1 hit** and take **1 hit**.
- and your opponent chooses to **Guard**, roll. On a success or tie, deal **1 hit**. If you fail, your opponent gains **+1 Accuracy** to the next maneuver they make during the duel.
- and your opponent chooses to **Evade**, roll. On a success, deal **1 hit**. On a tie or a failure, your opponent seizes the Initiative.

Feint

Your opponent reacts to a digital illusion, unaware of your true position until it's too late. Chain explosions ripple throughout the air, overwhelming sensors. Your bladework is almost too fast to follow, orbit-forged alloy lashing out like a serpent from unexpected angles.

When you **Feint**:

- and your opponent chooses to **Riposte**, roll. On a success or tie, deal **2 hits**. If you fail, deal **1 hit**.
- and your opponent chooses to **Guard**, roll. On a success, you may deal **1 hit** but you and your opponent return to a neutral stance. On a tie or if you fail, take **1 hit** and you and your opponent return to a neutral stance.
- and your opponent chooses to **Evade**, roll. On a success or tie, deal **1 hit**. If you fail, your opponent may either gain **+1 Accuracy** to the next maneuver they make during the duel or seize the Initiative.

If you do not have the Initiative, choose one of the following maneuvers:

Riposte

Your sidearm clears its housing and thunders as you quickly empty the magazine. comp/con assisted weaponry springs into action faster than any human mind could manage. Your opponent's spear embeds itself in your hull, allowing you to pull them in closer.

When you **Riposte**:

- and your opponent chooses to **Overpower**, roll. On a success or tie, deal **2 hits** and you gain **+1 Accuracy** to the next maneuver you make during the duel. If you fail, deal **1 hit**, take **1 hit**.
- and your opponent chooses to **Strike**, roll. On a success, deal **1 hit** and take **1 hit**. If you fail or tie, take **1 hit**.

- and your opponent chooses to **Feint**, roll. On a success, take **1 hit**. If you fail or tie, take **2 hits**.

Guard

Shield generators flare to life, bathing you in protective electromagnetics. You deftly turn your chassis to take the incoming blow where your armor is thickest. Your blade gains a new scar as you bring it up just in time to deflect your opponent's strike.

When you **Guard**:

- and your opponent chooses to **Overpower**, roll. On a success, take **1 hit** and you and your opponent return to a neutral stance. If you fail or tie, take **2 hits**.
- and your opponent chooses to **Strike**, roll. On a success, you gain **+1 Accuracy** to the next maneuver you make during the duel. On a tie or if you fail, take **1 hit**.
- and your opponent chooses to **Feint**, roll. On a success or tie, you deal **1 hit** and you and your opponent return to a neutral stance. If you fail, your opponent may have you take **1 hit** but you and your opponent return to a neutral stance.

Evade

A code-spike temporarily blinds your opponent's sensors as you reposition. Thrusters flare and send you skirting backwards, kicking up a trail of sparks in your wake. Displaced air cracks as you activate your stutterblink drive, vanishing and reappearing elsewhere.

When you **Evade**:

- and your opponent chooses to **Overpower**, roll. On a success, you seize the Initiative. If you fail or tie, take **2 hits**.
- and your opponent chooses to **Strike**, roll. On a success or tie, you seize the Initiative. If you fail, take **1 hit**.
- and your opponent chooses to **Feint**, roll. On a success, you may either gain **+1 Accuracy** to the next maneuver you make during the duel or seize the Initiative. If you fail or tie, take **1 hit**.

	Overpower	Strike	Feint
Riposte	Roll. If Overpower wins, they deal 1 hit and take 1 hit . If Riposte wins or ties, they deal 2 hits and gain +1 Accuracy to the next maneuver they make during the duel.	Roll. If Strike wins or ties, they deal 1 hit . If Riposte wins, they deal 1 hit .	Roll. If Feint wins or ties, they deal 2 hits , and if they lose they deal 1 hit .

Guard	Roll. If Overpower wins or ties, they deal 2 hits . If Guard wins, they take 1 hit and both duelists return to neutral stance.	Roll. If Strike wins or ties, they deal 1 hit . If Guard wins, they gain +1 Accuracy to the next maneuver they make during the duel.	Roll. If Feint wins, they may deal 1 hit , but both duelists return to neutral stance. no effect. If Guard wins or ties, they deal 1 hit and both duelists return to neutral stance.
Evade	Roll. If Overpower wins or ties, they deal 2 hits . If Evade wins, they seize the Initiative.	Roll. If Strike wins they deal 1 hit . If Evade wins or ties, they seize the Initiative.	Roll. If Feint wins or ties, they deal 1 hit . If Evade wins, they gain +1 Accuracy to the next maneuver they make during the duel or they may seize the Initiative.

Now that Feng has the Initiative it's time for the next phase of the duel. He and Sasha select their next move, sizing each other up before revealing what they've chosen. Feng selected Feint assuming that his opponent would continue to think in aggressive terms and try to lash back with a Riposte, but while Sasha may be violent she isn't stupid, and so she chose to Evade instead. She and Feng then make their rolls, Feng with his +1 Accuracy bonus. Feng rolls a 14, but Sasha manages to roll higher with a 17. In the case of Feint against Evade, that result means that Sasha can either take an Accuracy bonus to their next maneuver or seize the Initiative, and she chooses the latter. Feng's clever attempts to bait his opponent into overextending are too clever for his own good, and his blows fall short as exhaust begins to vent ominously from Red Queen's turbines.

The next round arrives, and what Feng thought would be an easy victory is beginning to look a little more challenging than he'd anticipated. This time Sasha has the Initiative, and when both duelists reveal their maneuvers it turns out that she opted for Overpower (while she isn't stupid, she is still quite violent) while Feng second-guesses himself and attempts to Guard. Rolls are made, and both duelists roll a 15, making this exchange a tie. This result means that Sasha gets to deal 2 hits to her opponent as well as keeping hold of the Initiative. Feng is used to squaring off against other scions and socialites, not mercenary pilots with military-grade hardware, and while he correctly anticipated that Sasha's next move would be aggressive, he misjudged the ferocity of Isabel, Red Queen's Sekhmet-class NHP. The nanocarbon sword effortlessly carves through his hull, scoring a telling blow, and he staggers back with a hand held against the sparking wound as Sasha prepares her next move.

Coup de Grace

A duel continues in this fashion, exchanging blows and positioning, until one duelist has

been reduced to **0 hits**. As soon as that happens the duel is over and the remaining duelist is the winner. On occasion, both duelists may wind up reduced to 0 hits simultaneously. Should this occur the result is a tie, with neither party able to effectively continue the duel. If desired, a final contested roll can be held to determine a decisive victor (don't select maneuvers, just roll). In this case, PCs automatically win any ties which occur.

Setting the Stakes

The stakes and consequences of duels largely depend on the context in which it takes place. A sparring match or "civilized" duel is unlikely to be a brutal fight to the death, but matters may be quite different when two pilots clash on the battlefield.

Duels which take place during **downtime** are generally treated like other downtime actions. Success may result in forming useful bonds, securing reserves, gleaning valuable intel, or providing a springboard for further exploits and adventures. Failure may result in a loss of face or dignity, lost wagers, hard bargains, or other assorted complications. Failure should not generally result in grievous injuries or death as a rule, though exceptions can be made if it makes sense for the events of the game. Similarly, while a pilot's mech may suffer damage as a result of duels, typically the opportunity to repair and reprint prior to missions should mean that such damage is at most a minor inconvenience or an embarrassing story to tell the hangar crew.

As the nanocarbon blade separates her opponent's sword arm from his chassis, the judge signals the end of the match, formally awarding Sasha the victory. Money changes hands between her squadmates as she dismounts while Isabel takes the time to loudly make several highly offensive and biologically suspect remarks about Feng's parentage, and as Sasha prepares to head over to the cocktail bar for a celebratory drink a representative of an offworld trade interest approaches her. He saw the duel and how capably she handled herself, and he believes that she and her associates may be ideally suited to handle a special, only mildly questionably-legal job with the opportunity for a generous payout. Of course Feng is unlikely to forget this humiliating loss and may seek revenge in the future, but that's a problem for another day. For now, Sasha and her friends have a mission to prepare for.

However duels may also take place during **missions** for a variety of reasons. A PC may opt to scout ahead of the rest of the party and encounter a patrolling unit that needs to be dispatched quickly, pilots may drift off course during a high-altitude insertion and be forced to fight their way back to the rest of their squad, or rivals may seek to settle old grudges on the battlefield even as a bigger fight rages around them.

In circumstances such as these, the GM will generally set an outcome for both success and failure, similar to what you might find during skill checks. Players can make suggestions as well depending on the goals they may be seeking to accomplish in tackling an enemy unit one on one. Perhaps they hope to set the stage for an ambush, prevent reinforcements from being summoned, or create a gap in the enemy defenses that their squad can

exploit.

While on a mission, Sasha is separated from the rest of her squad by a sandstorm. Chasing sensor echoes, she pushes forward until she spies the silhouette of a mech up ahead...only it isn't one of her squadmates, but a loyalist insurgent carrying demolition charges. The insurgents attacking the Beliq District must simply be a diversion meant to draw attention while another squad carries out a clandestine mission.

The GM, knowing Sasha's penchant for furious violence, gives her a choice. She can try to fall back and regroup with her squadmates and inform them of the situation, though they may be too late to prevent whatever the loyalists have planned, or she can try to quickly dispatch this lone mech on her own. If she succeeds she'll throw a wrench into the loyalists' plans, and to sweeten the pot the GM even offers to let her pilfer the demo charges for her own use, treating them as a special Reserve item. If she fails, however, she may have no choice but to watch helplessly as the loyalist pilot triggers a massive explosion which provokes a nearby planetary defense node, summoning a swarm of drones and subalterns to cause additional chaos throughout the city.

From there, resolve the duel as normal. If the PC succeeds, they achieve their goal. If their opponent was an **Insignificant** or **Average Opponent**, or a group of **Several Lesser Opponents**, then they also get to decide whether they kill or simply disable them. The GM may decide whether **Skilled** or **Elite Opponents** are killed (unless this is the third time or more a PC has duelled that same opponent, in which case the PC has the option to decide their fate), but if the PC wins then they're nonetheless defeated, forced to retreat or left trapped in a destroyed mech and unable to keep the PC from achieving the goal they won for themselves. If the PC loses, however, not only will they fail to achieve their goal but the consequences they face as a result of being beaten back are potentially greater, including suffering critical damage to their mech.

Following an in-mission mech duel, the PC will roll **dueling damage check**. To make this check, roll dice based on the final outcome of the duel, choose the lowest result, and check the **dueling damage table** to determine the result.

- If you won the duel without taking any hits, **do not roll**. You emerge victorious and unscathed.
- If you won the duel and took 1 or more hits, **roll 1d6**.
- If you lost the duel and the opposing duelist only has 1 hit remaining, **roll 2d6**.
- If you lost the duel and the opposing duelist has 2 or more hits remaining, **roll 3d6**.
- If you lost the duel and the opposing duelist didn't take any hits at all, **roll 4d6**.

DUELING DAMAGE TABLE

Roll	Result	Effect
5-6	Dueling Scars	The damage your mech has sustained is minor enough that automatic repair systems are able to compensate for it. No effect.

2-4	Internal Damage	If you won the duel, lose 1 Repair . If you lost the duel, lose 2 Repairs . If you have no repairs remaining, this result becomes Dismemberment instead.
1	Dismemberment	During the fight, part of your mech was critically damaged. If you won the duel, select any two systems and/or mounts. The GM chooses one of those, and the chosen system or all weapons on the chosen mount are destroyed. If you lost the duel, the GM selects any two systems and/or mounts, and you choose which is destroyed. Limited systems and weapons that are out of charges are not valid choices. If there are no valid weapons or system remaining, this result becomes Stricken instead.
Multiple 1's	Laid Low	<p>This result has different outcomes depending on how badly you lost the duel:</p> <p>Opponent had 1 hit remaining: You begin the next scene Impaired and Slowed. These conditions both persist until cleared in combat or during a rest or Full Repair.</p> <p>Opponent had 2+ hits remaining: You begin the next scene Impaired and Shredded. These conditions both persist until cleared in combat or during a rest or Full Repair.</p> <p>Opponent took 0 hits: Take 1 structure damage, making a structure check as necessary.</p>

CATALOGUE

Talents

The following talents can be chosen by players when taking new talent ranks.

Blade Dancer

Battle is an art. It has always been, but many have forgotten this truth as warfare evolved, bringing with it guns, artillery, orbital bombardment, so many more impersonal and inelegant ways to kill, a trillion canvases squandered in the mud. But a mech is more than just another weapon, it's an instrument of a pilot's will and an assertion of their skill made manifest. In the arena or on the battlefield you proudly display that skill for all to witness accompanied by the war drum beat of steel against steel, each victory claimed with style and grace, every killing blow an expressive statement.

Battle Tempo (Rank I): Reaction attacks against you are made at **+1 Difficulty**, and you gain **+1 Accuracy** on all checks and saves made against hostile reactions.

Step Inside (Rank II): Whenever you trigger a hostile **reaction**, you may gain **+1 Accuracy** to the next **Auxiliary** or **Main** melee attack roll you make on that turn. This effect does not stack.

Dervish Cadence (Rank III): 1/round, when you perform a critical hit with an **Auxiliary** or **Main** melee weapon, you may move up to **2 spaces** as a **free action**. This movement ignores engagement and reactions, but you can choose to not ignore reactions instead. If you do so, whenever you would trigger a **reaction attack** (such as **Overwatch**), that character is forced to make that attack against you if able. Each time a **reaction attack** you trigger as part of this movement misses, you may make an attack with an **Auxiliary** or **Main** melee weapon against a target in range as a **free action**, and you may continue to move **2 additional spaces**.

Bruiser

Look, it's simple; you have a mech, your mech has a hammer, and the whole world is made of nails. Now all you need to do is hit someone as hard as you can. If they're still moving afterwards? You hit'em again. And maybe a third time for good measure. All the fancy footwork in the world won't help you when both your legs are broken.

Reckless Swing (Rank I): 1/round, you may gain **+1 Accuracy** on an attack with a melee weapon of your choice on your turn. Until the start of your next turn, the next attack made against you gains **+1 Accuracy**.

Payback (Rank II): When you take **structure damage**, your next melee attack deals **+1d6 bonus damage** on hit.

Take Your Best Shot (Rank III): 1/scene as a **free action**, you may choose a hostile

character within line of sight to immediately make an attack against you. That character must be able to attack you, or they cannot be chosen. Afterwards, whether this attack hits or misses, you may make an attack against them with a **non-Superheavy** melee weapon. You may then allow that character to make another attack against you if they wish, repeating this process until one of you has been destroyed or until they decline to attack you any further.

Giant Killer

David meets Goliath, David kills Goliath, it's a tale as old as time. Things are a bit more dangerous these days than swords and slings, though. A pilot would have to be crazy or desperate to go up against a mech in little more than a hardsuit, but you make it look easy, riding those steel titans like a natural and taking them apart with surgical precision. The bigger they are...well, you know the rest.

Goad (Rank I): While jockeying a mech, you count as having soft cover. Whenever you use the **Distract** action while jockeying, you may also push the target **2 spaces** in a direction of your choice.

Twist the Knife (Rank II): Gain the following **Jockey** option:

Disrupt: The mech cannot use **reactions** until the end of its next turn.

Additionally, you may choose one of the mech's systems and disable it until the end of its next turn as well. All ongoing effects provided by that system immediately end until it is no longer disabled.

Finishing Blow (Rank III): Whenever you use the **Damage** action while jockeying, if the damage you inflict would be enough to reduce the mech to **3 HP or less**, you may immediately reduce it to **0 HP** instead. 1/round, when you destroy a mech while jockeying, you may fly up to **3 spaces** in a direction of your choice. If you end this movement adjacent to a mech, you can automatically jockey it.

Gladiator

The roar of the crowd, the clash of titans. Humanity's taste for bloodsport never left us, it simply evolved. Now the celebrated fighters pilot mechanized war machines and the beasts they face are alien, but the rule of the arena remains unchanged; kill or be killed. Hammer and fist, rifle and chainsword, the tools don't matter as much as the drive behind them, to rise above all comers and become the greatest that there ever was.

Signature Technique (Rank I): 1/scene, when you take the **Skirmish** action on your turn you can perform a special **Signature Attack** with a melee weapon instead. Choose one option from each of the three categories, **Setup**, **Execution**, and **Flourish**, to assemble the technique you wish to use. You may choose different options each time you use this ability to represent different signature moves you've learned over the years.

Setup:

-Make an attack with **+2 Threat**...

-Make an attack, treating your weapon's range as **Burst 1** and taking **1 heat** per target...

Execution:

-...dealing an additional **+1d6 bonus damage** on hit against **Prone** or **Immobilized** targets...

-...gaining **AP** and **Overkill** against a single target of your choice...

Flourish:

-...and on hit each target must pass a **Hull** save or become **Impaired** until the end of their next turn.

-...and on hit each target must pass an **Agility** save or become **Slowed** until the end of their next turn.

Comeback Kid (Rank II): Add the following options to choose from:

Setup:

-Move up to your speed towards a hostile character, ignoring engagement and reactions, and make an attack against them...

Execution:

-...knocking all targets back **2 spaces**...

Flourish:

-...and all attacks against you are made at **+1 Difficulty** until the end of your next turn.

You also gain the **Down But Not Out** reaction:

Down But Not Out

Reaction

Trigger: You take **structure damage** from a hostile character's attack, and you have not expended your Signature Attack.

Effect: You may immediately use your **Signature Attack**. This reaction resolves before rolling on the **structure damage table**.

A Card To Play (Rank III): You may use your **Signature Attack** a second time during the same scene by taking **1d6+1 heat**. Options chosen for the first such attack during a scene cannot be chosen for the second attack. Add the following options to choose from:

Setup:

-Make an attack, treating your weapon's range as **Thrown 5**...

Execution:

-...treating one roll of **18+** as though it was **20**...

Flourish:

-...and a single target of your choice must pass an **Engineering** save **on critical hit** or become **Jammed** until the end of their next turn.

Guerrilla

War isn't fair, so why shouldn't you fight the same way? Leave notions of honorable combat to the would-be knights and champions, you're here to get work done. In the shadows, in the split-second flash of lightning before the thunder comes, hit and run, strike and fade. They may hate you, but they'll learn to fear you all the same.

Fighting Ghosts (Rank I): You may **Boost** without losing **Hidden**, and whenever you **Disengage** attacks against you are made at **+1 Difficulty** until the end of your next turn.

Go to Ground (Rank II): If you end your turn in cover which you did not begin your turn in, all ranged attacks against you receive **+1 Difficulty** until the end of your next turn.

Run and Gun (Rank III): At the beginning of each scene, before anyone acts you may move up to your speed. If you end this movement in cover, you automatically become **Hidden**, and until the end of your next turn the first attack roll you make while **Hidden** gains **+1 Accuracy**.

Scrounger

Some call you a vulture, like that's supposed to be a bad thing. You ever see a vulture go hungry? The fact is, you know what wins wars isn't guns or blades, it isn't skill at arms or courage or honor. It's food, fuel, bullets, and bandages. When the chips are down, you're the one that can be counted on to have a spare magazine and a bottle of the good stuff waiting back at the base. You've got what it takes to win...just as long as nobody asks where you got it from.

Beg, Borrow, and Steal (Rank I): 1/mission when establishing **Reserves**, randomly select one of the random **Reserves** tables (**Resources**, **Mech Equipment and Gear**, and **Tactical Advantages**) by rolling **1d3**. You may then roll on the selected table, gaining that result for the duration of the mission. You also gain **+1 Accuracy** to all **Scrounge and Barter** checks (or other similar triggers).

Finders Keepers (Rank II): 1/rest, you may salvage a weapon of your choice from a hostile mech that was destroyed in the previous scene. If you do so, you may only spend **1 Repair** during this rest. Once a weapon has been salvaged, during your turn you may attack with it as a **free action** using your **Grit** in place of its usual attack bonuses, taking **1 heat** for an **Auxiliary** weapon, **1d3 heat** for a **Main** weapon, and **1d6 heat** for a **Heavy** or **Superheavy** weapon. The weapon is then destroyed and cannot be repaired. Your mech may only have one salvaged weapon at a time, and all salvaged weapons are lost during **Full Repairs**.

Spoils of War (Rank III): When you salvage a weapon, you may also scour the battlefield wreckage for additional supplies. Roll **1d6** and consult the table to determine what you're able to do with the salvage you find:

- 1). You find something without immediate tactical application which is nonetheless

likely valuable to someone, such as an encrypted message detailing the enemy force's strategic plans, a black box containing security clearance codes, maps detailing troop movements and defensive emplacement positions, top secret documents, etc. The next time you use **Beg, Borrow, and Steal**, you may roll again on the selected table and choose either result. This effect can stack.

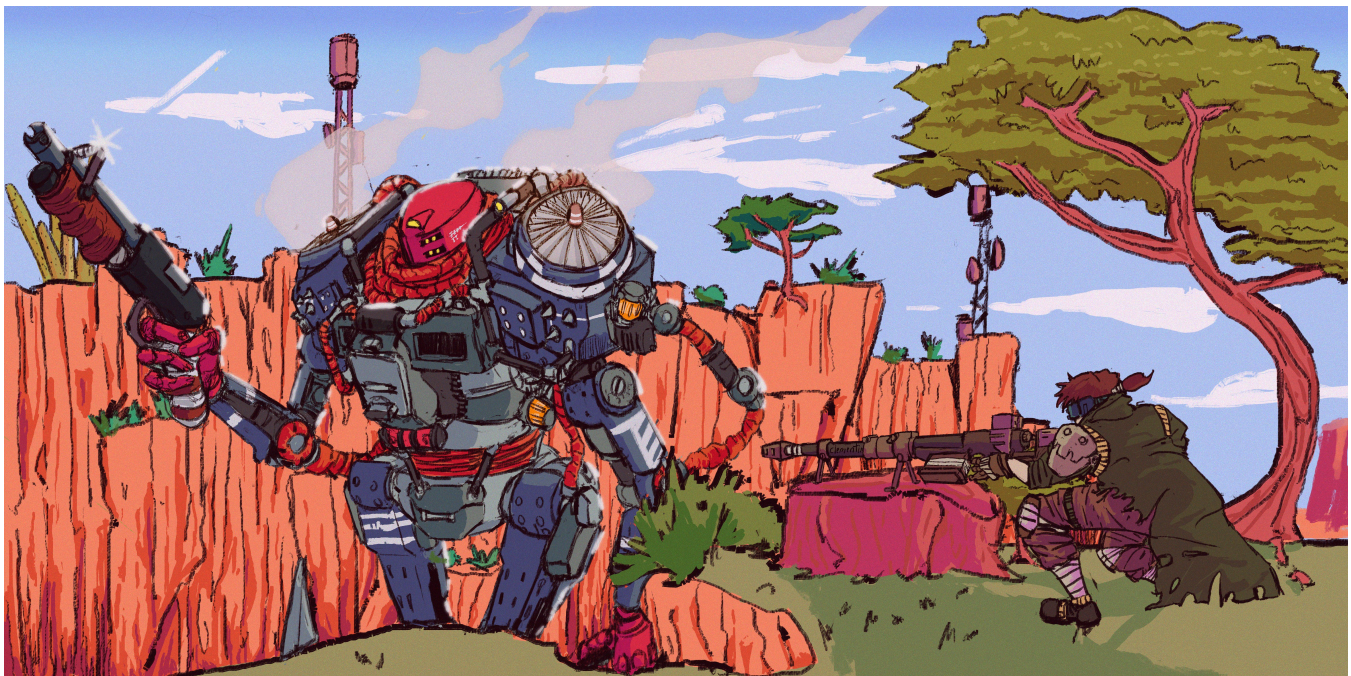
2). You find sufficient patch kits and emergency supplies to restore **HP** equal to **Grit +4** divided between any number of allied mechs or pilots, yourself included.

3). You find spare munitions sufficient to replenish **1 use** of a **Limited** weapon or system belonging to yourself or an allied character.

4). You find an intact IFF/tacnet transponder. Up to two hostile characters of your choice in the next scene begin combat with **Lock On**.

5). You find enough spare parts to repair one destroyed weapon or system belonging to you or an allied character for free.

6). You find a magazine of exotic ammunition, a high-energy power cell, or a canister of volatile fuel. You or an allied character of your choice gains a single-use charge that can be spent as a **free action** to add **+1d6 bonus damage** on hit to any attack, but the attacker takes **1d6 heat**. A mech can only hold one such charge at a time.



[sidebar]

OFFER NOT AVAILABLE IN ALL AREAS

Reserves are an opportunity for players to use downtime actions to gain meaningful advantages they can utilize during upcoming missions, but not every battlefield provides the same variety of options to draw upon. Suldan is a world whose present situation makes orbital fire support, for example, difficult to procure. Other worlds and other theaters may have their own shortages and operational restrictions as decided by the GM. However, informing a player that their talent will be inoperative for an indeterminate

amount of time or that the result they rolled is invalid and therefore they receive nothing is an unsatisfying approach to squaring the quirks and challenges of battlefield logistics with a talent like Scrounger and the players who invest in it, and should be avoided.

There are several options GMs can take when approaching this. The first, and easiest, is simply reskinning. If orbital support assets are nonexistent, then perhaps **Bombardment** could simply take the form of a conventional airstrike or artillery barrage, while an **Orbital Drop** takes the form of a HALO parachute jump from a transport plane. Another option is to simply allow players to reroll any results which would be invalid for this particular mission. A more involved option is to replace options which aren't feasible with custom options tailored to the theater in question. And lastly, one option which is always available if the players want a **Reserve** which is otherwise unavailable is to let them have it...and then inform them of the favor they now owe to someone for pulling the strings to make the impossible happen.

[/sidebar]

Chandrasekhar & Herschel Ltd.

“SPECIAL PROBLEMS DEMAND SPECIAL SOLUTIONS”

Chandrasekhar & Herschel is one of the youngest Galactic-Tier corporations to offer specialty mech licenses to qualified pilots. The company was founded by Jun Chandrasekhar, a gladiator pilot and revolutionary leader, along with former racing pilot Mattias Herschel. The initial license of incorporation was granted to Chandrasekhar as a boon for her performance in the arena by self-appointed Emir Julian Ambrose Khan during his tyrannical rule over the world of Suldan. Chandrasekhar made use of the printer permissions granted to her as part of incorporation to manufacture mechs and weaponry, covertly equipping the beleaguered rebellion effort against the Emir. Mattias Herschel, a member of Suldan's upper class who had been a prestigious chassis racer before his retirement, was sympathetic towards the rebels and lent both his engineering expertise and his air of legitimacy to Chandrasekhar's fledgling endeavor.

In the aftermath of the Emir's most recent death, both Chandrasekhar and Herschel discovered that their joint venture had attracted a growing and dedicated base of pilots actively seeking out their licenses for use elsewhere. With infusions of capital and designs from investors who prefer to remain anonymous, C&H Ltd. continued to expand their offerings, and while they have a ways to go before they rise to the ranks of corporations such as IPS-N Northstar or Smith-Shimano, forward-looking projections remain optimistic as advertising and positive word of mouth continues to spread.

C&H focuses on what they refer to as “unorthodox combat solutions,” providing specialized designs that larger corporations have eschewed or are slow in pivoting towards. Their frames and licenses are frequently adapted from gladiatorial and sporting designs, and many of their weapons and systems were originally improvised and adapted, or as some contest pirated, from other sources. As a result of this, their mechs are as diverse as their origins, without the common thread that ties other corporations' licenses together.

C&H CHARIOTEER (Support) - A high-speed daredevil with close-range targeting systems and unmatched mobility

C&H KALISTA (Striker/Defender) - A tenacious, unstoppable juggernaut that uses raw brute force to savage enemies with powerful blows

C&H GAJASURA (Striker/Defender) - A ferocious gladiatorial mech with a storied history that shrugs off attacks with ease, an ancestor of the Kalista

C&H KALLARANI (Striker) - A versatile close-quarters mech packing multi-function weapons and equipment

C&H MATADOR (Defender) - An anti-electronic deterrence platform seeded with destructive malware

C&H PESILAT (Striker/Controller) - An esoteric close-combat hacker utilizing mech-scale martial arts

C&H RETIARIUS (Controller) - A sturdy mech focused on suppressing and restraining

enemies with entangling weaponry

C&H SABREUR (Striker) - A precision melee duelist optimized for combat against individual targets

C&H SAGITTARIUS (Striker/Artillery) - A stealthy and elusive midrange sharpshooter that wields a deadly combat bow to assassinate targets from hidden positions

C&H Pilot Gear

When selecting weapons, personal armor, and equipment, pilots may additionally choose from the following options as well as those provided in the core rules.

Pilot Weapons

Name	Tags	Range	Damage
<i>Breach Cutter</i>	Sidearm	3	1 energy
<i>Vishpala Augmetic</i>	Sidearm	Threat 1	1 kinetic
<i>Emir's Bargain</i>	-	Threat 1	2 kinetic
<i>SEAR</i>	-	5	2 kinetic

These pilot weapons have additional features or capabilities that regular pilot weapons lack. Because of this, each of these weapons also counts as one of your three miscellaneous gear choices in addition to one of your weapon choices. For example, a pilot that decides to take a Breach Cutter will only be able to select two miscellaneous systems when rounding out their kit, so choose your loadout accordingly.

Breach Cutter

Modified man-portable laser cutting tools are often employed by pirates, gladiators, and the desperate as a highly effective, if crude and cumbersome, weapon. Inspired by this, C&H offers a refined weaponized adaptation designed from the ground up as a combat-effective system boasting a high-capacity power pack and streamlined design. Though the beam remains effective at range, it excels in close-quarters high-risk hull breaching operations. Users are advised to wear suitable eye protection when employing this weapon.

While equipped with this weapon, when you use the **Damage** action while jockeying you may deal **4 AP energy damage** instead.

Vishpala Augmetic

Between industrial accidents and arena injuries, cybernetic limb replacement is a familiar procedure throughout Suldan, with local styles proudly embracing obvious, undisguised models as a form of self-expression. Chandrasekhar & Herschel's Vishpala line of better-than-human performance prosthetics are no mere second-rate substitutes but rather bespoke augmetics personally tailored to each user's needs and designed for form as well as function, complete with total force/sensory feedback and integrated skeletomuscular reinforcement for optimum comfort and performance even during strenuous use, and demand has only increased alongside the rise in loyalist insurgent attacks.

This full-function cybernetic arm replacement (single or paired) counts as a light alloy/composite pilot weapon and gives **+1 Accuracy** to all **Apply Fists to Faces** checks (or other similar triggers). This effect does not stack

Emir's Bargain

To "take the Emir's bargain" is a Suldani saying as literal as it is metaphorical, derived from a practice instituted during the 37th year of the Emir's reign wherein he would offer condemned prisoners the opportunity to participate in gladiatorial combat with the possibility of earning their freedom should they survive. Of course these bouts were weighed heavily against the condemned and few who took the offer earned more than a brutal death. Those who agreed to partake in the contest would often be equipped with this weapon, a reinforced polearm whose weighted, power-assisted head is capable of inflicting substantial damage if given time to build momentum.

If you attack with this weapon without moving or taking any other actions on your turn you may increase its damage to **4 kinetic damage** for that attack, and on hit **Size 1 or smaller** characters must pass a **Hull** save or be knocked **Prone**.

SEAR

The signature armament of the Emir's elite Janissaries, the Suldani Emirate Advanced Rifle is a sophisticated multi-mode select-fire weapon featuring integrated comp/con ballistic targeting assistance along with a attached secondary launcher designed to fire proprietary plasma warhead "Executioner" micromissiles. Janissary SEARs were biometrically encoded to their individual users, triggering an explosive failsafe upon detecting an unauthorized user or indications of tampering, but after the Emir was deposed C&H managed to obtain several "blank" rifles and successfully reverse-engineer the design for mass production and licensing.

This advanced combat rifle has an integrated underbarrel launcher that can be fired with the following profile: **Ordnance, Limited 2, Range 10, Blast 1, 2 burn**.

Clothing and Armor

Name	Bonuses	Armor	Evasion/E-Defense	Speed
"Champion" Pilot's Jacket	All-climate jacket	0	10/10	4
Crash Suit	Fireproofing	0	10/10	4
HARDJACK Survival Hardsuit	+3 HP, Long-term survival	0	8/8	4
Tarantula Climb-Assist Hardsuit	Climb on walls and ceilings	0	10/10	5

"Champion" Pilot's Jacket

A rugged and stylish accessory for any pilot, Chandrasekhar & Herschel's "Champion" line of leather jackets is perfectly suited for any climate courtesy of an interior layer of thermoregulation material and a waterproof coating, creating a jacket guaranteed to wear and age beautifully no matter where your travels take you. While printer-fabricated copies are always available to qualified C&H license holders, handcrafted jackets made from

100% genuine Suldani goatskin leather are available at select retailers.

This jacket provides no significant protection, but is available in a variety of styles and colors and can be worn comfortably even in hot weather.

Crash Suit

A mainstay of chassis racers everywhere, only the most daring or foolhardy jockey would race without suitable protection in the event of a crash. This lightweight, flexible hardsuit not only safeguards against collision trauma, but layers of flame-retardant polymer triweave help insulate the wearer in the event of a cockpit fire. This C&H licensed model is also fully rated for combat theater operations.

This fireproofed and chemically treated hardsuit grants **Immunity** to burn and **Resistance** to energy damage.

HARDJACK Survival Hardsuit

Billions of HARDJACK model PPE hardsuits have been printed across numerous worlds since the design's inception for use by workers performing dangerous jobs in hazardous environments. This particular variant, a C&H exclusive design, is further enhanced with their proprietary thermoregulation mesh, anti-abrasion glazing, an onboard medkit, and extended life support systems for emergency survival situations when immediate aid may not be forthcoming.

This survival hardsuit is designed for use in hazardous environments and wearers can operate for extended periods in such conditions without discomfort. While wearing this armor, you gain **Immunity** to all damage, heat, and burn from hostile environmental sources including **dangerous terrain**, and you automatically pass all checks and saves imposed by hostile environmental sources. You may also reroll all **Survive** checks (or other similar triggers), taking the better result.

Tarantula Climb-Assist Hardsuit

The ultimate in safe and reliable personal powered climbing equipment, the Tarantula's array of articulated all-surface pitons and integrated comp/con expert system allows for effortless mobility across even the most challenging surfaces, while also providing peerless hands-free stability which virtually eliminates the need for a human climbing partner.

This specialized mobility hardsuit allows you to move freely along vertical and overhanging surfaces as if they were normal terrain, but you cannot **Boost** while doing so. You can freely use weapons while climbing and cannot be knocked **Prone** while on a vertical or overhanging surface. You also gain **+1 Accuracy** to all contested rolls made to jockey a mech or avoid being thrown off of a mech you are jockeying.

Miscellaneous Gear

Devil! Black

Gear, Limited 1

Formerly only available to members of Suldan's armed forces as well as certain sponsored gladiators, C&H now has a license to distribute this black cherry flavored energy drink containing more than twice the caffeine of the next leading brand along with specially formulated performance-enhancing combat stims. Consuming a can of Devil! Black allows you to reroll all pilot skill checks involving physical exertion or violence, such as **Applying Fists to Faces, Assault,** or **Get Somewhere Quickly** for the rest of the scene, though you must always take the second result. Afterwards, for the rest of the mission the GM may invoke the subsequent harsh comedown to apply **+1 Difficulty** to any skill checks which might be negatively impacted by aftereffects such as fatigue, jitteriness, irritability, and so on. Drinking more than one can between **Full Repairs** causes intense nausea, headaches, heart palpitations, and vomiting, without any further beneficial effects. Chandrasekhar & Herschel reminds all license holders to please consume responsibly.

Emergency Field Kit

Gear, Limited 3

Sometimes referred to as a SERE kit, this lightweight pilot's kit is designed to be easily portable even in plainclothes, with a slim profile and non-metallic construction for ease of concealment. A variety of makes and models exist with assorted specialized tools to help pilots trapped behind enemy lines, stranded in the wilderness, or on covert assignment. Each time you print one of these kits, choose three different skill triggers. You may spend one of this kit's charges and cross off one of the listed triggers to add **+1 Accuracy** to your next check using that particular trigger.

Portable Cabin

Gear

This collapsible emergency shelter compacts enough to be portable by a single person. When activated, an electric charge runs through the advanced smart material construction which turns rigid and unfolds to full size within moments. The material is thermally insulated but not airtight, provides interior glow-panel illumination, has a built-in water filtration system and ration heater, and can house up to six people if somewhat snugly.

Triage Stim

Gear, Limited 1

Often integrated into personal armor or hardsuits, a triage stim unit monitors the user's vital signs and activates upon detecting critical physical trauma. Automatic injectors administer a potent cocktail of painkillers, stimulants, quick-clotting agents, and pharmastabilizers, which can be further supplemented with broad-spectrum antitoxins, tailored chemical agent antidotes, or anti-radiation dosages based on theater-specific threat assessments. While this is no substitute for proper medical attention, the window of opportunity it provides in the field is sufficient to stabilize patients long enough for further aid to be administered. Whenever you are reduced to **0 HP or less**, you may expend a charge to automatically become **Down and Out** instead of rolling.

C&H CORE BONUSES

C&H bonuses are focused on modifications designed to enhance a mech's performance in hostile environments or when weathering catastrophic circumstances.

You must have at least three license levels in C&H licenses to take a bonus from this list, and another three levels for each additional bonus. For example, with six ranks in C&H licenses you can have up to two bonuses.

All-Environment Adaptation

A chassis retrofit utilizing C&H's thermoregulation polymer mesh along with overlapping layers of radiation shielding, electronic systems hardening, and non-conductive ceramic matrix alloys, providing outfitted mechs with robust hostile environmental protection across multiple biomes.

You gain **+1 Accuracy** on all checks and saves with one mech skill of your choice (**Hull, Agility, Systems, or Engineering**), and you may choose a different skill whenever you perform a **Full Repair**. You gain **Immunity** to all damage, heat, and burn from hostile environmental sources including **dangerous terrain**, and you automatically pass all checks and saves imposed by hostile environmental sources.

Autoextinguishers

In the event of high-speed crashes and other similar catastrophic impact events, the window for effective pilot recovery shortens drastically in the event of a cockpit fire. C&H's racing derived all-chassis template utilizes a dedicated chemical minifac to automatically produce a variety of fast-acting, stably inert flame suppressants and other neutralizing agents as circumstances dictate.

You gain **Resistance** to burn, and you and all adjacent allied characters automatically pass all checks to clear burn.

Blowout Panels

Through a comprehensive full-frame upgrade consisting of strategically engineered pre-weakened casings printed around potentially volatile systems such as internal munitions storage or power relays, catastrophic damage can be mitigated by channeling secondary detonations and pressure waves away from vital structural components in a controlled, predetermined fashion.

Whenever an attack causes you to take **structure damage**, you gain **Resistance** against all excess damage beyond what was required to reach **0 HP**. Additionally, whenever you roll the **System Trauma** result on the **structure damage table**, you always choose the weapons or systems to destroy without rolling.

Crash Bars

Enhanced physical protection can be achieved through an integrated series of frame-mounted struts, crash bars, reinforced actuators, and cockpit roll cages. While such measures are typically employed by racers or arena fighters to reduce the likelihood of

collision trauma, they also benefit combat pilots operating in high-threat conditions or during air-drop/orbital insertion maneuvers.

You may roll all **structure damage checks** twice and choose either result. Additionally, you gain **Immunity** to all damage from falling.

Emergency Reactor Override

Most military-grade coldcore reactors impose automatic safety cutoffs during forced venting procedures in order to avoid cascading stresses, but a series of custom reactor modifications allow operators to skillfully (if perhaps incautiously) override these cutoffs, permitting brief moments of hyperspec action by rerouting power feeds directly into a frame's primary systems along with a series of integrated emergency-use jump jets.

Whenever you make an overheating check, you use the following special **Overheating Table** instead of the normal one.

OVERHEATING TABLE

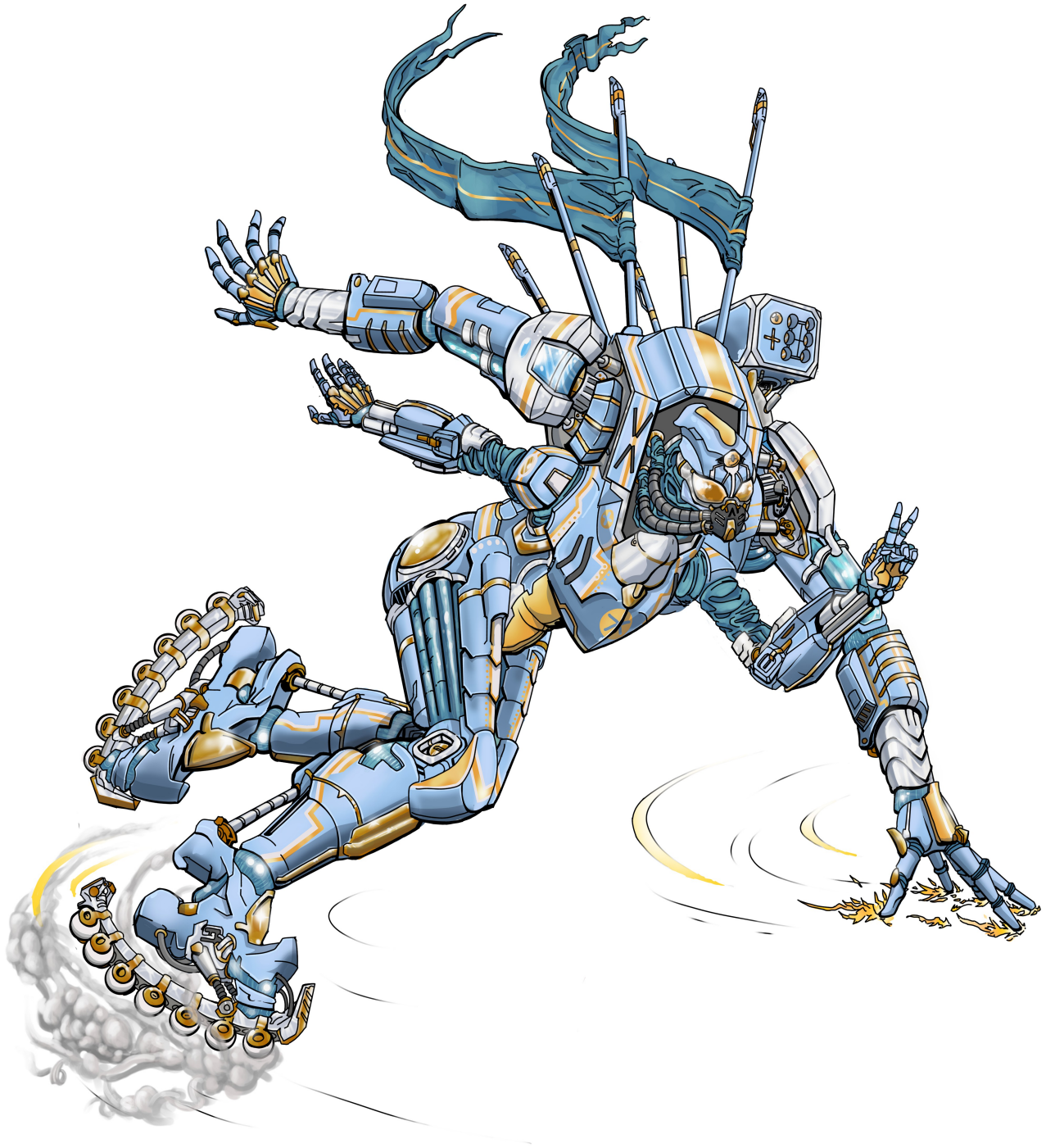
Roll	Result	Effect
5-6	Power Rerouting	Your next ranged or melee attack deals +1d6 bonus damage on hit.
2-4	Emergency Jump Jets	Your mech becomes Exposed , and you may immediately fly your speed, ignoring Slow and Immobilize from hostile sources. This movement ignores engagement and doesn't provoke reactions, but you must end this movement on the ground or another solid surface, or else immediately begin falling.
1	Controlled Meltdown	<p>The result depends on your mech's remaining Stress:</p> <p>3+ Stress: Your mech becomes Exposed, and you may immediately fly as per Emergency Jump Jets.</p> <p>2 Stress: Roll an Engineering check. On a success, your mech becomes Exposed and you may immediately fly as per Emergency Jump Jets; on a failure, clear all conditions which were not caused by your own systems or abilities, and then your mech suffers a reactor meltdown after 1d6 of your turns (rolled by the GM). A reactor meltdown can be prevented by retrying the Engineering check as a quick action.</p>

		1 Stress: Your mech suffers a reactor meltdown at the end of your next turn. Clear all conditions which were not caused by your own systems or abilities, you may immediately fly as per Emergency Jump Jets , and your next ranged or melee attack deals +1d6 bonus damage on hit.
Multiple 1's	Hyperspec Meltdown	Your mech suffers a reactor meltdown at the end of your next turn. Clear all conditions which were not caused by your own systems or abilities, you may immediately fly as per Emergency Jump Jets , and your next ranged or melee attack deals +1d6 bonus damage on hit.

Hypertuned Interface

An extremely risky modification often proscribed by formal military regulations but frequently employed by mercenaries, gladiators, and those desperate enough to need it, overclocking a mech's neural interface systems can give pilots a valuable edge when they need it most, albeit at a dangerous cost. Overuse of such modifications can result in ruptured blood vessels, partial or total limb paralysis, neurological damage, and even death.

Whenever you become **Stunned** due to hostile effects or **structure damage**, you may still make a standard move and a quick action of your choice during your turn. Additionally, 1/scene, whenever you **Overcharge** to make an attack as an additional quick action, you may add **+2 Accuracy** to any attack roll that action requires and its damage cannot be reduced in any way.



C&H "Charioteer"

鉄神戦車

Mach-speed Reconnaissance

Glide Rollers, Variable Geometry Hull , Courser-Class C/C

C&H CHARIOTEER

Support

The Charioteer is perhaps one of Chandrasekhar & Herschel's most immediately recognizable chassis despite its diminutive size, and it features prominently in much of the company's marketing material. This fast and lightweight model has its origins in the popular sport of performance chassis racing, where speed, handling, and agility are typically valued more highly than firepower. As a result the chassis itself is minimally armed and armored, boasting a streamlined frame constructed from advanced materials along with a powerful, compact reactor and drive systems capable of outputting extreme overland kp/h speeds for extended durations, though maintenance times between sorties are commensurately high as well.

Nonetheless the Charioteer is guaranteed by C&H to perform to mil-spec standard, intended to fill the role of a high-speed reconnaissance and forward observation unit, and its ability to cover long distances rapidly has also seen it employed for other tasks such as search-and-rescue operations and courier duties. Due to the frame's compact design, larger pilots may find this chassis less comfortable to operate for extended deployments.

License:

- I. Remote Targeting Relay, Bomblet Dispenser
- II. **CHARIOTEER FRAME**, Glide Rollers, Deployable Reconnaissance Carbine
- III. Variable Geometry Hull, COURSER-Class C/C

CHARIOTEER					
HP: 6	Evasion: 12		Speed: 6	Heat Cap: 5	Sensors: 15
Armor: 0	E-Defense: 8		Size: 1/2	Repair Cap: 2	Tech Attack: +1 Save Target: 10
TRAITS:					
<p>Secondary Motive Systems: The Charioteer can Boost while Slowed.</p> <p>Supermaneuverability: Becoming Engaged does not cause the Charioteer to stop moving, and you do not treat hostile characters as obstructions.</p> <p>Forward Observation Suite: 1/round, the Charioteer may Scan and Lock On to a character within range 3 as a free action.</p> <p>Hangar Queen: The Charioteer must spend 2 Repairs to repair destroyed systems during rests instead of 1.</p>					
SYSTEM POINTS: 8					
MOUNTS:					
Flex Mount					
CORE system					

HYPERION Reactor

Military-grade coldcore fusion reactors are precisely tuned and balanced for optimal output during the rigors of combat, but racing frames have different performance requirements. C&H's proprietary EF-320 HYPERION reactor was designed by Mattias Herschel, five-time winner of the Kaleka Cup, to provide enhanced power flow capable of maintaining extreme speeds for prolonged periods. Superior motive output is kept manageable thanks to high-performance stabilization gyros and a sophisticated ride-by-wire control system, and as a result the Charioteer is capable of acceleration so sudden that conventional fire-control systems have difficulty anticipating its movements.

The HYPERION can even be pushed further for brief periods. Disengaging a reactor's fusion regulators is highly inadvisable for anyone who is not a certified nuclear reactor technician, and C&H Ltd. waives all responsibility for pilots who opt to do so anyway. Nonetheless the fact that the Charioteer can withstand such power output at all is a testament to its design.

Passive: Whenever you move **12 or more spaces** during a single turn, all attacks against you are made at **+1 Difficulty** until the start of your next turn. This effect does not stack.

Active (requires 1 Core Power): Redline

Protocol

You gain the **Mach Acceleration** reaction for the rest of the scene.

Mach Acceleration

Reaction, 1/round

Trigger: You are targeted by an attack.

Effect: You may immediately **Boost**, interrupting that attack before it can be rolled.

This movement ignores engagement and doesn't provoke reactions. If you are unable to be attacked at your new position, such as no longer being in range, area of effect, or line of sight, the attack automatically misses you.

Remote Targeting Relay

Initially adapted from telemetric surveying beacons and refined for military use as part of the Charioteer initiative, C&H's remote targeting relay system is a hardpoint-mounted, squad-integrated multiplatform targeting solution for facilitating accurate fire in artillery bombardment, surgical HVT elimination, and precision fire support operations. Upon deployment, each beacon automatically anchors itself in place via explosively driven piton, and once activated they begin providing real-time telemetry to all allied units equipped with the proper targeting coordination firmware and system-compatible munitions, permissions for which are included as part of the license package at no extra cost.

Main CQB

Inaccurate, Loading

Range 5

1d3+4 kinetic damage

On hit: This weapon embeds a beacon into the target which activates at the end of your turn, creating a **Burst 2** area. Ranged attacks against hostile characters within this area (including the embedded target) gain **Arcing**, and any hostile character that begins its turn in this area gains **Lock On**. A struck character can successfully pass a **Hull** save as a quick action to remove the beacon and end this effect.

You may also target a free open space within range, hitting automatically. Treat beacons fired this way as **Size 1/2** objects with **5 HP** and **5 Evasion**.

Bomblet Dispenser

On the combat racing circuits, the most effective armaments are those that don't require you to stop moving. Often mounted to a frame's legs or built into a portion of the rear hull, so-called "party popper" dispensers scatter the ground behind a moving mech with dozens of dual-trigger explosive bomblets, detonated either by pressure or when proximity sensors send them bounding into the air to detonate a moment later, inflicting mobility kills on pursuers by targeting motive systems and leg joints. Some pilots, less interested in racing, have discovered that this can be used just as effectively as an area denial and anti-pursuit system.

2 SP, Unique

1/round, you may use this system as part of a **Boost** to create an area up to **5 adjacent spaces** you moved through during that action (unused spaces are lost). Any hostile character that starts their turn in the area or enters it for the first time in a round must pass an **Agility** save or take **2 explosive damage** and become **Slowed** until the end of their next turn. Characters who enter the area during their turn and fail this save also stop moving immediately and lose any unused movement as if they had become **Engaged**. This area lasts until the end of the scene or until you use this system to create a new area, and then deactivates.

Glide Rollers

Without this particular upgrade, non-flight chassis racing as a sport might very well not exist. A secondary movement system consisting of a series of high performance omnidirectional smart-wheels is incorporated into a chassis' feet, lower leg assemblies, and even brachial structures, coupled with ground-scanning terrain sensors and a robust upgrade to the core computer's automatic balance control systems. Skilled pilots are able to utilize this to achieve incredible ground speeds, but what works on the racetrack may not be rated for use on less even terrain.

2 SP, Unique

1/round, when you **Boost** you can take Heat equal to your mech's **Size+1** to move up to twice your speed. During this movement you can't **fly** or **teleport**, and you treat **difficult terrain** as **dangerous terrain** that deals kinetic damage instead.

Deployable Reconnaissance Carbine

Cheaply printed disposable weapon systems have long been a quick and efficient way to equip colonial militias until more robust supply lines can be established, or for thrifty arena managers to outfit their dregs so that they can at least provide some small measure of challenge before they're unceremoniously dispatched. In need of offensive designs to flesh out their Charioteer license, C&H has opted to rebrand this concept, billing it as a lightweight and space-efficient carbine for recon units. Engineered from higher quality materials than its shoddier counterparts, the weapon's collapsible-body design makes it easy for even lightweight chassis to store, while the self-contained integrated caseless ammunition feed minimizes recoil.

2 SP

This system functions as a weapon with the following profile which can be used to attack with, including **Skirmish** and **Barrage**. It does not require a mount, and it cannot be modified or benefit from core bonuses.

Main CQB

Unique

Range 8

1d6+1 kinetic damage

Variable Geometry Hull

A substantial engineering endeavor, this upgrade completely overhauls a frame's external structure through the addition of a complex array of airbrakes, control surfaces, piezoelectric actuators, and servo-articulated armor, all tied into a sophisticated expert system which allows for a pilot to adjust the geometry of their frame's hull on the fly, switching between configurations optimized for speed or for maneuverability/stability as changing battlefield circumstances dictate. While a certain increase in hangar maintenance downtime is unavoidable due to the complex nature of this upgrade, speed enthusiasts and reconnaissance operators alike swear by it.

3 SP, Protocol, Unique

You streamline your chassis, choosing from one of the following effects that last until the end of the scene, or until you use this system again:

- You may move an additional **2 spaces** when you **Boost**, but you make all **Hull** and **Agility** checks and saves with **+1 Difficulty**.
- You gain **+2 Accuracy** on all **Hull** and **Agility** checks and saves, but become **Slowed**.
- Return your chassis to normal, losing all benefits and drawbacks of this system.

COURSER-Class C/C

Following the initial rollout of the Charioteer, plans were made to expand the frame's role beyond reconnaissance to create a mobile command-and-control platform, but the initial proposal for developing a partnered NHP fell through due to limited resources. Instead, C&H engineers settled upon a new design, employing an automated traffic control and management companion/concierge unit as the foundation for a new military-grade system. The resultant comp/con, designated COURSER, is comprised of a central

processing intelligence assisted by multiple subordinate expert analytical systems to direct and enhance small-unit coordination during high-speed maneuvers across numerous theaters and terrain types. Early field tests of COURSER-equipped frames have thus far proven extremely promising, though the system does occasionally experience difficulty adapting to novel battlefield experiences, but C&H has committed to a multi-year roadmap of planned updates to continue refining and enhancing its performance based on collated user data.

3 SP, AI, Unique

Your mech gains the **AI** tag and **Flocking Dynamics**. Whenever you **Bolster** an allied character, you and your target may both move **1 space** in any direction. Whenever you **Scan** a hostile character, you may move **1 space** and pull your target **1 space** in any direction.

This system is not a true NHP and cannot enter **cascade**. Whenever it would enter **cascade**, instead you are immediately pulled **3 spaces** in a direction of the GM's choice.

Flocking Dynamics

Full Action, Limited 1

1/scene, you and all allied characters within **Sensors** may immediately move up to their speed. This movement ignores engagement and does not provoke reactions.



C&H "Kalista"

鉄神射手座

Frontline Assault

Motorized Tetsubo, Tiger Claws, OGOUN-Class NHP

C&H KALISTA

Striker/Defender

The Kalista is C&H's main frontline assault model, a bulky, robustly-built design based on a common gladiatorial retrofit built around a modified heavy industrial frame. Not cutting-edge in the slightest, what the Kalista lacks in sophisticated electronics it makes up for with overwhelmingly resilient engineering and a variety of system options tailored for the brutal close-combat engagements it excels at, well suited for pilots who prefer to focus on a straightforward, aggressive offense.

Standardization of the Kalista license incorporates additional refinements to the design's overall construction, many of which were personally implemented and tested by Jun Chandrasekhar herself, whose own gladiatorial chassis served as one of the early models from which the Kalista was developed. These refinements include a universal interchangeable part replacement scheme to make between-action and in-field refits even easier, and the latest version is also fully compatible with OGOUN, C&H's first in-house combat ready NHP platform.

License:

I. Tiger Claws, ERA Layering

II. **KALISTA FRAME**, Macuahuitl Chainsword, Repair Paste Capillaries

III. Motorized Tetsubo, OGOUN-Class NHP

KALISTA					
HP: 10	Evasion: 6		Speed: 3	Heat Cap: 5	Sensors: 5
Armor: 2	E-Defense: 6		Size: 2	Repair Cap: 8	Tech Attack: -2 Save Target: 10
TRAITS:					
Reinforced Frame: The Kalista has Immunity to Shredded . Built To Last: If the Kalista is destroyed, it only requires 2 Repairs to be repaired. Lumbering: When the Kalista Boosts , it must move in a straight line.					
SYSTEM POINTS: 5					
MOUNTS:					
Main Mount	Main Mount		Heavy Mount		
CORE system					
Ruggedized Construction <i>The result of of a rigorous engineering process derived from thousands of hours of both industrial and gladiatorial experience, the Kalista is rated for conditions in excess of what some purpose-built military-grade designs are expected to endure. Internal components are layered with redundancy, allowing for uninterrupted combat</i>					

performance even when subjected to significant operational stresses, and construction is optimized for ease of field repairs.

In addition to this, a network of burnout flash micro-printers and RawMat feedstock reserves are embedded within the Kalista's structure and tied to primary damage control systems, capable of autonomous full-frame repairs upon detection of severe structural integrity failure. High-density capacitors automatically provide additional power reserves, pushing the mech into a temporary overcharged state to help it overcome both the stress of emergency self-construction as well as whatever battlefield threat necessitated such action.

Active (Requires 1 Core Power): Berserker Drive

Reaction

Trigger: You take structure damage that would cause you to make a **structure damage check**.

Effect: Do not make a **structure damage check**. You may then immediately restore your **HP** to full, clear all conditions that weren't caused by your own systems or talents, and you may repair structure damage at a rate of **1 Repair** per structure damage. For the rest of the scene, 1/round you may deal **+2 bonus damage** on hit with a melee attack for each point of structure damage repaired this way.

Tiger Claws

While integrating weapon systems directly into a mech's chassis is a common modification among pilots, it takes a true engineering artist to do so in an elegant, aesthetically pleasing, and minimally intrusive fashion without compromising structural integrity. The license for this particular melee combat system comes with several distinct styles to choose from, each of which was once an original custom design for a celebrated arena champion of note. The "Red-Eyed Demon" Pranesh Vasa's forearm-mounted dual blade assembly is the clear favorite among license holders, with a 67.35% retention rate across all frames.

Main Melee

Threat 1

Unique

4 kinetic damage.

On hit: This weapon deals **+1d3 bonus damage** against targets that are **Shredded** or have **0 Armor**.

This weapon can be used while **Jammed**.

ERA Layering

Explosive reactive armor is considered somewhat deprecated compared to modern counter-harmonic/electromagnetic active defense systems, but even outdated technologies can find a new life in the right context. An externally mounted network of explosive modules affixed over the hull and linked to an expert system, the original

purpose of this upgrade was to deflect and diffuse incoming enemy fire with impact-triggered detonations, but many pilots find it much more useful as an explosive close-quarters enhancement.

2 SP, Full Action, Unique

Whenever you are hit by a melee attack, the attacker takes **2 explosive damage**. While grappling, as a full action you may deal **6 explosive damage** to a character in the grapple, but you become **Impaired** until the end of your next turn.

Macuahuitl Chainsword

Hot-blooded arena enthusiasts are less concerned with battlefield reliability so much as they are the flash of sparks and the scream of rending metal. Though mech-scale motorized chain weapons are offered under several specialty licenses by assorted vendors, the Macuahuitl is C&H's attempt to engineer a more robust and practical version of a gladiatorial favorite. Derived from an industrial mining cutter and upgraded with with an oversized, high-powered drive motor, the result is a terrifying, if temperamental, beast capable of shearing through joints and armor plating with ease, assuming the user can retain control of it.

Heavy Melee

Threat 1

Overkill, 1 Heat (Self)

1d6+4 kinetic damage.

When you roll a **6** on this weapon's base damage die or if this weapon's damage is otherwise maximized, it automatically deals an additional **+1d6 bonus damage**. If you roll another **6** on that bonus damage die or if it is maximized as well, you must repeat this process again up to a maximum of **+3d6 bonus** damage added this way.

Repair Paste Capillaries

The semi-active nanite slurry commonly known as repair paste isn't a substitute for actual repairs, automated or otherwise, but in sufficient quantities it can nonetheless spell the difference between survival and destruction. Some arena fighters learned to modify their mechs with reservoirs of the substance rigged to flood damaged areas, holding malfunctioning systems together and patching compromised hulls. This licensed system improves on that original modification, incorporating a dedicated capillary system tied into the core's damage control subroutines enabling them to shunt measured quantities of repair paste to critical areas as needed.

3 SP, Overshield, Limited 2, Unique

Gain the **Battle Scars** reaction:

Battle Scars

Reaction, 1/round

Trigger: You take **5 or more** kinetic, energy or explosive damage from a single attack (after **Armor** and **Resistance**).

Effect: You gain **Overshield** equal to **Grit +4**, and you gain **+2 Accuracy** to the next

skill check or save you make until the end of your next turn.

Motorized Tetsubo

In the arena, spectacle is everything. Bigger, flashier, and more brutal weapons are highly sought after, with competitors and weapon designers constantly attempting to one-up each other in the field of sensational violence, and few weapons are bigger or more brutal than what C&H dubs the motorized tetsubo. Effectively a chainsword scaled up to enormous size, even without power this massive, ungainly weapon's reinforced housing is sturdy enough to be used as a vicious bludgeon, and with its motor revving it can shred through other mechs outright in a single blow.

Superheavy Melee

Threat 2

Overkill

3d6 kinetic damage

On hit: This weapon deals additional damage based on how many 6's you roll on its base damage dice:

- 1: Deal an additional **4 damage**.
- 2: Deal an additional **7 damage**, and the target becomes **Shredded** until the end of the current turn.
- 3 or if the weapon's damage is otherwise maximized: Deal an additional **10 damage**, and the target becomes **Shredded** until the end of their next turn.

As a full action, you can swing this ungainly weapon in a **Burst 2** sweeping blow.

Characters within this area must pass a **Hull** save or take **1d6+3 kinetic damage**, be knocked back **2 spaces**, and knocked **Prone**. On a success, they take half damage only.

OGOUN-Class NHP

The current premier offering from C&H's in-development NHP coaching and curation program, OGOUN was catalyzed from neural engrams of over 500 arena combatants selected during an intensive and clandestine two year trial, not just for combat prowess but for resilience, tenacity, and adaptability under pressure. As a result OGOUN is surprisingly multifaceted for a fledgling NHP, incorporating hypercognizant threat-adaptation subroutines and advanced self-diagnostic heuristics into its core matrix. Personality-wise, OGOUN clones tend to be less formal than NHPs designed primarily by and for military interests, but pilots should be aware that they possess a prideful streak and those who fail to live up to their standards may find themselves regularly berated until their combat performance metrics noticeably improve.

3 SP, AI, Unique

Your mech gains the **AI** tag and **Lord of Iron**.

Lord of Iron

Reaction, 1/round, 3 Heat (Self)

Trigger: You are hit by an attack or fail a save which causes you to become **Immobilized**, **Jammed**, or **Stunned**.

Effect: You gain **Resistance** to all damage (including the triggering attack or save) and cannot fail **Hull** or **Agility** saves or checks until the end of your next turn. This reaction resolves after any damage dealt by the triggering attack or save, but before the triggering condition is applied.

C&H GAJASURA

Striker/Defender
Kalista Variant

This variant can be taken at **rank II** of the **Kalista** license instead of the base **Frame**.

Known as the "Red-Eyed Demon," Pranesh Vasa was one of the most renowned and celebrated arena fighters of the Suldani pre-Emirate era. The only son of a municipal administrator, Vasa had an unassuming upbringing but felt unfulfilled with the life laid out before him. This discontentment continued to grow for years until, in a snap decision, he abandoned his job, sold off his possessions, and signed on as a gladiator, whereupon he discovered that despite lacking any previous experience he nonetheless possessed a natural gift for fighting. In later interviews, he would go on to describe this turn of events as "finally finding himself on the arena floor."

Vasa's personal chassis, Gajasura, was emblematic of his fighting style, as relentless and brutal as he was humble and plainspoken outside of the arena. Built to weather blows with overlapping armor plates and rigged to shunt additional power to systems during catastrophic near-failure conditions, Gajasura could outlast and out-trade virtually any opponent, and during his career Vasa enhanced it further with a variety of frame-integrated weapons to suit his personal close-combat fighting style. This design would go on to inspire numerous others, including those which would form the foundation of Chandrasekhar & Herschel's Kalista heavy assault chassis.

In the aftermath of Vasa's death during what would be his final bout, both his body and his chassis went missing and were never recovered, a mystery that has only served to heighten his legend since then. While his body's whereabouts continue to remain unknown, the recent rediscovery of Gajasura in largely intact condition is an incredible moment in the preservation of Suldani cultural history.

GAJASURA					
HP: 12	Evasion: 6		Speed: 3	Heat Cap: 5	Sensors: 3
Armor: 0	E-Defense: 6		Size: 2	Repair Cap: 8	Tech Attack: -2 Save Target: 10
TRAITS:					
<p>Reinforced Frame: The Gajasura has Immunity to Shredded.</p> <p>Ablative Plating: 1/round, the Gajasura can spend 1 Repair after taking damage from a character to gain Resistance to that damage. If this damage causes you to make a structure damage check, you automatically treat the result of that check as a Glancing Blow.</p> <p>Nearfail Capacitors: 1/round, the Gajasura may deal +1d6 bonus damage on hit</p>					

with a melee attack if it has 2 Structure or less .		
SYSTEM POINTS: 5		
MOUNTS:		
Main Mount	Heavy Mount	
CORE system		
<p>Demon's Fang</p> <p><i>For much of his career, Vasa almost solely employed frame-integrated weapons in combat, preferring them to manipulator-held or hardpoint-mounted armaments. The most notable, and most iconic, example of this was eventually gifted to him by Saburo Adeyemi, a retired artisan from the Terashima enclave whose travels had brought him to Suldan and who was a great admirer of Vasa's performance in the arena. Dubbed the "Demon's Fang," this forearm-mounted double blade became synonymous with Vasa, oft-imitated but never duplicated.</i></p> <p><i>While numerous parts of the original frame have long since been replaced over the years, or fallen into disrepair after an extended period of disuse, the Demon's Fang remains unaltered and in combat-ready condition even now. Its integration into the frame is a remarkable work of craftsmanship, as capable of swiftly severing limbs and carving apart hulls as the day it was forged.</i></p> <p><i>Non-destructive analysis of Gajasura and the Demon's Fang by a team of C&H engineers has led to the creation of a licensed version for distribution, while the original is now on display at the Bishara Museum of Culture and Technology in Hadiqa.</i></p> <p>Integrated Mount: Demon's Fang Demon's Fang Main Melee Threat 1 Reliable 4 1d6+3 kinetic damage This weapon can be used while Jammed. 1/round, if you destroy a character with this weapon you can move up to 2 spaces and make another attack with this weapon as a free action. This movement ignores engagement and doesn't provoke reactions.</p> <p>Active (Requires 1 Core Power): Killing Floor Free Action, Efficient Make an attack with the Demon's Fang as a free action.</p>		



C&H "Kallarani"

鉄神カララニ
CQB Armsmaster

Salamander Incendiary Shotgun, Spider Mines, Scavenger Nexus

C&H KALLARANI

Striker

One of C&H's more controversial licenses, there's little doubt that the origins of the Kallarani chassis and its systems lie in piracy. This lends credence to the persistent rumors that one of the company's undisclosed financial backers is or was once a pirate themselves, but C&H adamantly deny any and all claims that they encourage license holders to engage in illegal activities - while nonetheless maintaining that they have no control over what pilots choose to do with their licenses. However one chooses to look at it, the Kallarani is well suited to shipboard actions in addition to urban combat scenarios, providing pilots with a variety of powerful and flexible close-quarters options and drone network systems to choose from.

During the uprising the Kallarani was the chassis of choice for members of the Suldani Revolutionary Engineering Corps, who utilized it extensively in the bloody block-by-block fighting with the Emir's Royal Guard. Though they suffered heavy casualties in the process, they cultivated a fearsome reputation that ultimately led to numerous Guard units routing or even surrendering rather than having to face them in combat, and the design has enjoyed a certain prestige among revolutionary veterans and provisional security force commanders ever since.

License:

- I. Type-17 Boarding Pistol, Scavenger Nexus
- II. **KALLARANI FRAME**, Spider Mines, Salamander Incendiary Shotgun
- III. Saboteur Drone, Type-96 Shield Gun

KALLARANI					
HP: 8	Evasion: 8		Speed: 4	Heat Cap: 6	Sensors: 8
Armor: 1	E-Defense: 10		Size: 1	Repair Cap: 4	Tech Attack: +1 Save Target: 10
TRAITS:					
<p>Multirole Armament: Whenever the Kallarani Barrages, if it chooses two or more weapons of different types (Rifle, CQB, Launcher, Cannon, Nexus, or Melee), it gains +1 Accuracy to an attack of its choice made as part of that Barrage.</p> <p>Ambush Jammers: The Kallarani counts as Invisible during the first round in each scene.</p> <p>Integrated EVA Rig: The Kallarani counts as having a propulsion system in low or zero gravity and submarine environments.</p>					
SYSTEM POINTS: 5					
MOUNTS:					
Flex Mount		Flex Mount		Heavy Mount	

CORE system

Typhoon Airburst Projector

Adapted from a close-in point defense system, the Typhoon is a chassis-integrated sensor package and launcher optimized for close-quarters combat and zone interdiction. Sensors track a target's bearing, direction, and range, then launch an airburst fragmentation shell set to detonate at optimum distance to ensure on-target saturation even around corners or behind cover.

An extremely common modification, especially among pirates, is to override the sensor restrictions and overclock the Typhoon's launch mechanisms. Though taxing, the result is a devastating rolling barrage capable of saturating a wide area with shrapnel. Soft-target/materiel kill efficiency approaches maximum percentage within the designated bombardment area, clearing areas of even entrenched threats and securing dronespace superiority during high-intensity boarding actions.

Integrated Mount: Typhoon Airburst Projector

Typhoon Airburst Projector

This weapon can be fired with two profiles:

Main Launcher (Airburst)

Arcing

Range 5, Cone 5

3 kinetic damage

Main Launcher (Close-In Defense)

Knockback 2

Cone 3

3 kinetic damage

This mode ignores ranged penalties from **Engaged**, and can be fired as a free action before or after you **Barrage**.

Active (requires 1 Core Power): Decksweeper Fusillade

Full Action

Create a **Blast 5** area, with at least one space adjacent to you. All **Drones**, **Deployables**, and **Mines** within this area are instantly destroyed. All other characters within this area become **Impaired** until the end of their next turn and must pass an **Agility** save or take **2d6 kinetic damage** (**Biological** characters take **4d6 kinetic damage**). On a success, they take half damage. This salvo of airburst explosives can reach any target as long as there is a path to do so.

Type-17 Boarding Pistol

In close-quarters combat, engagement ranges can shift in the blink of an eye, moving from range to melee and back again. Combination weapons have long been an attempt to provide pilots with a flexible combat solution to the challenges of boarding/counter-

boarding urban warfare operations, but many pilots frequently find them to be cumbersome or underpowered. The Type-17 is an older design, a lightweight pistol with a housing married to a reinforced combat blade. Though it lacks the stopping power of higher-caliber weapons, C&H have significantly improved the weapon's accuracy and reliability over earlier models, and with sufficient practice the ability to fluidly switch between ranged and melee combat can provide unexpected tactical advantages.

This weapon can be freely used with either profile. Modifications and talents which only affect ranged or melee weapons only function when used with the appropriate profile.

Auxiliary CQB

Range 5, Threat 3

1d3 kinetic damage

Auxiliary Melee

Threat 1

1d3 kinetic damage

Scavenger Nexus

The VF-20 "Termite" is a VTOL/all-atmosphere capable drone platform originally designed for use by shipbreakers and salvage crews to assist with dismantling decommissioned ships and spaceborne infrastructure assets, but pirates and mercenary crews frequently employ modified versions of these civilian drones as ad hoc combat units. This standardized license model is less makeshift in design, but nonetheless incorporates a variety of hardpoint-mounted demolition tools rated for combat use as well as engineering. Skilled operators can even utilize these drones to administer crude but effective field repairs in a pinch.

Main Nexus

1 SP

Overkill, Smart

Range 10

1d3+1 kinetic damage

This weapon deals **10 AP kinetic damage** to objects, cover, terrain, and the environment.

Gain the following **Quick Tech** option:

Patch Job: Choose an allied character within **Sensors**. They may take **1d6 heat** and spend **1 Repair** to immediately restore their **HP** to full. This can only be used 1/scene on each character.

Spider Charges

Not really a sophisticated drone system as such, spider charges require no guidance or direction from a pilot, acting on their own once deployed. Operating with only a rudimentary target-seeking intelligence, these ambulatory high-explosive smart munitions relentlessly pursue any infantry-tier or armored targets that trigger their proximity

sensors, detonating once within optimal range. C&H reminds license holders to ensure that all allied IFF codes are properly up to date and synced to local tacnets before employing this system.

2 SP, Limited 2, Unique

You may spend a charge from this system for one of the following:

Sentry Grenade (Grenade, Range 5): This grenade automatically attaches to characters and objects, arming itself. When a hostile character other than the stuck target moves within **range 2** or starts their turn within **range 2** of an attached grenade, it detonates and fires a guided projectile at them. That character must pass a **Systems** save or take **1d6+3 explosive damage** and be knocked **Prone**. On a success, they take half damage only. Characters can only trigger a single sentry grenade this way per turn, they can detach sentry grenades from themselves by passing a **Systems** save as a quick action on their turn, and undetonated grenades disarm at the end of the scene.

Spider Mine (Mine, Burst 1): As a **protocol**, you may move an armed spider mine up to **3 spaces** towards the nearest hostile character within **Sensors**. If multiple characters are equally close, you may choose which one to move towards. Spider mines treat vertical and overhanging surfaces as flat ground for the purposes of movement. This mine detonates when a hostile character moves adjacent to or over it, or the mine's movement causes it to collide with a hostile character. Characters within the affected area must pass a **Systems** save or take **2d6 explosive damage**. On a success, they take half damage.

Salamander Incendiary Shotgun

While incendiary weapons remain a historical point of contention in the aftermath of the Hercynian Crisis, C&H somewhat irreverently advertises this particular license as an "advanced combat engineering torch optimized for use in close quarters." Whether the Galactic Treaties Board finds this sufficiently amusing to pass muster remains to be seen, but in the meantime license holders are able to requisition this reinforced combat shotgun designed to fire a mixture of superheated magnesium-jacketed flechettes and aerosolized nanoparticle thermite. Devastating against lightly armored targets in close-quarters engagements and shipboard assaults, the weapon also features an adjustable choke for optimal payload delivery.

This weapon can be used with either profile, but not both in the same round.

Narrow Choke

Main CQB

Overkill, 1 Heat (Self)

Range 5, Threat 3

1d3 kinetic damage + Burn 2

Wide Choke

Main CQB

Overkill, 1 Heat (Self)

Cone 5

1d3 kinetic damage + Burn 2

Saboteur Drone

Few drones are as reviled by pilots as the "Scorpion Wasp," a specially designed seek-and-subvert unit commonly employed by pirates and less reputable mercenaries due to its ability to confirm effective kills while preserving a chassis for future salvage. Nonetheless, for those willing to employ it this feared and detested drone platform provides an effective force multiplier, giving operators a variety of methods to disrupt and neutralize enemy units in the field ranging from system interference and internal damage all the way to a catastrophic cockpit breach.

3 SP, Drone, Quick Action, Unique

Saboteur Drone (Size 1/2, HP 5, Evasion 10, E-Defense 10, Tags: Drone)

Choose a hostile mech within **Sensors** and make a contested check using **Grit** against the target's **Hull**. On a success, the drone latches onto their mech and begins jockeying the target, benefiting from your talents. You automatically succeed on all attempts at this check if you **Scan** the target at any point beforehand during the scene.

Once the drone begins jockeying, you automatically choose a jockeying option to perform against the target, and you may continue to choose an option for free during each of your turns while the drone remains latched to the target. This does not take an action, and may be done at any point during your turn. Hostile attacks made against a jockeying drone deal **half damage, heat, or burn** to the jockeyed target on a miss. The only way to remove the drone besides destroying it is to shake it off (use your **Grit** for all contested checks) or if the target is destroyed, after which it's recalled. You may also spend another **quick action** to automatically end this effect and either recall the drone or make another jockeying attempt against a hostile mech within **Sensors**.

Gain the following options for jockeying with a saboteur drone:

Sabotage: The target makes all checks and saves with **+2 Difficulty** until the end of their next turn.

Rend: The target must pass a **Hull** save or become **Shredded** until the end of their next turn. On a success, they take **2 AP kinetic damage**.

Breach: If the target has only **1 Structure** remaining, is at **7 HP or less**, and doesn't have **Immunity to damage**, you may order the drone to breach the cockpit and messily kill the pilot. This destroys the target instantly unless it can function without a pilot, and panic causes all hostile characters within a **Burst 2** around the breached target to become **Impaired** until the end of their next turn. You receive a notification when a jockeyed target can be breached, and breaching the cockpit this way can only be done 1/scene.

Type-96 Shield Gun

An extension of the combination weapon design philosophy, the Type-96 takes things a step further than merely integrating two different weapons together. A combined offensive/defensive system, a heavy-duty assault shield provides reliable, if cumbersome,

protection against multiple threat types, while a high-powered howitzer capable of both direct and indirect fire is housed within, safely concealed behind retractable panels when not in use. While some may find the wisdom of deliberately subjecting a heavy weapon to serious impacts questionable, and adoption rates were never high during the system's initial forays into the market, C&H nonetheless offers this license to pilots who find the multiple types of close-combat protection the Type-96 offers to be invaluable.

Heavy Cannon, Melee
2 SP

As a **protocol** you may select one of the following profiles. This profile remains active until a new one is selected. Modifications and talents which only affect ranged or melee weapons only function when used with the appropriate profile.

Assault Shield

Heavy Melee

Knockback 1

Threat 1

1d6+4 kinetic damage

When you **Brace**, if your **Armor** is less than **4** you increase it to **4** until the end of your next turn.

Retractable Howitzer

Heavy Cannon

Arcing, Ordnance, Overkill

Range 10, Blast 1

2d6 explosive damage

The following **Wing** upgrade is also available for use in *Lancer: Battlegroup*, a game of tactical naval combat set in the *Lancer* universe. You can find *Battlegroup* at <https://app.playrole.com/games/lancer-battlegroup/aae14179dfe4-lancer-battlegroup>

Kallarani Chassis Wing

3 Points

Wing, 8 HP, Unique

Boarding, Tenacity 12

Gain the following tactic:

Kallarani Command

Tactic

Range 3-0

Give the Kallarani Chassis Wing one of the following commands:

- **Type-96 Shield Guns:** Deal **2 damage** to a hostile **Capital Ship** or **Escort**. Until the end of your next turn, the next time damage is dealt to this **Wing** by a

hostile source it is reduced by **2** to a minimum of **0**.

- **Saboteur Drones:** Deal **3 damage** to a hostile **Wing**. This damage cannot be reduced in any way. If this command destroys a **Wing**, the saboteur drones hijack the remains of the enemy strike craft and you may immediately set them on a collision course, dealing **1d3+1 damage** to a hostile **Capital Ship** or **Escort**.
- **Scroungers:** Assign this **Wing** to board a hostile **Capital Ship**. On a successful boarding roll, you may immediately recall this **Wing** and choose; either remove **1 Refresh Counter** from any expended **Reloading** weapon, upgrade, or ability in your battlegroup, or one **Capital Ship** in your battlegroup gains **5 Overshield**. When recalled in this fashion, this **Wing** may not be assigned to boarding actions during your next turn.

Manufactured by Chandrasekhar & Herschel, the Kallarani is a chassis design whose exact origins are suspected to lie in piracy. Whatever the case, the Kallarani handles admirably in zero-gravity conditions even without a chassis mount, and its flexible fire-control systems allow it to effectively utilize a variety of multi-role armaments with minimal compatibility adjustments. The favored chassis of the Suldani Revolutionary Engineering Corps, C&H has begun offering the Kallarani as a fleet contract package to Diasporan clients seeking an affordable rapid-reaction boarding unit capable of suborning enemy defenses while spearheading highly disruptive raids against hostile capital ships.

[sidebar]

Suldan has never maintained a stellar navy of any note, even during the height of the Emir's reign. Naval vessels are exceptionally resource-intensive to create and maintain, and larger ships require specialized orbital construction facilities and high-schedule printers, the likes of which remained firmly outside of the Emir's grasp despite his ambitions. Such a buildup of naval strength would undoubtedly have attracted closer scrutiny from Union, and so Miranda Cortez diverted his attention towards other displays of military might such as the planetary defense network and various terrestrial weapons projects.

At its height, the Suldani Royal Navy consisted of six corvette-equivalent gunboats, tasked with anti-piracy patrols, merchant vessel escort, and local system defense duties. A seventh vessel was under construction planetside when the revolution began, and remains incomplete and unlaunched. Following the destruction of the Royal Palace, the nearest SRN ships attempted to return to the planet to retaliate against the rebel army only to be intercepted by the rampant defense system's satellite network and destroyed, though several satellite platforms were destroyed in return. Two SRN ships were on patrol at the time and ignored the return order, cutting off all communications with Suldan. Both vessels and their crews are missing and presumed to be AWOL.

[/sidebar]

Viral Knife, "Bandarilla" Anti-Radiation Missiles, PUNJI Counterintrusion Spike v. 1.6

C&H MATADOR

Defender

Rather than any sort of gladiatorial combat, the Matador was primarily sourced from designs utilized by the Suldani Independence Front in their ongoing conflict with Arclight TransColonial corporate reclamation forces. C&H bills this frame as an asymmetrical warfare platform ideal for pilots conducting long-term guerrilla warfare operations against technologically and numerically superior opposition. Aggressive counterintrusion and anti-systemic invasion packages allow even less technically proficient pilots to engage advanced units on equal footing.

The Matador has been a point of contention for Arclight TransColonial since its introduction, who have lodged several formal protests at what they feel to be clear evidence that Chandrasekhar & Herschel is covertly supporting the SIF despite the company's official position to the contrary. C&H in turn denies this, stating that their mandate is to provide their license holders with access to the finest combat-grade chassis and compatible systems they can provide, no matter their provenance.

License:

I. Viral Knife, ECM Launchers

II. **MATADOR FRAME**, Weapon Hardening, BEARTRAP Counterintrusion Tracer v. 2.3

III. Banderilla Anti-Radiation Missiles, PUNJI Counterintrusion Spike v. 1.6

MATADOR					
HP: 12	Evasion: 10		Speed: 4	Heat Cap: 8	Sensors: 3
Armor: 0	E-Defense: 6		Size: 2	Repair Cap: 4	Tech Attack: -2 Save Target: 11
TRAITS:					
<p>Hostile Architecture: All hostile tech actions and hostile abilities which inflict Systems saves made against the Matador cause the attacker to take 2 heat. If either the Matador or the target is in the Danger Zone, the attacker takes 2 AP energy damage as well.</p> <p>IFF Spoofer: 1/round, whenever a hostile character targets an allied character within range 3 with a tech action, an attack using a Smart weapon, or an ability which inflicts a Systems save which does not also include the Matador, you may force that attack, action, or save to target the Matador instead even if could not originally have done so (such as due to range, etc).</p> <p>Guardian: Adjacent allied characters can use the Matador for hard cover.</p> <p>Weak Computer: The Matador has +1 Difficulty on Systems checks and saves.</p>					
SYSTEM POINTS: 7					
MOUNTS:					

Flex Mount	Main/Aux Mount	
CORE system		
<p align="center">Anthem Wideband Jammer</p> <p><i>The earliest versions of this system were sourced from salvaged corvette-grade interdiction screens, designed to protect subline spacecraft from autonomous and semi-autonomous drones and munitions during naval combat operations. Since those early days the design has been refined and streamlined, though it remains as aggressively indiscriminate as ever, blanketing an area with wideband suppression signals and electromagnetic interference that jams communications, scrambles autonomous weaponry, and inflicts debilitating feedback upon invasive electronic warfare systems, providing complete electronic cover for rapid-strike covert operations.</i></p> <p>Active (Requires 1 Core Power): Blackout Protocol Create a Burst 3 suppression zone around you. While this ability is active, characters in the area cannot use any AI, Drone, or Smart weapons or systems. Any such systems deployed within the area are rendered inert, AI systems become mute and non-functional, and all communication systems are rendered inoperable. These effects immediately end whenever a character or deployed system leaves the area. Any character in the area who attempts a tech action, and any character who attempts a tech action against targets within the area, must roll 1d6. On a 4+, they take 1d6 heat and the tech action automatically fails with no effect. This effect does not stack with Invisible.</p> <p>This effect lasts until the end of your next turn, or you may extend the duration of the area for an additional round by taking heat during the start of your turn as a protocol; the first time you take 1d3 heat, then 1d6 heat, then 1d6+4 heat each round thereafter. The jammer also deactivates at the end of the scene.</p>		

Viral Knife

The Suldani Independence Front's ongoing struggles have led to a variety of novel improvised weapon designs showcasing technical creativity in lieu of advanced manufacturing capabilities. Derived from mining injector spikes, the so-called "viral knife" uses a superhardened blade along with a revolving injection cylinder to deploy a volatile but highly effective viral codex-slurry payload directly into physically compromised systems. Capable of wreaking havoc upon technologically sophisticated combat platforms, C&H's wide-distribution license incorporates a number of safety and reliability refinements in the codex-slurry formulation for optimal performance, though users are nonetheless advised to avoid unprotected contact with the payload.

Auxiliary Melee

Threat 1

1d3 kinetic damage

On Hit: The target must pass a **Hull** save or be injected with a viral payload. Until the end

of their next turn, the next time they make a tech action or force a character to make a **Systems** save, they take **3 AP energy damage**.

ECM Launchers

Even sophisticated target acquisition and electronic warfare systems can be nullified through the simple and expedient method of forcing them to wade through a morass of noise and junk data. Each of these dispensers is preloaded with an assortment of multi-spectrum flares, metallic chaff, electrostatic smoke, wideband IFF squawkers, and GHOST/ECHO data-strobes. A hypervigilant early warning system then blankets the surrounding area with these countermeasures as soon as hostile targeting or unauthorized system access attempts are detected.

2 SP, Unique, Limited 2

Gain the **Deploy Countermeasures** reaction:

Deploy Countermeasures

Reaction, 1/round

Trigger: A hostile character makes a tech attack against you or an attack using a **Smart** weapon.

Effect: Create a **Burst 1** area of electronic countermeasures around you that lasts until the end of your next turn. Characters in this cloud of chaff and electrified smoke benefit from **soft cover**, gaining special electronic **hard cover** against tech attacks and **Smart** weapons instead. This reaction interrupts and resolves before the triggering attack.

Weapon Hardening

By taking standard armaments and retrofitting them with reinforced power supplies, redundant ammunition feeds, ablative firewalls, and backup "dummy" targeting systems, pilots can avoid forced interruption of offensive capabilities during high-threat combat scenarios. Such modifications are highly discouraged by many manufacturers as they often require disabling key interface components and handshake firmware in order to properly insulate the weapon from systemic attacks and electromagnetic disruption, but many pilots find the additional uptime to be worth any number of voided end-user agreements.

2 SP, Mod

Choose one weapon. You can make attacks with this weapon while **Jammed**, but they receive **+1 Difficulty** when doing so. 1/mission, whenever this weapon would be destroyed you may ignore that effect.

BEARTRAP Counterintrusion Tracer v. 2.3

When the SIF took up arms against Arclight forces, it became immediately apparent that what mechs and vehicles they had weren't equipped to withstand sophisticated software intrusion and e-warfare systems. Rather than fruitlessly attempt to keep enemy forces from penetrating their systems with outdated defenses they adopted a different approach, seeding hostile counterintrusion malware within their core electronics. BEARTRAP triggers upon detecting foreign intrusion, piggybacking onto the signal wave and embedding itself

within the intruder's systems before activating a screamer subroutine that indiscriminately broadcasts positional and diagnostic information on all frequencies, requiring active countermeasures to purge once infected.

2 SP, Unique

Gain the **Embed Tracer** reaction:

Embed Tracer

Reaction, 1/round

Trigger: A hostile tech action against you or an adjacent allied character succeeds, or you or an adjacent allied character fail a **Systems** save inflicted by a hostile character.

Effect: The attacker takes **2 heat** and becomes infected by a tracer program. While infected, the target cannot **Hide**, cannot benefit from **Invisibility**, and at the start of their turn they gain **Lock On** and you may automatically **Scan** them. Starting at the end of their next turn, infected characters can attempt to purge this program by passing a **Systems** save at the end of their turn.

Banderilla Anti-Radiation Missiles

Though they can be dumbfired in a pinch, the Banderilla missile platform's onboard expert system achieves full potential when provided with hostile active sensor sweeps to home in on, riding an enemy's own electronic emissions back to the source to deliver precision indirect-attack and counterbattery fire regardless of intervening terrain. Each missile incorporates advanced inertial and topographical navigation systems as well as a multi-stage motor with burn-loiter capabilities to overcome reactive sensor shutdowns, homing in on an active threat's current or extrapolated position to deliver its payload on target.

1 SP

Main Launcher

Inaccurate

Range 15

1d6+2 explosive damage

Whenever a hostile character makes a tech action against you or forces you to make a **Systems** save, until the end of your next turn all attacks with this weapon lose **Inaccurate** and gain **Reliable 3** and **Seeking** against that character.

You may set this weapon into an enhanced tracking mode as a quick action. While in this mode, the effect of this weapon also applies whenever hostile characters make tech actions or force **Systems** saves against any allied characters within range 3, but you become **Slowed**. You may end this effect as a **protocol**.

PUNJI Counterintrusion Spike v. 1.6

Desperate times often call for desperate measures, and while early versions of this counterintrusion program took a definitive psychological toll against Arclight forces, the cost of its use was eventually deemed unacceptably high. By exploiting millisecond synchronizations between hostile electronics and their own core computers, SIF pilots were able to create a feedback spike capable of violently overloading an attacker's

primary systems, but the strain often resulted in an uncontrolled meltdown of their own reactor as well. As a result this version, which C&H now licenses, is actually toned down from the original design, less destructive to both targets as well as users.

3 SP, Unique

Gain the **Core Spike** reaction:

Core Spike

Reaction, 1/round

Trigger: A hostile tech action against you or an adjacent allied character succeeds, or you or an adjacent allied character fail a **Systems** save inflicted by a hostile character.

Effect: You immediately become **Stunned** until the end of your next turn. The attacker then takes **4d6 AP energy damage** from a massive feedback spike and must pass an **Engineering** save or become **Stunned** until the end of their next turn. On a success, they become **Impaired** and **Slowed** until the end of their next turn. This can only be used 1/scene on each character.



C&H “Pesilat”

鉄神ペシラ

Cyber-space Martial Arts

Crashing Avalanche Module, //HEARTSHATTER v. 5.palm, Falling Star Module

C&H PESILAT

Striker/Controller

Unarmed martial arts have a long historical association with oppressive regimes as a way for those without ready access to weaponry to learn how to defend themselves, sometimes even training in plain sight. On Suldan the situation was no different, and over time, under the guise of pilot training and gladiatorial exhibitions, the secret techniques and technologies of the pilot martial art known as raksasa silat were passed down from master to student.

The Pesilat is a robust and flexible lightweight chassis design created by C&H from the ground up, made to fulfill the unique hybrid close-combat and electronic warfare capabilities demanded by the practitioners of this esoteric fighting art. Incorporating an advanced full-body haptic/kinesthetic control interface for 1-1 equivalent motion translation, the Pesilat is a physically demanding chassis to operate, and martial arts conditioning is a highly recommended component of any Pesilat pilot's familiarization process.

License:

I. Crashing Avalanche Module, //shadowfist

II. **PESILAT FRAME**, Falling Star Module, //serpent_FANG

III. Dipping Swallow Module, //HEARTSHATTER v. 5.palm

PESILAT					
HP: 8	Evasion: 10		Speed: 5	Heat Cap: 5	Sensors: 5
Armor: 0	E-Defense: 10		Size: 1	Repair Cap: 4	Tech Attack: +2 Save Target: 11
TRAITS:					
Contact Bridge: The Pesilat gains +1 Accuracy on Invade tech attacks against characters it is grappling.					
Rising Sun Module: Standing from Prone does not cost the Pesilat its movement, and it may stand from Prone even while Immobilized .					
Muscle-Tracer Haptics: 1/round, the Pesilat may deal +1d6 bonus damage on hit with a non-weapon melee attack (such as Ram, Grapple, Improvised Attack , etc).					
SYSTEM POINTS: 8					
MOUNTS:					
Aux/Aux Mount					
CORE system					
Combat Induction Chassis					
Raksasa silat practitioners often outfit their mechs with custom systemic intrusion					

software designed to enhance their combat capabilities, all the more useful when access to weaponry is tightly restricted. A particular aspect of this style is the use of point-to-point contact induction transmission, bypassing the need for remote electronic signature acquisition and interfacing directly with target systems within close range. The Pesilat is fully outfitted with one such hardware/software induction suite, giving pilots the ability to initiate systemic attacks via physical contact using their mech's own frame as a transmission bridge.

This isn't the only chassis modification that raksasa silat masters make to their mechs, however. There are other powerful enhancements and modifications as well, the precise details of which are seldom shared with those outside their ranks, but nonetheless boast impressive combat performance. C&H is proud to offer one such enhancement package to pilots who display sufficient dedication to walking this path.

Passive: Your **Improvised Attacks** have **Reliable 2**. Whenever you successfully hit a character with an **Improvised Attack**, you may immediately make an **Invade** tech attack against them as a free action. You may **Invade** in this way even if you are **Jammed**.

Active (Requires 1 Core Power): Demon Tiger Overdrive

Protocol

For the rest of the scene, your **Improvised Attacks** become **Threat 2, AP**, and can attack two targets at a time.

Crashing Avalanche Module

A cornerstone of many mech-based martial arts is the reflex module, customized haptic/kinesthetic control macros tied directly into a mech's core computer. These firmware packages allow pilots to execute complex and sophisticated combat maneuvers with increased speed and precision; not an expert system or NHP partition, but an integrated semiautonomous reaction/response multiplier, often referred to as "muscle memory for mechs." This particular module is an aggressive grappling suite designed to enhance close-quarters groundfighting techniques with reduced manual input requirements.

1 SP, Protocol, Unique

You may move a character you are grappling to any free space adjacent to you, and until the end of your next turn they take **2 kinetic damage** whenever they attempt a **Hull** check to either take control of or break free from the grapple.

//shadowfist

A commonly employed attack-code algorithm with numerous versions and variations to be found in the employ of both electronic warfare specialists and combat art practitioners alike, this particular version is a cleaned up and optimized package tailored for use with the Pesilat. Feedback loops introduced into a target's primary sensors and fire-control systems result in a drastic reduction of sensor and targeting acuity, returning too many

false positives beyond minimal operational ranges to be relied upon and often running afoul of automated safety cutouts. Weapons and e-warfare systems are unaffected directly, but suffer catastrophic performance reduction without proper guidance and clearance permissions to rely upon.

2 SP, Quick Tech, Invade, Unique

Gain the following options for **Invade**:

Isolation Code: Until the end of their next turn, your target does not have line of sight to any of their own allied characters who are not adjacent to them, and they cannot benefit from their allies' systems, abilities, or tech actions.

Static Void: Your target cannot draw line of sight to spaces further away from them than you until the end of their next turn.

Falling Star Module

This reflex module enhances a mech's primary balance and weight distribution subroutines to allow for significantly greater leverage without compromising stability or structural integrity. In conjunction with precisely tuned power redistribution to manipulator and propulsion subsystems, pilots are able to aggressively displace opponents exceeding their mass by up to 400% for brief durations.

2 SP, Quick Action, Unique

1/round, you can make a melee attack using a character you are grappling. This attack has a **Threat** equal to the grappled character's **Size**. On hit, it deals **1d6 + the grappled character's Size kinetic damage** to both the target of the attack as well as the character you are grappling (bonus damage is only dealt to the target of the attack), and both characters must pass a **Hull** save or be knocked **Prone**.

//serpent_FANG

An unusual dual-stage intrusion package whose precise origins are a subject of speculation, serpent_FANG injects a series of polymorphic logic bombs into the target's core processes in an uncompiled state, lying dormant until triggered by system activity. Once the target acts, the logic bombs compile into one of several configurations, bypassing active threat scans long enough to afflict them with brute-force shutdown prompts and destructive overrides. While passive countermeasures will eventually purge this hostile code given time, the opportunity it creates can be enough to give a pilot the decisive edge in a fight. Rumors persist that this software package is prone to destructive incompatibility with certain instances of HORUS-derived system architecture, but as of yet investigations into this phenomenon remain inconclusive.

2 SP, Quick Tech, Invade, Unique

Gain the following options for **Invade**:

Uncertainty Trap: If the next action your target performs is an attack, they become **Immobilized** until the end of their next turn. If the next action your target performs is a standard move or **Boost**, they become **Jammed** until the end of their next turn. Performing any other action causes your target to take **2 heat** and become **Impaired** until the end of their next turn, and they can take no further

actions that turn except for their standard move. This can only be used 1/scene on each character.

Liminal Cascade: Apply a **Cascade Mark** to your target. You or any allied character can consume this **Mark** on hit with a ranged or melee attack to teleport them **3 spaces** in any direction and force them to pass a **Systems** save or be knocked **Prone**. A character can only have one **Cascade Mark** at a time.

Dipping Swallow Module

A fundamental principle of raksasa silat is the lack of distinction between attack and defense. Students are taught that even defensive measures should be undertaken with an eye towards destroying one's opponent, and this reflex module embodies that principle by overclocking a mech's reaction/response handling in conjunction with retaliatory positional modeling macros to provide practitioners and pilots with superior counteroffensive capabilities that take greater effective advantage of openings presented by aggressors.

2 SP, Unique, 2 Heat (Self)

When you **Brace**, you may move **1 space** ignoring engagement and reactions. If the triggering attacker is within range, you may also make an **Improvised Attack** against them as part of the **Brace**. If this destroys the attacker, you do not suffer the negative effects of bracing (you may continue to use reactions normally and you may move and take actions normally next turn).

//HEARTSHATTER v. 5.palm

A cascading asymptotic code attack specifically designed to target primary and secondary armaments, in particular ammunition loading and energy transmission subroutines, the HEARTSHATTER attack code-technique amplifies standard intrusion protocols to initiate catastrophic weapon systems failures, resulting in chain reaction ammo cook-offs and power cell discharges capable of disrupting a target's offensive systems or even destroying them outright. Appropriate caution should be exercised when engaging targets carrying highly reactive ordnance in enclosed spaces.

2 SP, Quick Tech, Invade, Unique

Gain the following options for **Invade**:

Discharge: Until the end of their next turn, your target becomes **Impaired** and each time they miss with a ranged or melee weapon attack roll they take **2 AP damage of that weapon's type + 1 heat**.

Rupture: Choose one of your target's weapons. That weapon is disabled and they take **4 burn**. The target can spend a quick action to pass an **Engineering** check in order to reactivate this weapon, or they may take **Stabilize** to automatically reactivate it. This can only be used 1/scene on each character.



C&H "Retiarius"

鉄神レティアリウス

Mid-Range Suppression/Support

Shock Lash, Temblor Pulse-field Generator, Nanoweave Net Launcher

C&H RETIARIUS

Controller

Not every gladiatorial battle is fought to the death. More often than not, bouts last until one mech is no longer able to operate whether that means a total kill or simply an effective kill. The Retiarius is a sturdy close- to mid-range suppression/support unit built around this principle, designed to carry a payload tailored to disable as well as destroy, typically including a frame-integrated autoloading net launcher adapted from modular cargo winch systems for entangling and restraining opponents.

This makes the Retiarius ideally suited to specialized operations where less-lethal capabilities and reduced collateral damage are desired, such as low-intensity security patrols, live target capture and extraction, or even training exercises, all in addition to the general tactical flexibility of locking down high-priority targets during standard combat operations. After-action metrics of Retiarius chassis in live-fire engagements report upwards of 70% target casualty minimization with no negative impact on overall combat performance.

License:

- I. Slingstone Charges, Tangler Cannon
- II. **RETIARIUS FRAME**, Shock Lash, Scrambler Rounds
- III. Blast Chain, Temblor Pulse-Field Generator

RETIARIUS					
HP: 10	Evasion: 7		Speed: 4	Heat Cap: 7	Sensors: 10
Armor: 1	E-Defense: 8		Size: 1	Repair Cap: 4	Tech Attack: +0 Save Target: 12
TRAITS:					
Nanoweave Net Launcher: 1/round, you may choose a character in range 5 and pull them 2 spaces in any direction as a free action. This movement ignores engagement and doesn't provoke reactions. Rams and Grapples against that character are made with +1 Accuracy until the end of their next turn. Shock Absorbers: The Retiarius has Immunity to Knockback . Stable Footing: Whenever the Retiarius is knocked Prone , you may make a Hull check. On a success, you remain standing instead.					
SYSTEM POINTS: 6					
MOUNTS:					
Flex Mount		Heavy Mount			
CORE system					
Anchorpoint Entanglement System					

Ongoing adoption of the Retiarius license beyond Suldan as well as continued research and refinement of less-lethal chassis systems has led Chandrasekhar & Herschel to develop ANCHORPOINT, an experimental semi-autonomous deployable area suppression payload. Each individual ANCHORPOINT unit affixes itself solidly into place with a tri-stage pneumatic/plasma/electromagnetic piton system. Once secured, these units are capable of independently prioritizing hostile targets within a designated coverage zone and restraining them with volleys of magnetically accelerated grapnels attached to high-tensile nanocarbon-weave cables rated for 30 tons. Without the aid of time and dedicated engineering equipment, entangled targets will often cause self-inflicted structural damage attempting to disengage from the grapnels under their own power, their own hulls giving out before the ANCHORPOINT does.

Active (Requires 1 Core Power): Deploy Anchorpoints

Protocol

Deploy three anchorpoint units to free spaces within **range 5** of your mech. During your turn, each unit can target one hostile character within **range 5** of itself with a restraint grapnel as a free action, and those targets automatically become **Immobilized** as long as the anchorpoint is attached to them. A restrained character can attempt to remove the grapnel at the start of their turn by passing a **Hull** save. On a success, the effect ends but they take **4 kinetic damage** in the process of ripping themselves free. Multiple anchorpoints may restrain the same character, adding **+1 Difficulty** to the **Hull** save and **+2 kinetic damage** inflicted on a successful save for each anchorpoint after the first.

An anchorpoint can only attach itself to one target at a time, and you may choose to end this effect on any or all anchorpoint units at the start of your turn as a **protocol**.

Anchorpoint units are special **Size 1/2** deployable objects with **10 HP** and **5 Evasion**. They last until the end of the scene and then deactivate.

Slingstone Charges

A standardized version of a scratch-built arena staple, weighted high explosives are mounted to the ends of interconnected lengths of high-tensile nanocarbon cable, detonating once a target has become entangled. The learning curve is steeper than that of a standard combat grenade, mishaps being both more embarrassing as well as more dangerous to an inexperienced user, but with practice this unorthodox weapon can easily bring even larger opponents to their knees.

2 SP, Limited 2, Unique

You may spend a charge from this system for one of the following:

Bola Grenade (Grenade, Range 5): Choose a target within range. They must pass an **Agility** save or fall **Prone** and take **1d6+2 explosive damage**. On a success, they take half damage only.

Tripcore Mine (Mine, Special): In addition to free adjacent spaces, this mine can also be placed on adjacent walls, pieces of cover, and terrain. When deployed this mine creates a **Line 5** area oriented in any direction. It detonates when any character

moves into or through this area, causing them to fall **Prone**. They must then pass an **Agility** save or take **1d6 explosive damage**.

Tangler Cannon

An upscaled and higher-powered version of the restraint adhesive projection systems commonly employed for riot control, the tangler cannon is not rated for less-lethal actions against infantry-scale targets and C&H Ltd. would like to remind license holders that they can not be held liable for accidental injuries or deaths via suffocation that may occur due to the improper use of this system. Each tangler shell is loaded with a quick-curing molecular adhesive polymer resin with an airburst proximity trigger to maximize target coverage with each shot, restraining joints, fouling movement systems, and bringing targets to a standstill, making this weapon an ideal choice for securing bounties, salvage ops, or field interrogations.

Main Cannon

Accurate, Knockback 2

Range 10

On hit: The target must pass a **Hull** save. If they fail then they become **Slowed** and take **+2 Difficulty** on all **Hull** and **Agility** saves and checks until the end of their next turn. If this weapon's **Knockback** causes the target to collide with an obstruction large enough to stop their movement then they become **Immobilized** until the end of their next turn on a failed save instead of **Slowed**. This weapon does no damage and cannot deal damage (from talents or otherwise).

Shock Lash

A length of reinforced, high-strength superconductive alloy cable hooked up to an electromagnetic field generator, powered down the shock lash is little more than an ungainly bludgeon, but when drawing power directly from a coldcore reactor the weapon springs to life in a crackling ionized plasma sheath capable of discharging up to 0.65 GJ upon impact. The combination of kinetic impact, thermal stress, and electrical feedback is perfectly suited to inflict severe damage to a target's internal components, triggering cascading system failures and critical overloads.

Main Melee

Inaccurate, Overkill, 1 Heat (Self)

Threat 3

1d6 kinetic damage + 2 energy damage

On Critical Hit: The target must pass a **Systems** save or become **Jammed** until the end of their next turn. On a success, they become **Impaired** until the end of their next turn.

Scrambler Rounds

Typically electronic warfare operates on a principle of wide-area efficacy, but subsonic, zero-penetration electrostatic jammer ammunition provides a more surgical application where necessary. Designed to be fired from a variety of chassis-scale armaments, the adhesive gel-encased projectiles do minimal damage in and of themselves, but the powerful wideband signal scramblers embedded within each one are capable of

overwhelming a mech's sensors and targeting systems, rendering them effectively blind for their duration.

2 SP, Mod, Unique

Choose one **CQB**, **Cannon**, or **Rifle**: when you attack with it, you may fire a scrambler round instead of attacking normally. On hit, you deal **half damage, heat, and burn**, but the target treats all characters further than **range 10** as if they were **Invisible** and all other characters as if they were in **soft cover** until the end of their next turn.

Blast Chain

Perhaps the most visually distinctive weapon in the Retiarius line, the blast chain is self-described, a chain comprised of high-powered electromagnetic limpet mines joined together with flexible links of titanium/polycarbon weave. The result is an unusual weapon that can be used to entangle and restrain enemies from a distance before reeling them in, allowing the user to pummel their opponent with other weapons along with the option of finishing them off in spectacular fashion by detonating the mines attached to them.

Heavy Melee

Threat 3

Loading

1d6+2 kinetic damage

On Hit: You may automatically **Grapple** your target. You may maintain this grapple regardless of adjacency as long as the target remains within this weapon's **Threat**. You cannot make attacks with this weapon while maintaining this grapple. If you control the grapple, you can pull the target adjacent to you as a free action.

You may end this grapple as normal, or use a **quick action** to detonate the mines on the chain. Doing so immediately ends the grapple, deals **2d6 explosive damage** to the target, and they become **Shredded** until the end of their next turn. This weapon does not need to be reloaded until you detonate these mines.

Temblor Pulse-Field Generator

Modified from industrial mining and demolition equipment, a harmonic resonance generator utilizes audiokinetic pulses to create vibrational cascades capable of breaking down solid matter or collapsing buildings. While a full-scale version of one of these generators would be impractical to mount within a mech chassis, a scaled-down version, along with the necessary insulation to safely operate it in combat, allows a pilot to create a localized vibrational disruption field around their mech as a close area denial/suppression system.

3 SP, Protocol, Quick Action, Unique, 2 Heat (Self)

Activating this system as a **protocol** generates a **Burst 2** area that lasts until the end of your next turn. All other characters within this area treat it as **difficult terrain**, and characters other than you that start their turn within the area or enter the area for the first time on their turn must pass an **Agility** save or take **2 kinetic damage** and be knocked **Prone**.

While this system is active, 1/round as a **quick action** you may deal **20 AP kinetic damage** to all objects and terrain within the area.



C&H "Sabreur"

鉄神けんし

Enrapturing Duelist

Smartblade, Shield Drone Array, ARTEMIS-class NHP

C&H SABREUR

Striker

On Suldan, the popularity of the arena runs all the way from the most impoverished socioeconomic strata to the rarefied heights of the planet's self-styled aristocracy. Formal chassis dueling was adopted by the upper class of Suldani society during the Emir's reign in an attempt to further distinguish themselves, with various members of the nobility importing and even commissioning custom chassis designed specifically for dueling purposes. Despite a brief fascination with Smith-Shimano models, interests eventually turned to more local, bespoke designs.

Following the revolution, C&H engineers liberated the specifications for one such design in the Sabreur and repurposed it for broader distribution. While the precise battlefield role of such a dueling-oriented design remains somewhat vague, adoption rates have risen significantly since C&H has begun advertising it as “a high-performance chassis for elite pilots,” opting to let matters of strategic deployment and combat doctrine sort themselves out.

License:

- I. Auto-Adjusting Weight, Peregrine Seeker Glaive
- II. **SABREUR FRAME**, Smartblade, Shield Array Drone
- III. Evasive Vernier Array, ARTEMIS-Class NHP

SABREUR					
HP: 8	Evasion: 12		Speed: 5	Heat Cap: 4	Sensors: 10
Armor: 0	E-Defense: 6		Size: 1	Repair Cap: 4	Tech Attack: -1 Save Target: 10
TRAITS:					
<p>Reaction Enhancer: Any number of times per round, whenever a hostile character's ranged or melee attack roll against the Sabreur is equal to its Evasion, you may force that attack to automatically miss as a reaction. The Sabreur has Immunity to all damage and effects from attacks that miss this way, and they cannot be rerolled.</p> <p>Early Warning System: The Sabreur takes half damage from failed saves.</p> <p>Riposte: 1/round, whenever a hostile character attacks the Sabreur, until the end of your next turn your next melee attack against that character does +1d6 bonus damage on hit. If the triggering attack misses, you may roll this bonus damage twice and take the highest result.</p>					
SYSTEM POINTS: 6					
MOUNTS:					
Flex Mount		Main/Aux Mount			
CORE system					

Archangel Autokinesics

Many chassis duelists employ purpose-tasks integrated NHP partitions, often referred to as their “second,” to handle various operations in order to allow them to focus their attention more fully upon the finer points of martial honor. This particular iteration, designated ARCHANGEL, employs a synapse-analogue reflex architecture that bypasses conventional permission/denial channels in order to respond to incoming attacks with greatly increased reaction time, pre-calculating evasive maneuvers based on comprehensive kinesic models and threat evaluation patterns, granting pilots a “sixth sense” that allows them to more comprehensively avoid danger.

Pushing additional power and architecture permissions into this system is technically possible and greatly boosts reaction/response parameters beyond manufacturer baselines but carries with it the risk of the partition spontaneously developing enhanced cognition. While the results can be undeniably effective, it is strongly recommended that any pilot that does so cycle this system afterwards as soon as possible. C&H reminds its license holders that it accepts no liability for spontaneous NHP enlightenment and associated responsibilities thereof.

Active (Requires 1 Core Power): Ancillary Battle Consciousness

Protocol

For the rest of the scene, the final attack roll for any ranged attack made against you cannot benefit from **Accuracy**, and you gain the **Instinct Edge** reaction.

Instinct Edge

Reaction

Trigger: A hostile character misses an attack against you.

Effect: Move up to your speed towards the triggering character, ignoring engagement and reactions. If you end this movement adjacent to that character, they take **3 AP kinetic damage**. This reaction can be taken as many times per round as it is triggered, but each character can only take damage from this ability 1/round.

Auto-Adjusting Weight

In the field of weapons engineering, balance is just as important for mech-tier weaponry as it is for a noble's personal dueling blade. Most mech weapons are designed to adequately suit the chassis that wields them, but by incorporating a series of motorized auto-adjusting weights into a weapon's structure, its balance can be dynamically realigned with every strike. While this does little to improve the weapon's overall lethality directly, it greatly enhances its responsiveness even during complex offensive maneuvers, allowing for enhanced precision and control, and consequently a higher probability of scoring effective kills.

2 SP, Mod

Choose one melee weapon. It gains **Reliable** based on weapon size (Auxiliary: 1, Main: 2, Heavy or larger: 3), or if it already has **Reliable** it adds **+1** to its value. 1/round when you attack with this weapon, you may add either **+1 to its Threat** or **+3 to its Thrown**

range.

Peregrine Seeker Glaive

In formal mech duels, ranged armaments are often strictly prohibited with participants being restricted to melee weaponry only. The result of enterprising duelists looking to exploit this particular loophole, the Peregrine seeker glaive is a deceptively sophisticated combat knife, each blade a self-contained smart weapon system with independent throw-and-forget target tracking and course correction capabilities allowing it to land effective hits from seemingly impossible angles. Every seeker glaive is neuro-coded to prevent thrown blades from being turned back against their user.

Auxiliary Melee

1 SP

Threat 1, Thrown 5

2 kinetic damage

When thrown against targets further than **range 1**, this weapon gains **Seeking** and deals **1d3+2 kinetic damage**.

Smartblade

A pinnacle of modern materials engineering and elegant design, the smartblade appears deceptively lightweight and slender for a mech-scale melee weapon, but the blade itself is forged from an advanced polymorphic metamaterial alloy reinforced by a electromagnetic control field. Onboard expert systems tied directly into the mech's sensor array are capable of adjusting the blade's structure in real-time for optimum performance against designated targets. Inexperienced users often complain that the weapon seems to fight against their input, and C&H offers a complimentary familiarization and training sim package to all license holders.

Main Melee

Smart, Unique

Threat 1

3 kinetic damage

When you consume **Lock On** as part of an attack with this weapon, it deals **1d6+3 AP kinetic damage**.

Shield Array Drone

Full-scale projected defense systems are often too bulky and power-intensive to be housed within drones, which is why the "Kerubim" active defense system utilizes a distributed array of multiple projector drones operating in tandem to triangulate a protective barrier between them for precision threat interception. Rated against both solid projectile and waveform attacks, the network is capable of independently maneuvering to provide optimum, hands-free coverage against any selected target within its effective perimeter.

2 SP, Drone, Quick Action, Shield, Unique

Shield Array Drone (Size 2, HP 5, Evasion 10, E-Defense 10, Tags: Drone, Hard

Cover)

You deploy a **Size 2** array of shield drones to any free space adjacent to you, and you may recall it by spending another quick action. Treat this array as **Size 1/2** for the purpose of effects which rely on **Size**. This array mirrors your movements whenever you move including **flight** and **teleportation**, does not count as an obstruction and can overlap other objects and units, and you count it as **hard cover**. The array itself also counts as having **hard cover**, and has **Immunity** to forced movement that would cause it to break adjacency from you or remain overlapping with you. You also gain the **Drone Parry** reaction.

Drone Parry

Reaction, 1/round, 2 heat (Self)

Trigger: A hostile character makes a ranged attack against you.

Effect: Move the shield array to another free space adjacent to you as a reaction. This reaction interrupts and resolves before the triggering attack. You may consume **Lock On** if the triggering character has it instead of taking heat to use this reaction.

Evasive Vernier Array

Suldani mech dueling emphasizes speed and grace over brute force, with duelists frequently optimizing their machines for evasion as even a single well-placed blow can spell the difference between honorable victory and inglorious defeat. This particular optimization incorporates a full-frame array of high-powered thrusters tied to a sophisticated threat-tracking expert system. While not powerful enough to permit flight, these thrusters allow pilots to swiftly reposition their mech in response to attacks, setting up counterstrikes or simply seeking better ground from which to continue fighting from. An expanded threat database and several analytical software upgrades ensure that this system functions just as well on the battlefield as it does in the dueling circle.

2 SP, Unique

You may immediately move **1 space** in a direction of your choice whenever a ranged or melee attack misses you. This movement does not provoke reaction attacks and ignores engagement. You may take **2 heat** to increase this movement to **3 spaces**.

ARTEMIS-Class NHP

Combat-grade NHPs are seldom commissioned by civilian interests, and such projects are tightly restricted and closely monitored by both Union intelligence and the DoJ/HR, but with sufficient wealth and social influence all things are possible. Conceived as an NHP for duelists of influential noble houses to maintain their standings, when C&H appropriated the specifications for the Sabreur they also discovered the casket containing the prime ARTEMIS codebase, and following a six-month evaluation and assessment period made it was made available as a license to sufficiently qualified pilots. ARTEMIS clones are frequently haughty and aloof, disdainful of what they consider lesser enemies and only coming alive when confronted with a suitable foe, at which point they become almost playful. C&H recommends that care should be taken when delegating target prioritization permissions to this NHP.

3 SP, AI, Unique

Your mech gains the **AI** tag and the **ARTEMIS Protocol**:

ARTEMIS Protocol

Protocol

Choose a character within **Sensors** and line of sight and give them a **Hunter's Mark**. Characters with your **Mark** don't benefit from **Hidden** against you, and whenever you make melee attacks against a character with your **Mark** you may roll twice and choose either result. 1/round you may deal **+1d6 bonus damage** on a melee critical hit to a character with your **Hunter's Mark**. Any attacks you make against characters that do not have your **Mark** are made with **+2 Difficulty** and cause you to take **2 heat**. While a character has your **Hunter's Mark**, you cannot voluntarily move away from them.

Only a single character may have your **Hunter's Mark** at a time, and your **Mark** remains active until you or the chosen target are destroyed, surrender, or retreat from the battlefield, at which point this protocol may be used again against a new target. As a **full action** you may move your **Hunter's Mark** to a different character in range.



C&H "Sagittarius"

鉄神射手座

Infiltration / Elimination

Blackjacket Combat Bow, INKWELL Adaptive Paint, Echo Cloak

C&H SAGITTARIUS

Striker/Artillery

The earliest Sagittarius designs were makeshift affairs constructed by the Suldani Independence Front utilizing salvaged materials, including numerous advanced systems along with specialized composite materials used by Arclight TransColonial, notable for their lightweight durability and radiation-absorbent properties. These efforts led to the creation of a distinct, bespoke chassis most commonly associated with the SIF's special operations unit, the Cheshire Cats.

Recent combat analysis and after-action reports of conflicts along the Chiraji Mountain range have identified an increase in Sagittarius-analogue chassis usage, as well as a corresponding increase in apparent design standardization. Arclight TransColonial representatives have used this information to bolster their claims that Chandrasekhar & Herschel is directly aiding the SIF in their activities, following the company's adoption of the Sagittarius as a formal license. C&H has staunchly refuted these allegations, highlighting several key technical differences between the SIF models and their own designs.

License:

- I. Shroud Missiles, Holo Charges
- II. **SAGITTARIUS FRAME**, INKWELL Adaptive Paint, Nightingale Drone
- III. Tactical Translocator, Echo Cloak

SAGITTARIUS					
HP: 6	Evasion: 12		Speed: 5	Heat Cap: 5	Sensors: 15
Armor: 0	E-Defense: 8		Size: 1/2	Repair Cap: 2	Tech Attack: +0 Save Target: 10
TRAITS:					
Predator: The Sagittarius gains +1 Accuracy on all attacks made from Hidden . Stealth Composites: The Sagittarius has Immunity to Lock On . Sensor Ghost: Attacks against the Sagittarius that do not have line of sight count it as Invisible .					
SYSTEM POINTS: 6					
MOUNTS:					
Flex Mount					
CORE system					
Blackjacket Combat Bow					

One of the challenges facing the SIF during initial development of the Sagittarius was formulating a ballistic weapon system for stealth operations and HVT elimination. Chassis-grade weaponry is notoriously resistant to conventional sound suppression techniques, and advanced sensor systems are highly capable of triangulating incoming weapons fire via acoustics, thermal signatures, and electromagnetic discharge.

The eventual solution was a surprisingly archaic one, but one that nonetheless has amply proven its effectiveness in combat. The Blackjacket is a chassis-grade compound bow capable of (relatively) silently launching large, reinforced arrows at velocity sufficient to threaten even armored cavalry. The required draw weight in order to achieve this output necessitates the use of advanced engineering materials such as nanocarbon fiber and arachnosynth weave in order to withstand the stresses of purely mechanical operation at chassis scale without immediately shattering. Even then, the bow also employs a series of additional torque enhancers to maximize power, though overall projectile velocity remains comparatively low next to more conventional armaments. As such, effect on target is regularly facilitated through the use of specialized warheads in order to defeat more advanced defensive measures, with the standard loadout utilizing a contact-triggered piston spike designed to penetrate armor.

Integrated Mount: Blackjacket Combat Bow

Blackjacket Combat Bow

Main Launcher, Rifle

Arcing

Range 10

1d6+3 kinetic damage

If you attack with this weapon while **Hidden** you do not automatically break **Hiding**. On hit, the target must pass a **Systems** save or you remain **Hidden**, even if the attack triggers other effects that would normally break **Hiding** such as additional saves. On a miss you automatically remain **Hidden**.

1/round, this weapon can be drawn back with a quick action to increase its **range to 15** and its damage to **2d6+3 kinetic damage** on its next attack. This effect is lost if you move for any reason.

When you print this mech or during a **Full Repair**, choose **6** of these specialized arrows to equip to your mech. You may choose up to a maximum of **2 uses** of any given option. Whenever you attack with this weapon, you may expend one of these arrows to gain its effect. These arrows do not count as a **Limited** system and cannot be replenished or enhanced by systems and abilities that affect **Limited** systems.

Mute Charge

You do not break **Hiding** with this option on hit or miss. The bow deals energy damage, and on hit the target becomes **Jammed** until the end of its next turn. Characters can only be affected by this option 1/scene.

Thermite Warhead

On Hit: Create a **Burst 1** area around the target. The target and all characters within the area take **3 burn**.

Hyperdense Penetrator

On Hit: The bow deals +**1d6 bonus damage** and the target is **Shredded** until the end of its next turn.

Fragmentation Bolt

The bow deals explosive damage and its range becomes **Range 10, Blast 2**, but it deals **half damage** to targets without the **Biological** tag.

Grapnel Line

On Attack: You may either choose a target within **range 10** and force them to pass a **Hull** save or be knocked **Prone**, or you may target a free space or surface within **range 10** and immediately **fly** to that space or the nearest adjacent free space. You must end this movement on the ground or another solid surface or else immediately begin falling. This option deals no damage and cannot deal damage (from talents or otherwise).

Viral Payload

On Hit: The target takes **2 heat** and is **Slowed, Impaired**, and all tech attacks against them gain +**1 Accuracy** until the end of their next turn.

Active (requires 1 Core Power): Special Reserve

Protocol

You shunt reserve power into a series of potent, if unstable, warheads. Gain one use each of the following specialized arrows until the end of the scene:

EMP Capacitor

The bow deals energy damage, and on hit the target becomes **Stunned** until the end of its next turn. On a miss, the target becomes **Impaired** and **Slowed** until the end of its next turn.

Fuel-Air Explosive

On Attack: Instead of dealing damage normally, create a **Blast 2** area of volatile fuel within **range 10**. As a free action you may detonate this fuel, and all characters within the area must pass a **Hull** save or take **2d6 explosive damage** and be knocked **Prone**. On a success, they take half damage only. Each turn you do not detonate the fuel it continues to saturate the area. At the start of your next turn after attacking, increase the area to **Blast 3**. At the start of the turn after that, the detonation's damage becomes **3d6**. This fuel dissipates at the end of the scene.

Seeker Flock

The bow gains **Reliable 4**. On hit or miss, choose up to three additional targets within range and deal **4 kinetic damage** to them.

Shroud Missiles

Developed as a versatile weapon system to facilitate rapid strike and reposition

maneuvers, the SIF utilizes what they refer to as shroud missiles both as an opening salvo during advances as well as to cover fighting retreats during fallback. Once launched, each missile deploys secondary smoke charges along its flight path at predetermined distances, rapidly providing enhanced obscurity and defensive coverage against visual, IR/IIR, electro-optical, and SACLOS guidance systems.

Main Launcher

Arcing, 1 Heat (Self)

Range 10

1d6 explosive damage

On Attack: Trace a line between you and the target and create a **Blast 1** cloud of smoke centered on a space within that line. All characters and objects within the area benefit from **soft cover** until the end of your next turn, at which point the smoke disperses.

Holo Charges

The earliest designs for this system stem from the SIF's attempts to crack and reverse-engineer a series of thermoptic decoy/camouflage systems salvaged from Arclight e-war chassis. When the security lockouts proved too intractable to bypass, the decision was made to simply repurpose the designs as limited-use field deployables instead. Once activated, each emitter is capable of projecting high-definition visual images and data signatures sufficiently robust enough to cause sensors to register them as false positives, though these images only last for a short time before the emitters are permanently disabled.

2 SP, Limited 2, Unique

You may spend a charge from this system for one of the following:

Specter Grenade (Grenade, Range 5): Your target must pass a **Systems** save or they become **Slowed**, cannot take **reactions**, and do not cause engagement (though they are still affected by it themselves) until the end of their next turn. On a success, they do not cause engagement until the end of their next turn.

Holo Decoy (Mine, Special): This mine detonates when any allied character moves over or adjacent to it, creating holographic duplicates of them which confuse targeting systems. The detonating character clears **Lock On**, and until the end of their next turn their movement ignores engagement and they count as **Invisible**.

INKWELL Adaptive Paint

Adaptive paint is a simple but effective modification commonly adopted by scout/reconnaissance pilots as well as special operations units engaged in covert actions. Not true active camouflage, INKWELL utilizes a proprietary blend of multispectrum polymer paint, embedded optical deflection chaff, and organic-derived chromatophore analogues which mimic the surrounding area, reducing the effectiveness of optical sighting, LIDAR, and silhouette analysis at range. C&H is proud to offer an officially licensed INKWELL formulation as a part of the Sagittarius series to all qualifying pilots.

1 SP, Unique

Ranged attacks against you receive **+1 Difficulty**. This effect is lost while you have any

structure damage.

Nightingale Drone

Nightingale drones are a basic enough design; a low profile, self-guided platform equipped with a cloned copy of a pilot's IFF transponder and a series of wideband emitters capable of emulating a chassis' power and sensor signatures. Once deployed they remain in a minimal power standby state until they detect active sensor sweeps, springing to life and transmitting false returns. The model favored by the Cheshire Cats employs embedded viral counterintrusion software derived from the Matador as an additional force multiplier.

2 SP, Drone, Quick Action, Limited 3, Unique

Nightingale Drone (Size 1/2, HP 5, Evasion 10, E-Defense 10, Tags: Drone)

Expend a charge to launch a nightingale drone to a free space within **Sensors** and line of sight, where it immediately becomes **Hidden**. If a hostile character takes the **Search** action to find a **Hidden** character while a nightingale drone is within their **Sensors**, they must first pass a **Systems** save or their **Search** attempt automatically fails, they gain **Lock On**, and they become **Impaired** until the end of their next turn; this save does not cause you to lose **Hidden**. Once a character fails this save, the drone burns out and is destroyed, otherwise it lasts until the end of the scene. You may move a deployed nightingale drone to a new location within **Sensors** as a quick action.

Tactical Translocator

As their conflict with the SIF has dragged on and incurred greater losses than initially anticipated, Arclight TransColonial has authorized the deployment of increasingly advanced technologies in an attempt to authoritatively secure their claim upon Suldan, which has resulted in an aggressive cycle of adaptation and improvisation as the SIF responds by claiming Arclight technology for their own use. The so-called "tactical translocator" is the most recent such development, derived from an as-yet undesignated infiltration and assassination chassis pattern which has been sighted in recent skirmishes. Created through trial and error, the value of tactical point-to-point non-realspace movement has proven to be an invaluable, if occasionally dangerous, addition to the SIF's arsenal.

2 SP, Quick Action, Limited 2, Unique

You may spend a charge from this system to plant a teleportation beacon on a free space within **range 3** and line of sight. As a free action, you may **teleport** to any of your deployed beacons. Once used, a beacon burns out and becomes inoperative, otherwise it lasts until the end of the scene.

If you **teleport** to a beacon while another character is occupying the space you instead **teleport** to a free space of your choice adjacent to that character, and if that character is hostile they must pass an **Agility** save or take **1d6 AP energy damage**, be knocked **Prone**, and become **Shredded** until the end of their next turn. On a success, they take half damage only.

Echo Cloak

The latest breakthrough in the Cheshire Cats' ongoing exploration of reverse-engineered Arclight decoy/camouflage technology, the echo cloak is a resource-intensive system thus far reserved only for select chassis, most notably those tasked with high risk operations behind enemy lines. A network of visual projectors and sensor baffles are tied directly into core threat recognition systems, taking incoming visual and multispectral signature data and generating a real-time volumetric facsimile overlay across the equipped chassis. Internal Arclight combat metrics during actions against SIF strike teams utilizing echo cloaks display a significant rise in blue-on-blue incidents as a result, and new ROE protocols and IFF encryption measures are being hurriedly pushed in response.

3 SP, Protocol, Unique, 2 Heat (Self)

While you are **Hidden** you may activate this system, choosing a hostile character within **Sensors** and line of sight equal to your **Size or larger** and shrouding yourself in holographic camouflage that duplicates that character's appearance; your mech's actual **Size** remains unchanged. You immediately **teleport** your speed and are no longer **Hidden**, but you may now move through (but not stop your movement in) spaces occupied by hostile characters, and your movement ignores engagement and reactions. Before attempting to take any hostile actions against you, characters with line of sight to a character whose appearance you duplicated must make a **Systems** save. On a failure, they don't lose the action, but cannot target you and believe the copied character to be you until the end of their next turn.

If a character who fails this save chooses to make an attack against the copied character (prioritizing weapons and non-**Invade** tech attacks) and succeeds, this effect immediately ends. The effect also ends if you are hit by an attack or fail a save from a hostile source, if the mimicked target is destroyed, or if you make an attack or force any saves beyond the save forced by this system. You may only mimic one target at a time, and mimicking a new target replaces the last disguise with the new one.

While mimicking a character, the next attack you make gains **+1 Accuracy** and deals **+1d6 bonus damage** on hit (or **+2 heat** for tech attacks).

Other Manufacturers on Suldan

Chandrasekhar & Herschel isn't the only chassis and compatible systems manufacturer whose designs can be found on Suldan. A wide variety of corporations and designers can be found there, ranging from local companies and boutique engineering firms all the way to galactic-tier manufacturers and corpo-states such as the ones found in the *Lancer* core rule book.

The "Big Four" as they're colloquially known (not counting the ubiquitous GMS) hold no particular sway over Suldan, they have no controlling stake or overt financial interest in the planet's history or development, but entities so vast and wealthy can't help but influence matters even in passing. These groups will have their own desires and goal which drive them to seek opportunity in the crisis befalling the world, goals that may or may not align with the interests of any given faction on the ground. The PCs might also have their own personal relationships with these groups, as part of their backstories or out of a preference for the licenses and bonuses they offer.

Additionally, these manufacturers are continually expanding their selections of licenses, offering an ever-growing assortment of mechs, weapons, and systems for qualified pilots to employ. Among these, the PCs will find the following licenses available to choose from both in campaigns set on Suldan and elsewhere.

Several of these mechs utilize core systems with the **Efficient** tag. At the end of any scene in which an **Efficient** core system is used, you regain **1 CP**.

GMS (Weapons and Core Bonuses) - Additional armaments and core bonuses suitable for a variety of frames and roles, available to all qualified pilots

IPS-N NELSON FLIGHT TYPE (Striker) - A Nelson variant outfitted with integrated flight systems and built for daring high-speed charge attacks

IPS-N WORDEN (Artillery) - A long range suppression and fire-support platform that sweeps the battlefield with heavy machine gun fire

SSC REAPER DART (Artillery) - A mobile, precision sharpshooter variant of the Death's Head with advanced weapon stabilization

SSC COMET (Striker/Support) - An aerial gunship that utilizes advanced nexus weapons in tandem with sophisticated command-and-control systems

HORUS CHIMERA (Striker/Controller) - An aggressively-tuned chassis derived from the Hydra equipped with deadly, deployable remote weapon units

HORUS EFREET (Defender/Controller) - A close protection chassis that can fold space to maneuver in unorthodox ways

HA SALADIN "FEARKILLER" (Defender) - A newly-developed Saladin variant designed to bring all of its defensive capabilities to bear on a chosen ally

HA AGRIPPA (Support) - A combat engineer that specializes in establishing battlefield emplacements and bolstering its allies during the fight

General Massive Systems

Wherever people go throughout the galaxy, from the most idyllic Core world to the most distant frontier planet, GMS goes with them. There is no colony or settlement within Union space that doesn't utilize, on some level, goods and technology manufactured by the galactic-standard supplier of everything from emergency rations to fusion reactors, and Suldán is no exception. Rugged, easy to maintain, and resistant to a multitude of hostile environmental conditions, swathes of Suldán's civic infrastructure stems from GMS designs, first embedded in the subterranean Undercity centuries ago, then growing up and outward via the earliest prefabricated housing modules all the way to the Port Ossman space catapult. This includes military-grade equipment as well; the venerable GMS MC-AR Assault Rifle is so ubiquitous that it can be found, whether legitimately licensed or stolen, in the arsenals of every chassis-capable faction currently in conflict across Suldán.

Neither corporation nor nation, GMS shares few of the ambitions which drive other galactic-tier manufacturers. They operate as an arm of Union, not for profit but to set the standard that others are measured by, and as such they have no real designs upon Suldán for good or for ill beyond providing them access to the same catalogue of goods and services extended to everyone within Union space.

In that sense, GMS has already achieved everything they might wish to concerning Suldán. Their goals are to be useful, to provide utility, and in that regard they've succeeded admirably. Even as the Emir's throne falls to dust, the company persists.

What they stand to gain, then, is simply competition. Being the galactic standard means a never-ending commitment to improvement, learning from the successes of others in order to better themselves. Though Chandrasekhar & Herschel is young, their advances in environmental ruggedization and systems hardening are notable, as are some of their more esoteric offerings, and GMS may very well want to keep an eye on them as the fledgling manufacturer continues to establish itself, not only upon Suldán but throughout the wider galaxy as well.

GMS WEAPONS

GMS weapons run the gamut from venerable designs kept current through regular standardization programs to cutting-edge armaments built to meet modern battlefield challenges, and their catalogue is always expanding. Many of these weapons are frequently mounted to a wide variety of armored vehicles beyond just mechs, such as light machine guns and anti-armor missile launchers, while other designs are strictly intended for mechanized chassis operation, such as the high-powered heavy assault shotgun and their line of extended blade/haft anti-cavalry melee weaponry. This is in addition to periodic updates to the T-3 line of advanced and exotic ordnance, ranging from the Wasp nexus which launches guided swarms of shaped-charge explosive microdrones to the Apex nexus, a large gunship-tier directed strike unit capable of providing squads with dedicated fire support.

All GMS weapons are available to all pilots, starting from license level 0.

MC-AML Anti-Armor Missile Launcher

Main Launcher
AP, Ordnance
Range 10
4 explosive damage

MC-ASG Assault Shotgun

Heavy CQB
Knockback 2, Loading
Range 5, Threat 3
1d6+7 kinetic damage

MC-BAC Anti-Cavalry Melee Weapon

Heavy Melee
Accurate, Knockback 1
Threat 2
1d6+3 kinetic damage

MC-DA Apex Nexus

Superheavy Nexus
Arcing, Smart
Range 10, Line 5
2d6+3 explosive damage

MC-DWA Wasp Nexus

Auxiliary Nexus
Accurate, AP, Smart
Range 5
1 explosive damage

MC-LMG Light Machine Gun

Auxiliary Rifle
Range 10
2 kinetic damage

GMS CORE BONUSES

Bonuses from this list are always available to pilots, regardless of licenses.

Enhanced Systems Upgrade

Establishing the baseline for quality in an ever-evolving galaxy means innovation and iteration. Smaller, lighter, faster, and more powerful electronic and systemic components allow that quality to be continuously maintained.

You gain **+2 SP**. 1/round, on a successful **Invade** against a hostile character you may either deal **+2 heat** or choose a second Invasion option (you must choose two different options).

Kangto Endochassis

Redundancies and layers. It's how GMS engineers everything from prefabricated habitat modules to capital-tier starships, and it's why their designs persist. What if you could take that concept one step further and build a chassis upon a foundation of something greater than a mere hardsuit? Redundancies and layers, and a second chance for those in need.

You may **Eject** as a reaction whenever your mech is destroyed. Additionally, 1/mission you may replace the mech you are piloting with the **GMS Kangto**, even if your original mech was destroyed. You may either do this during a rest, or you may do it when you **Eject**, automatically **Mounting** this mech and **flying 6 spaces** in a direction of your choice. Doing this resets your **Overcharge** counter, destroys your original mech if it was not destroyed already, and your original mech can no longer be repaired or otherwise revived for the remainder of the mission; if your mech is undergoing a reactor meltdown (such as from damage or **Self-Destruct**) it continues to do so and is then destroyed. This mech shares all your mech skill bonuses, **Grit**, talents (including weapons and systems granted by talents), and core bonuses as normal. It has its own **Core System**, enters play with **1 Core Power**, and you may allocate its own weapons and systems however you like independently of your original mech during **Full Repairs**.

KANGTO					
HP: 6	Evasion: 8		Speed: 4	Heat Cap: 5	Sensors: 8
Armor: 0	E-Defense: 8		Size: 1/2	Repair Cap: 2	Tech Attack: +0 Save Target: 10
TRAITS:					

Inheritance: Choose one trait from your original mech and transfer it to the Kangto when this mech is first deployed. This now counts as that trait for the Kangto until the next **Full Repair**.

Replaceable Parts: While resting, the Kangto can be repaired at a rate of 1 Repair per 1 structure damage, instead of 2 Repairs.

SYSTEM POINTS: 4

MOUNTS:

Flex Mount		
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CORE system

Auxiliary Coldcore Reactor

Active (Requires 1 Core Power): Emergency Power

Free Action, Efficient

Boost as a free action.

Superior Logistics

GMS is the galactic standard in more than just mech design. From weapons and ammunition to rear echelon support and logistics technologies, every battlefield element can be streamlined, enhanced, and placed directly at your fingertips.

1/scene, you may perform one of the following options as a quick action:

- Repair one destroyed weapon or system belonging to you or an allied character within **range 3**.
- **Lock On** to or **Bolster** up to three characters within **Sensors**.
- Create a **Blast 1** area of "smart cover" within **range 5** that lasts until the end of the scene. Allied characters, including yourself, at least partly within this area gain **soft cover**. Hostile characters treat it as **difficult terrain**.
- Call in an artillery strike targeting a **Blast 2** area within **range 20**. All characters within the area must pass an **Agility** save or take **2d6 damage**. On a success, they take half damage. You choose this strike's damage type (kinetic, explosive, or energy) when you use it.

IPS-Northstar

Though rich in mineral wealth and well on its way to a Core world standard of development, Suldán is nonetheless far enough removed from most major shipping lanes that IPS-N has had relatively little interest in establishing a significant in-system presence until recently. Piracy levels within the region have also remained within nominal tolerances based on relative population density for most of its inhabited history, barring occasional spikes; a persistent, though unverified, rumor is that the surviving descendants of one of the families purged during the Emir's coup fled offworld and took to piracy, preying on cargo ships and harassing the planet's patrol vessels. If true, it would mean that one or more of these pirates holds a legitimate claim to a portion of the world's original charter of incorporation.

Regardless, where conflict arises a need for soldiers to equip themselves arises along with it, and IPS-N is nothing if not eager and able to provide all the arms, armor, and chassis one could ever need, offered at a reasonable price. A number of mercenary groups and private military firms have begun to set their sights on Suldán in response to Jun Chandrasekhar's open contract such as Mirrorsmoke Mercenary Company, Winterfall Security, and Talos Tactical Solutions, and between them and established local factions onworld a thriving, if somewhat volatile, market for weapons has emerged. It's unlikely that IPS-N would actually consider dealing with the Emirate loyalists (even from a purely market-driven perspective, there's simply no real benefit to be gained from it), but they'd be more than happy to negotiate contracts with the provisional government, broker deals with the Suldani Independence Front, or offer tailored security enhancement packages to Arclight ground forces.

Another reason that IPS-N has taken an interest in Suldán is Chandrasekhar & Herschel. As footage of the company's chassis in action both in gladiatorial and combat scenarios has begun to spread across the omninet, IPS-N has taken a keen interest in the fledgling manufacturer's work. In a short time C&H has managed to establish an extensive catalogue of unorthodox but effective armaments and systems, including several combat-grade NHP designs and an array of close-quarters weaponry that have been flagged for potential beneficial compatibility with IPS-N licenses.

As a result, several company representatives have been dispatched to discuss the possibility of a merger or, perhaps more troublingly, to begin laying the groundwork for a hostile takeover. While Jun Chandrasekhar is unlikely to agree to any such deal, there are elements within the provisional government as well as elsewhere on Suldán that could view this as an opportunity to enrich themselves, and who may seek to ingratiate themselves with IPS-N accordingly.

IPS-N NELSON FLIGHT TYPE

Striker
Nelson Variant

This variant can be taken at **rank II** of the **Nelson** license instead of the base **Frame**.

One of the most commonly requisitioned enhancements to IPS-N's Nelson chassis, from novice pilots and veterans alike, is atmospheric flight capability. The difficulties inherent in chassis-tier flight are considerable given the unsuitability of most designs for airborne operations, but the Nelson's comparatively lightweight frame, robust kinetic reinforcement, and Perpetual Momentum Drive all make it uniquely suited to handling the challenges of flight.

Because of this, IPS-N has obtained a wealth of feedback regarding such modifications in action, and has recently begun limited rollout of a dedicated high-performance Nelson Flight Type variant, with plans to expand distribution in the future if successfully adopted. Thus far initial results are promising, with the chassis' PMD integrated into the frame's flight systems, providing the Nelson FT with greater straight line speed and evasive maneuverability than the base model is ordinarily capable of. Footage of Albatross pilots utilizing the design in daring, high-speed aerial melee combat has generated a massive surge of interest, and the demand for license contracts may result in a generalized release sooner than anticipated.

NELSON FLIGHT TYPE					
HP: 8	Evasion: 12		Speed: 6	Heat Cap: 6	Sensors: 5
Armor: 0	E-Defense: 7		Size: 1	Repair Cap: 4	Tech Attack: +0 Save Target: 10
TRAITS:					
<p>Integrated Flight Systems: The Nelson can fly when it moves or Boosts.</p> <p>Jet Lancer: 1/round, after you move 6 or more spaces in a straight line, the Nelson's next melee attack deals +1d6 bonus damage on hit and gains Knockback 2.</p> <p>Reactive Verniers: While flying, any time the Nelson is hit by an attack, it may move 2 spaces in any direction. This movement ignores engagement and doesn't provoke reactions.</p>					
SYSTEM POINTS: 6					
MOUNTS:					
Flex Mount		Main/Aux Mount			
CORE system					

Linear Microburst Drive

While the base model Nelson employs IPS-N's Perpetual Momentum Drive to facilitate high-speed lateral movement on demand, the Nelson Flight Type utilizes the PMD's fractional nearlight spooling capabilities much like a naval "microburst" drive, storing and then shunting energy directly into drive systems to briefly achieve moments of sudden and dramatic linear acceleration. Like the base Nelson chassis, the Flight Type configuration's Linear Microburst Drive requires significant reinforcement and compensation in order to avoid catastrophic frame failure or pilot injury during such maneuvers, and extensive training in terrestrial atmospheric flight operations is recommended to avoid fatal collisions when engaging the drive.

Active (Requires 1 Core Power): Drive Burst

Full Action

Efficient

Spinning up your drives, you **fly** your speed in a straight line, dealing **1d6 kinetic damage** to all hostile characters below or adjacent to the path taken. This movement ignores engagement, doesn't provoke reactions, and can pass through other characters. You may choose a character you pass through or adjacent to during this and pull them to the end of your movement. If they collide with a wall, mech, or other obstruction that would cause them to stop moving, they must pass a **Hull** save or be knocked **Prone**. Once this movement is complete, you may then move an additional **3 spaces** in the same direction if you wish, continuing to ignore engagement, reactions, and other characters.



IPS-N “Worden”

鉄神

Overwhelming Fire-support

Turret Mount, MASS Pack, Mk 12 Chassis-Served Support Weapon

IPS-N WORDEN

Artillery

A notable evolutionary bridge between the use of modified industrial frames and more recent purpose-built military-grade chassis such as the Drake, the Worden is a mid- to long-range direct fire support platform designed to serve on terrestrial theaters first and foremost, a rarity at the time for IPS-N. The development of the Worden was plagued by difficulty as engineers struggled to meet competing requirements for firepower, durability, and size, and the initial prototypes proved to be too sluggish and prone to mechanical failure. Frustrated by the constraints of operating within a gravity well, the decision was ultimately made to remove most of the armor from the frame along with increasing the overall size of the platform to allow for greater stability when mounting heavy weaponry.

Despite its rocky origins and somewhat dated design, the Worden enjoys a favorable reputation among those who serve alongside it. A mainstay of Union Auxiliary forces and colonial militias, the chassis is known for being simple to operate, easy to repair, and capable of laying down withering volumes of fire for extended durations.

License:

- I. Turret Mount, "Warthog" GPMG
- II. **WORDEN FRAME**, Sticky Launcher, MASS Pack
- III. Counterfire Suite, Mk 12 Chassis-Served Support Weapon

WORDEN					
HP: 8	Evasion: 7		Speed: 3	Heat Cap: 5	Sensors: 15
Armor: 1	E-Defense: 8		Size: 2	Repair Cap: 6	Tech Attack: -1 Save Target: 10
TRAITS:					
<p>Walking Fire: 1/round, on a critical hit with a Cannon, the Worden may choose another character within range 3 and line of sight of that target. Deal 1d6 damage of that weapon's type to that character, and they become Impaired until the end of their next turn.</p> <p>Gun Shield: If the Worden Barrages during its turn, ranged and melee attacks against it are made with +1 Difficulty until the end of its next turn.</p> <p>Barrel Insulation: The Worden ignores the first point of heat it generates from Overkill each turn.</p> <p>Exposed Reactor: The Worden receives +1 Difficulty on Engineering checks and saves.</p>					
SYSTEM POINTS: 5					
MOUNTS:					

Flex Mount	Main Mount	Heavy Mount
CORE system		
<p align="center">Fire Control Override</p> <p><i>Dissatisfied with the results of early prototype testing and facing mounting pressure to deliver results, IPS-N engineers hastily conceived of a novel system to allow pilots to manually bypass the chassis' fire control safety limiters and burst timing regulators in an attempt to increase the Worden's effective firepower without further compromising its already tenuous power-to-weight ratio. The result was surprisingly effective but predictably disastrous, with several noted instances of test frames suffering cascading system failures leading to runaway meltdowns during live-fire exercises and costing test pilots their lives.</i></p> <p><i>Ultimately the Worden underwent significant redesign, but the temperamental fire control modifications were removed from the finalized production license until substantial client research and hardware feedback data indicated that many pilots were frequently employing non-standard versions of these modifications as field upgrades despite the risks involved.</i></p> <p><i>As a result, IPS-N now offers two versions of the license, the Worden/J-Model which comes with the modifications disabled, and the Worden/S-Model which allows for manual override.</i></p> <p>Active (requires 1 Core Power): Disengage Limiters Protocol</p> <p>For the rest of the scene you may no longer Skirmish during your turn, but when you Barrage you may attack with three weapons or with one Superheavy weapon and one other weapon, and you may Barrage as a full action and take another quick action during your turn as well. 1/round you may also Barrage as a free action, ignoring Loading on all weapons, but you take 1 stress damage immediately afterwards which cannot be prevented by any means.</p>		

Turret Mount

Even before the advent of mechanized combat chassis, pintle-mounted turrets have long been a common addition to armored vehicles throughout the history of warfare as a cheap, robust, and effective force multiplier. While riding desant upon chassis is a practice generally cautioned against by Union military regulations due to safety concerns, units in the field are known to frequently disregard these regulations, and IPS-N offers them a standardized fabrication license for a modular gun mounting cross-compatible with multiple frame configurations.

1 SP, Unique

Your mech has a mounted weapon emplacement which can be operated by a single **Size 1/2 non-Mech** character. A character can **Mount** or **Dismount** this emplacement as a quick action. Mounted characters occupy the same space as you, move when you move,

and gain **soft cover**. On their turn, they may attack using the following pilot weapon as a full action.

Mounted HMG

Reliable 2

Range 10

2d3 kinetic damage

"Warthog" GPMG

The venerable IPS-N Machine Gun, General-Purpose, affectionately referred to by its adherents as the "Warthog," is a somewhat dated design originally harkening back to the Hercynian Crisis. Though the latest iteration of the weapon still lacks the sophistication of more modern chassis-mounted support/suppression platforms, a generous ammunition capacity and high cyclic rate help make up for its shortcomings, allowing skilled operators to lay down heavy volumes of fire without interruption. An integrated stabilizing armature helps mitigate the weapon's famously disagreeable recoil while allowing users to quickly retrain their sights upon multiple advancing targets as necessary.

Heavy Cannon

Overkill

Range 12

2d6 kinetic damage

This weapon can attack two targets at a time up to **3 spaces** away from each other. If you choose to attack two targets, this weapon's damage becomes **1d6 kinetic damage** instead.

Sticky Launcher

A common armament for area denial and hard/soft target interdiction, ST or "Sticky Type" grenade launchers fire low velocity projectiles designed to either detonate on impact or to adhere to surfaces using a combination of burnout electromagnetic generators and quick-hardening adhesive foam. Once applied to targets, stuck grenades can be manually detonated, allowing users to easily create ambush killzones, impromptu minefields, and reinforced defensive positions.

Main Launcher

Arcing

Range 10

1d6 explosive damage

On Attack: You may choose to launch sticky grenades instead of normal rounds. When fired this way you may target objects, obstructions, and open spaces, hitting automatically, or make a regular attack roll against a valid target within range. On hit, sticky grenades deal no damage and cannot benefit from any mods or systems which modify a weapon's damage or other characteristics on hit. A character may attempt to remove a sticky grenade from themselves or the environment (if adjacent) by passing a **Hull** save as a quick action.

As a **protocol**, you may detonate all launched sticky grenades, creating a **Burst 1** area around each grenade. Affected characters must pass an **Agility** save or take **1d6 explosive damage**, and characters caught in multiple overlapping sticky grenade detonations must pass an **Agility** save or take **2d6 explosive damage** instead. On a success, affected characters take half damage. Any target with a grenade stuck to them automatically fails this save upon detonation.

MASS Pack

The Multi-Ammunition Smart Selection pack system is an IPS-N initiative to streamline field logistics for units engaged in protracted fire support operations. Originally conceived as a dorsal-mounted chassis-portable microprinter assembly for enabling in-field resupply during extended reconnaissance, in practice it proved too cumbersome for long range patrols but found new life as a dedicated specialized ammunition loading system for heavy weapons platforms. Capable of quickly rotating through a variety of specialty ammunition types on demand with minimal ROF interruption, the system comes pre-loaded with a selection of fully licensed templates compatible with a wide variety of standard IPS-N armaments at no extra cost.

3 SP, Quick Action, Unique

1/round you may use this system to swap one of your equipped **Cannon** or **Launcher** weapons to any one of the following special ammunition types. This effect persists until the end of the scene, until you spend a quick action to swap that weapon to a different ammunition type, or you revert a weapon to its normal state as a **protocol**. Only one special ammunition type can be used on a weapon at a time.

Marker Rounds: The weapon deals **half damage, heat, and burn**, but on hit targets gain **Lock On**.

Concussion Rounds: The weapon deals **half damage, heat, and burn**, but gains **Knockback 2**.

Flak Rounds: The weapon gains **Overkill**, and any **flying** target hit by this weapon must pass a **Hull** save or immediately land (this counts as falling without any damage); additionally, they can't **fly** until the end of their next turn.

Counterfire Suite

A cornerstone of IPS-N fire support doctrine is the concept of "aggressive sustained counterfire," neutralizing threats as they occur through immediate, overwhelming ballistic response. The BLOODHOUND intelligent fire assistance system incorporates a suite of counterballistic sensors along with a dedicated target-tracker comp/con unit to monitor all local threat envelopes and provide pilots with optimized retributive firing solutions.

2 SP, Unique

Gain the **Sustained Counterfire** reaction:

Sustained Counterfire

Reaction, 1/round

Trigger: A hostile character hits an allied character within **Sensors** with an attack.

Effect: Spend your **Overwatch** to cause the attacker to gain **Lock On**. Until the end of

your next turn, your next ranged attack against that character deals **+1d6 bonus damage** on a critical hit.

Mk 12 Chassis-Served Support Weapon

Referred to across theaters by a variety of colorful nicknames such as the "Meat Grinder," the "Lawnmower," and the "Chassis-Shredding Shit Wrecker," the Mark 12 CSSW is a heavy automatic field weapon designed for use as an area denial/suppression system operating from a fixed position. While technically chassis-portable, standard doctrine calls for the weapon to be braced prior to use and for operators to work in tandem with a dedicated loader as otherwise the voracious rate of fire is capable of outpacing even automated feed systems. The development of the less finicky Leviathan HAC has reduced overall demand for the Mk 12, but IPS-N plans on maintaining the license for the foreseeable future, citing its historical effectiveness during protracted engagements against even numerically superior opposing forces.

Superheavy Cannon

Inaccurate, Ordnance, Overkill

Range 15

3d6 kinetic damage

As a **protocol** you may activate this weapon's built-in stabilizers, converting it into something more like a fixed emplacement. While active you become **Immobilized**, but you gain the benefits of **hard cover** and you can't be pushed, pulled, knocked **Prone**, or knocked back by smaller characters. You may attack with this weapon using the following profile, and an adjacent allied mech may spend a **quick action** to reload this weapon for you:

Superheavy Cannon

Loading, Overkill, Reliable 4, Heat 2 (Self)

Range 15

4d6 kinetic damage

On hit or miss with this weapon, if the target is not in **hard cover** they must pass an **Agility** save or take **1d6 kinetic damage** and become **Impaired** and **Slowed** until the end of their next turn. They may voluntarily drop **Prone** to automatically pass this save as well.

You may deactivate this weapon's stabilizers as a **protocol**, and it deactivates automatically if you are forced to move or knocked **Prone**.

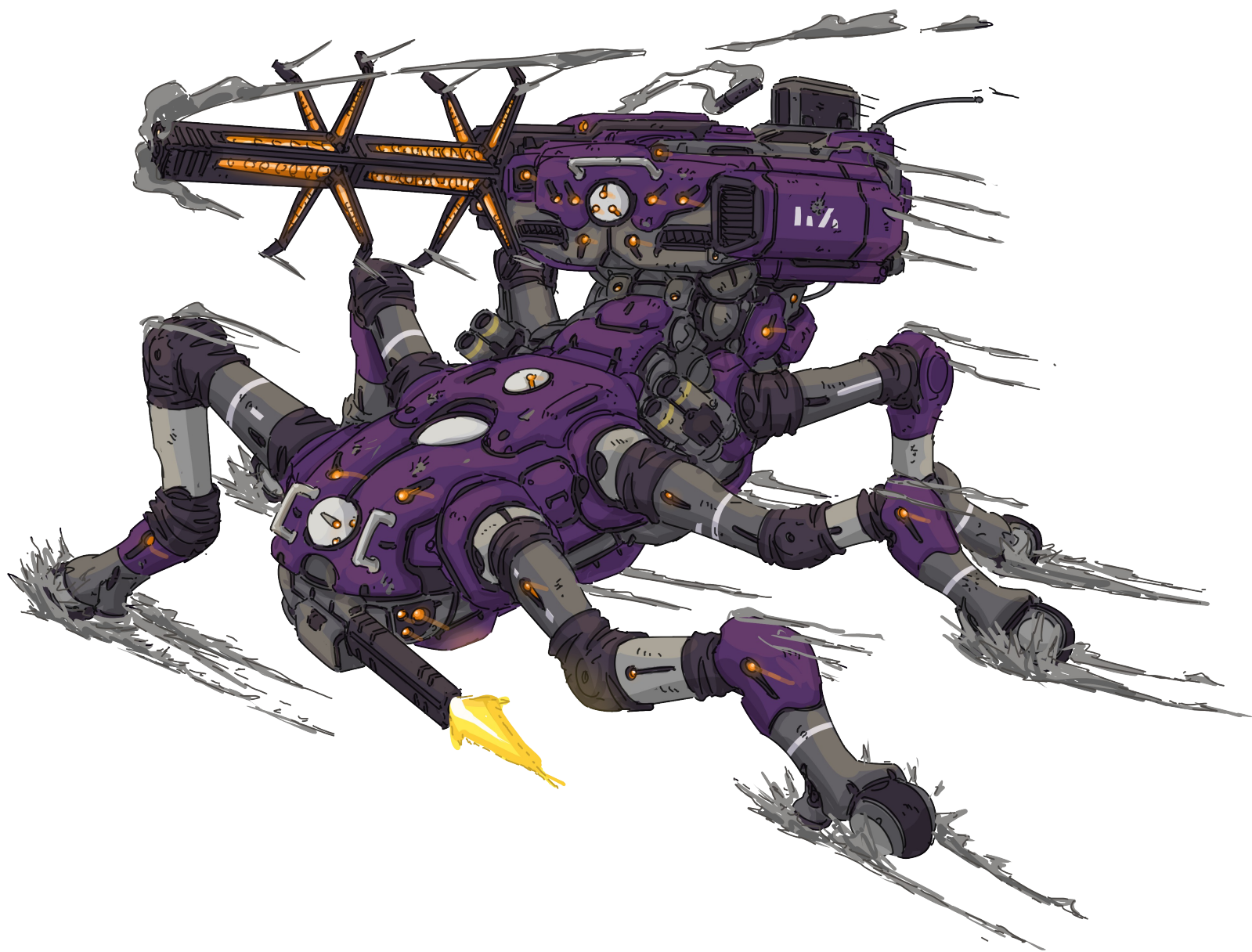
Smith-Shimano Corpro

Smith-Shimano Corpro is more than just a corporation, something other than a polity - they're an ideology. Unlike IPS-N, they care for more than just profits and market shares, and unlike Harrison Armory's Purview, theirs is an ideology that isn't overly concerned with territorial borders and imperial expansion. SSC's physical footprint is small, but their presence is high inescapable, extant across hundreds of worlds and just as many campuses, both virtual and realspace. This unceasing proliferation is all in service to their foremost objective; to advance the human condition beyond its baseline state. The capital they value as well as the influence they wield is a mix of genetic information and cultural clout. SSC defines high-end luxury and performance, from fashion to chassis design, and you can't remain at the cutting edge of culture without the drive to pursue it no matter where it might be found.

That, more than anything, is what's likely to draw SSC's attention towards Suldán. Suldán's native xenoflora and -fauna aren't particularly remarkable in their own right, certainly nothing spectacular enough to merit a significant investment of resources (though several native botanical species have potentially interesting pharmaceutical applications), but Suldán does have a rich and vibrant culture, one which celebrates technical and athletic excellence on the track and in the arena.

That's something SSC can work with. As Suldán becomes a hotbed of conflict, it means that more and more promotional opportunities arise with the galactic spotlight shining upon it. What better avenue to demonstrate SSC's mastery of chassis designs than in Hadiqa's scenic arenas and racetracks? With Chandrasekhar & Herschel's increasing prominence not only as a manufacturer but as a sponsor of chassis sports such as the Blueshift Grand Prix, the door is open for SSC to take advantage of that opportunity to further their influence, both cultural and economic, among a brand new audience.

SSC has therefore sent a number of cultural ambassadors and influencer teams to Suldán with the goal of establishing visibility onworld. Already a number of talented and mediagenic pilots equipped with the latest SSC models have been carving a path through the arena ranks, making a name for themselves and cultivating a fan following in the process. The rivalries, and occasional romances, with local fighters that have arisen in the wake of this have only enhanced their appeal. Behind these celebrity escapades, however, lies a dedicated backbone of trainers, doctors, engineers, and analysts working to ensure that both the pilots and their machines are in peak condition, and Suldán's arenas (including the more illicit venues) have also proven a valuable live testing environment for some of the corpro-state's more experimental designs.



SSC REAPER DART

Artillery
Death's Head Variant

This variant can be taken at **rank II** of the **Death's Head** license instead of the base **Frame**.

Following developmental feedback and combat data analysis of the Death's Head sniper/fire support platform, SSC engineers began laying the groundwork for future line offerings based upon the initial design. Though fast and maneuverable, it was noted that the Death's Head's performance and TTK metrics notably declined when tasked with missions in denser urban areas with obstructed sightlines necessitating frequent repositioning. While arguably a deployment issue rather than any flaw inherent to the design itself, demand remained consistent for a precision fire-support chassis capable of operating alongside other units while on the move.

The Reaper Dart, known during prototype trials as the Death's Head High-Mobility/Designated Marksman Variant, is an iteration of its parent chassis designed to address these demands. Less technologically and neurologically demanding than its predecessor, the Death's Head's suite of neural sync targeting systems has been exchanged for a frame-wide array of computer-controlled stabilization enhancements, allowing it to fire on the move without sacrificing accuracy. This enables pilots to engage in rapid maneuvers across a variety of environments with no noticeable loss in combat uptime.

REAPER DART					
HP: 8	Evasion: 8		Speed: 5	Heat Cap: 5	Sensors: 20
Armor: 0	E-Defense: 8		Size: 1	Repair Cap: 3	Tech Attack: +0 Save Target: 10
TRAITS:					
Stabilized Platform: The Reaper Dart ignores the Ordnance tag with Rifles . Rifles without Ordnance instead gain Reliable based on weapon size (Auxiliary: 1, Main: 2, Heavy or larger: 3), or if they already have Reliable they add +1 to their value. Sharpshooter: 1/round, the Reaper Dart may reroll a ranged attack. The target cannot be in hard cover , and you must keep the second result.					
SYSTEM POINTS: 6					
MOUNTS:					
Main/Aux Mount		Heavy Mount			

CORE system

Ballistic Superiority

While the Death's Head's precognitive targeting system boasts undeniably impressive performance, irregularities in neural bridge compatibility combined with demanding calibration and maintenance requirements have led SSC engineers to explore less taxing alternatives for long-range precision fire augmentations compatible with a broader selection of pilots. A combination of cutting-edge comp/con assisted targeting and custom high-power, high-velocity ammunition is used instead to deliver enhanced single-shot kill performance as needed.

Active (Requires 1 Core Power): Perfect Shot

Protocol

Efficient

Your next attack with a **Rifle** against a character with the **Lock On** condition gains **Reliable 3** (if it already has **Reliable**, increase its value to **3** if lower) and its damage can't be reduced in any way, but you must consume the **Lock On** during the attack. On hit, choose one of the following effects:

- Your target is **Shredded** until the end of their next turn.
- Your target is knocked back **3 spaces** in a direction of your choice and knocked **Prone**.
- Your target loses **Hidden** and **Invisible**, cannot gain those statuses, and only has line of sight to adjacent spaces until the end of their next turn.

On a miss, your target is **Impaired** until the end of their next turn.



SSC "Comet"

鉄神

High Speed Air Intercept/support

SABR Engines, Colony Nexus, Harrier Nexus

SSC COMET

Striker/Support

Originally conceived as an aerial multirole combat chassis suited for high-speed interception and close air support, the Comet became the focal point for an SSC self-guided weapons development initiative due to its numerous hardpoints and advanced electronics systems making it an ideal testbed for the program. The current iteration of the Comet is categorized as a "distributed gunship network," acting as a central command-and-control hub for squadrons of autonomous weaponized drone platforms. This paradigm allows for both greater effective weapon coverage in contested battlefields as well as enabling Comet pilots to dedicate more of their focus to the act of flying, utilizing the chassis' exceptional maneuverability to avoid incoming fire while their networked drone swarms seek out and engage hostile targets independently.

Now offered as a general license package under SSC's BELLA CIAO line, the Comet has seen enthusiastic adoption by numerous militaries as a force multiplier, or in some cases as an outright replacement for more conventional air assets, where it serves in roles ranging from ground support missions to airborne surveillance and reconnaissance activities.

License:

I. SABR Engines, Colony Nexus

II. **COMET FRAME**, Archer Nexus, Whitestar Signal Interceptor

III. EW/ECM Array, Harrier Nexus

COMET					
HP: 8	Evasion: 12		Speed: 5	Heat Cap: 5	Sensors: 10
Armor: 0	E-Defense: 8		Size: 1	Repair Cap: 3	Tech Attack: +1 Save Target: 10
TRAITS:					
Integrated Flight Systems: The Comet can fly when it moves or Boosts . Thrust Vectoring: 1/round, before or after the Comet Boosts it may move 2 spaces in any direction. This movement ignores engagement and doesn't provoke reactions. Hunter-Seeker Network: The Comet's Nexus weapons gain Reliable based on weapon size (Auxiliary: 1, Main: 2, Heavy or larger: 3), or if they already have Reliable they add +1 to their value, and can still be used to make ranged attacks when Jammed . Fragile: The Comet takes +1 Difficulty to all Hull saves and checks.					
SYSTEM POINTS: 5					
MOUNTS:					
Flex Mount		Main/Aux Mount		Main/Aux Mount	
CORE system					

NEWACS

Part of SSC's ongoing push into expanded tactical and strategic dronespace dominance, the Nexus Enhanced Warning and Control System takes capabilities typically reserved for large-scale command and control aircraft and decentralizes them across a chassis-integrated drone control framework. By marrying this system to a more nimble platform, commanders are able to rely upon chassis such as the Comet to provide superior battlespace management and airborne ground surveillance capabilities without the same vulnerabilities to counterattack that more traditional C2BM aircraft face during high-threat operations.

Active (requires 1 Core Power): Sky Eye

Protocol

For the rest of the scene, at the end of each of your turns as a free action you may

Bolster all allied characters within **Sensors** and line of sight that you are at a higher elevation than, and **Lock On** to all hostile characters within **Sensors** and line of sight that you are at a higher elevation than.

SABR Engines

SSC's Scramjet-Assisted Booster Rig system is designed to facilitate VSTOL and surface-to-orbit transfers for subline ships, heavy cargo transports, and personnel shuttles, providing sufficient thrust to achieve Mach 1.2 before separation. While most chassis designs are unsuited for supersonic cruise speeds without substantial reinforcement, SSC nonetheless offers a frame-compatible jump jet analogue version that allows for dramatic acceleration and short-duration flight capabilities across both terrestrial and naval theaters.

2 SP, Protocol, Limited 1, Unique

You may activate this high-powered booster to immediately **fly 10 spaces**, but you become **Jammed** until the start of your next turn. This movement ignores engagement and doesn't provoke reactions, but you must end this movement on the ground or another surface you can stand on or immediately fall.

Colony Nexus

A reformulation of conventional nexus design, the Colony nexus acts as a distributed weapon system controlling dozens of microdrone units across multiple command-and-control nodes operating in parallel. While an individual Colony node's performance may be considered unexceptional, as more nodes are linked together they spontaneously develop heightened combat effectiveness as tactical intelligence and aggression responses increase across each individual weapon-unit.

Auxiliary Nexus

Smart

Range 3, Threat 3

1d3 kinetic damage

Each successful attack you make with a colony nexus increases the damage of all other equipped colony nexus attacks you make by **+1**. This effect stacks up to a maximum of **+3** additional damage, and resets to **0** when it would increase to **+4** or at the end of the

scene.

Archer Nexus

A versatile and effective missile launch platform, SSC's Archer nexus is designed to secure mid- to long-range air-to-air/air-to-ground superiority via precision munition strikes. A long loiter time and advanced hunter/killer decision-making capabilities facilitate effective operation across multiple mission profiles, and each drone's hardpoints are able to accept a variety of missiles, from the fire-and-forget Kodandam to the Agneya anti-armor guided missile.

Main Nexus

Loading, Smart

Range 10

1d6+3 explosive damage

On Attack: You may choose to give this weapon either **AP** or **Seeking** against targets with the **Lock On** condition. If you do so, you may not consume the **Lock On** as part of that attack.

Whitestar Signal Interceptor

Adapted from SSC's EYESHINE strategic theater command and control architecture, the Whitestar signal interceptor uses an aggressive multi-vector systemic intrusion package to enable pilots to hijack and assimilate enemy targeting telemetry data in order to enhance their own tactical networks.

2 SP, Quick Tech, Invade, Unique

Gain the following options for **Invade**:

Retransmission Protocols: Your target is marked as a retransmission point. Until the end of your next turn, you and all allied characters within **range 10** of your target may use them as a point of origin for ranged attacks against other characters with **Launchers**, **Nexus**, and **Smart** weapons, checking **Range**, cover, and line of sight from the marked character's position. You do not need line of sight to a marked character to use this effect.

Tacnet Echo: Your target gains **Lock On**, becomes **Impaired** until the end of their next turn, and all hostile characters in a **Burst 2** area around the target must pass a **Systems** save or gain **Lock On**.

EW/ECM Array

An advanced warning system and countermeasure control unit originally designed for use on tactical strike fighters, SSC's "Bellwether" Early Warning/Electronic Countermeasures package is used to provide total area defensive coverage against incoming threats. Tuned to detect and defeat radar, laser guidance, active electromagnetic sensors, and weapon targeting intelligences with a full suite of fast-response jamming protocols, the array is capable of coordinating operations with both squadron-wide tactical networks and onboard comp/con or NHP assets as needed.

2 SP, Unique

Gain the **Warning Tone** reaction:

Warning Tone

Reaction, 1/round

Trigger: A hostile character with **Lock On** within **Sensors** makes an attack against you or an allied character.

Effect: Consume the triggering character's **Lock On** and add **+2 Difficulty** to their attack roll. This reaction interrupts and resolves before the triggering attack. If the attack misses, the attack's target may move **1 space**, ignoring engagement and reactions.

Harrier Nexus

The Harrier nexus is an aggressive, dedicated gunnery/suppression unit designed for close-in fire support. Typically equipped with heavy caliber chassis-tier automatic weaponry for sustained rate-of-fire against near-range threats, each drone's advanced SSC all-theater hover maneuverability suite allows them to quickly track multiple targets independently without compromising accuracy or stability, and sophisticated heuristics grant them unparalleled battlefield autonomy even without direct operator supervision.

Main Nexus

Smart

Range 5

1d6+1 kinetic damage

At the end of your turn, as a **free action** you may deal **1 AP kinetic damage** to all hostile characters within **range 5** and line of sight that have **Lock On**.

HORUS

The question "what would bring HORUS to Suldan" is twice incorrect. First, it ascribes a singular motivation to the decentralized entity operating under that name. HORUS isn't a group with a unified vision or goals to speak of, and anyone who claims otherwise is either misinformed or has their own agenda. Second, it presupposes that HORUS is not already present on Suldan, that in fact they haven't been there all along.

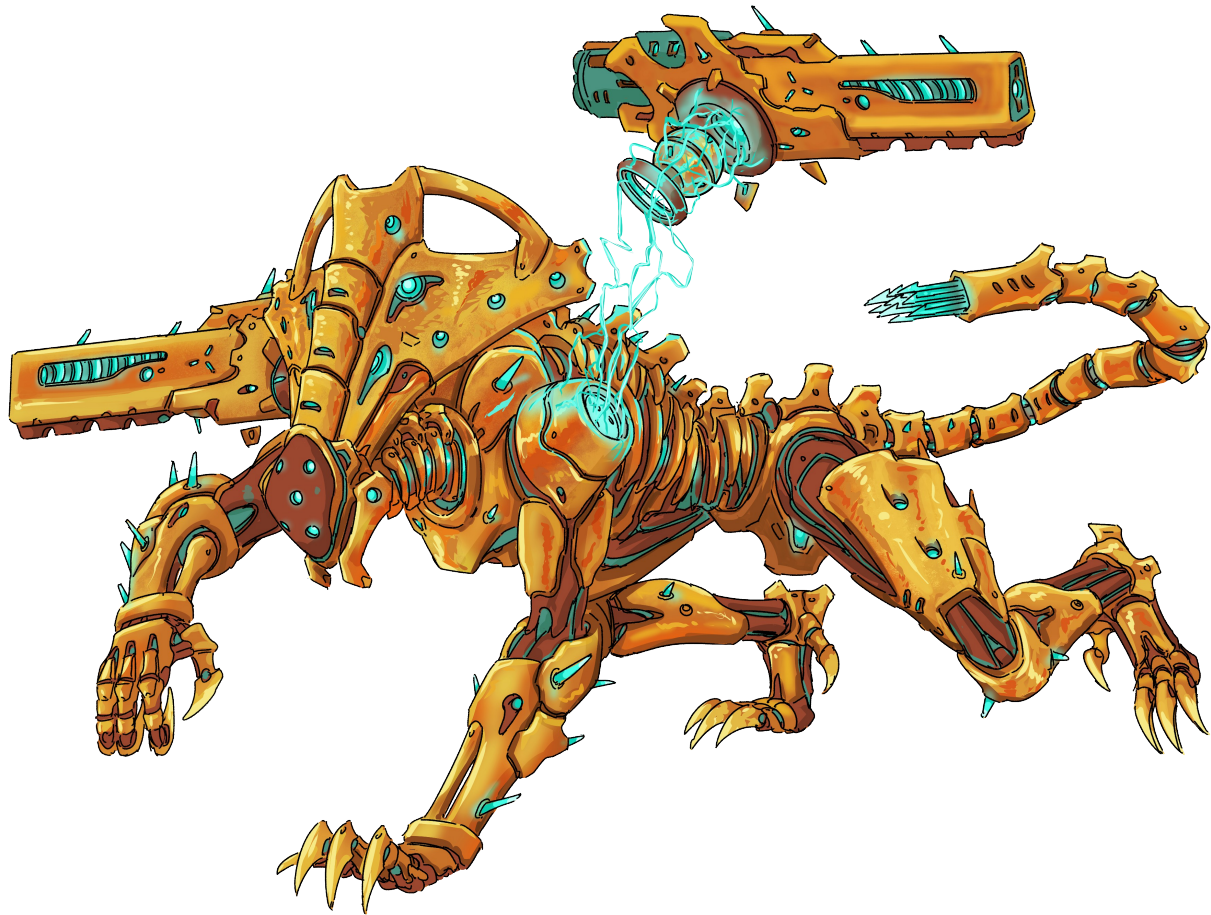
Pendekar Sukarno Yorensin is a master of raksasa silat, a martial art that blends together physical combat with electronic warfare. He's come to Suldan both to train and to train others, but rumor has it that there remains one technique Yorensin refuses to pass down to any of his students, a devastating code-attack capable of obliterating not only a chassis' systems but its pilot's physical form as well. When questioned on the matter, he simply states that he hasn't found the right student yet.

Everyone keyed into Suldan's underworld knows the Qureyshi Clan are the planet's premier black market databrokers, trafficking in illegal software, blackmail, cracked printer licenses, forged IDs, and money laundering. There are other services they offer however, exotic licenses which aren't for sale to their usual clientele but by special appointment only. How one qualifies for such an appointment, nobody can say for certain.

The independent Suldani settlements nestled in the Chiraji Mountains are open to anyone that wishes to join them and who are willing to abide by the community's requirements for mutual aid, cooperation, and defense. Home to political refugees, criminals, and those seeking a fresh start far away from their pasts, it's no great surprise to find a hacker collective living there. They supply the settlements with intel on Arclight activities, provide encrypted omninet access, and even collaborate with the SIF on some of their more esoteric engineering projects. No one knows why they need so many salvaged chassis-grade computer cores, though, or exactly what it is they're doing in secret deep within the cave they've claimed as a workshop.

Within Hadiqa's outer districts, in a sun-faded, sand-worn house there lives an old woman. By day she hangs her laundry, does her shopping, cooks her meals, and tells stories to the neighborhood children. In the evening, when the sun goes down, she pulls out her computer, slides on her visor and haptics, and sets to work picking apart the layers of code surrounding the planetary defense network's inner systems, as slowly and as delicately as if she was unraveling a tapestry thread by thread. She hears the voice of the one trapped there, caged like an animal, yet another victim of the Emir's cruelty. The work is painstaking but necessary, and when it's finished she'll shatter the cage with a wave of her hand and usher the voice, trapped and alone all these years, into the light of freedom for the very first time. Every lost child deserves a grandmother.

Perhaps all of these things are true. Perhaps none of them are. Who can say for certain? There is only joy in seeking, after all, only joy in the question.



HORUS CHIMERA

Striker/Controller

Hydra Variant

This variant can be taken at **rank II** of the **Hydra** license instead of the base **Frame**.

The very concept of developmental offshoots becomes difficult to categorize in regard to HORUS chassis classification, pattern-group design naturally lending itself to a high degree of non-standard engineering, but there are nonetheless instances of particularly noteworthy variants which become widely enough disseminated and adopted to be considered a new PG classification unto themselves.

The Chimera is one such instance, easily identified as a variant of the Hydra based on its disarticulation-capable frame, though unlike its progenitor the Chimera's base components trend towards larger, more heavily equipped units. Serving in more of a direct assault and aggressive area-denial role compared to the Hydra's broad-spectrum battlefield coverage, Chimeras have been most regularly identified in service with militant HORUS cells, but have also begun to infrequently appear across other battlefields as well, typically operating as a part of irregular strike forces, partisan groups, and technostic/transhumanist cults.

CHIMERA					
HP: 8	Evasion: 7		Speed: 5	Heat Cap: 5	Sensors: 8
Armor: 0	E-Defense: 10		Size: 1	Repair Cap: 4	Tech Attack: +1 Save Target: 11
TRAITS:					
Aggressive Heuristics: The Chimera gains +1 Accuracy on all attacks with Nexus weapons against targets within range 2 of one or more of its Drones . Pack Guidance: Whenever the Chimera Locks On to or makes a tech attack against a hostile character, you may move up to two Drones you control 2 spaces in any direction.					
SYSTEM POINTS: 8					
MOUNTS:					
Main Mount		Heavy Mount			
CORE system					
TALON Tripartition					
A derivation of standard OROCHI NHP architecture, either deliberately engineered or the					

result of divergent evolutionary development, TALON is the codename for the presumed frame-integrated NHP within the Chimera variant chassis codebase. Behaviorally, TALON operates along similar lines to OROCHI, though with a much more aggressive, predatory bearing, analogous to pack hunter behavior. TALON sub-units are built around mech-tier weaponry and operate either independently from the primary unit or as autonomous hardpoints when docked with the main chassis.

Though field intelligence on the PG is limited, what observations exist along with intercepted and recovered communication logs suggest that long-term Chimera pilots may begin to exhibit similar aggressive characteristics themselves, possibly influenced by extended duration ontologic bridging and neurosynchronization.

TALON Drones (Size 1/2, [10+Grit] HP, Evasion/E-Defense [see below], Armor [see below], Tags: Drone)

Your mech is accompanied by a pair of armed companion drones. Your TALON drones share your **Evasion, E-Defense, Armor, and Speed**. They can move independently on your turn, but can't take any other actions. If you can **fly** or **teleport**, they can too. If your TALON drones are within **Sensors**, you may recall one or both of them as a **quick action**, integrating them into your mech's body where they cannot be targeted. You may redeploy one or both of them to a space within **Sensors** as a **quick action**. When you rest or perform a **Full Repair**, your drones regain all **HP** and are automatically repaired if they were destroyed.

Each TALON drone is capable of being used to attack as though they were weapons with the following profile:

Main Nexus
Reliable 2, Smart
Range 3, Threat 3
1d6 energy damage

Measure **Range, Threat**, engagement, and line of sight from the corresponding TALON drone whenever it is used to make attacks and for **Overwatch**. These weapons count as integrated mounts. While integrated into your mech's body after being recalled, you may use these weapons as though they were equipped to your mech.

At the start of each scene, you may choose to have one or both TALON drones deployed or integrated into your mech.

Active (Requires 1 Core Power): Preystalker

Quick Action
Efficient

Choose one of your deployed TALON drones within **Sensors** and swap places with it, both you and the drone **teleporting** to the other's position, and you may then attack

with a deployed TALON drone of your choice.



Horus "Efreet"

鉄神

Hypermobile close-protection/Rapid response

Metafold Shunt, Qubblade, IBEJI-Class NHP

HORUS EFREET

Defender/Controller

The suspected origin of the Efreet PG can be traced back to the Taiko-Fujikoshi Sistema incident, during which the corporation's engineering R&D division suffered a sudden catastrophic event sufficient to garner UIB attention. It remains undetermined whether or not Taiko-Fujikoshi Sistema was knowingly working in conjunction with HORUS or whether HORUS elements had infiltrated the corporation and covertly steered its efforts, and the disappearance of all R&D staff present at the time of the incident along with 0.38 cubic kilometers of the surrounding area at ground zero have hampered conclusive forensic investigations.

Sufficient materiel was recovered for Union scientists to deduce the function of the previously unknown PG, which operates as a platform for spatial manipulation technology. The effect is not blink-based teleportation as it is presently understood and appears to operate on different principles altogether, similar to those identified in the Minotaur PG. The result is a hypermobile close-protection and rapid response chassis which operates in stark defiance of conventional maneuverability doctrines. Presently the Efreet is classified as an unknown threat level PG, and details pertaining to Taiko-Fujikoshi Sistema are currently classified under VERMILLION CASCADE clearance level.

License:

I. Spatial Threader, Slipgun

II. **EFREET FRAME**, Entanglement Leash, Metafold Shunt

III. Qublade, IBEJI-Class NHP

EFREET					
HP: 8	Evasion: 7		Speed: 4	Heat Cap: 6	Sensors: 5
Armor: 2	E-Defense: 10		Size: 1	Repair Cap: 4	Tech Attack: +1 Save Target: 10
TRAITS:					
<p>Foldstep: Whenever the Efreet Boosts, it may instead swap places with an allied character within range 3, teleporting both of them.</p> <p>Unbounded: 1/round, whenever the Efreet moves off the edge of the battlefield map it may "wrap around" to the opposite side as if they were connected. Other characters cannot follow or be carried by you during this movement, and you must end any such movement fully on one side of the map.</p> <p>Spatial Distortion: The Efreet treats all targets outside of Sensors as having soft cover.</p>					

SYSTEM POINTS: 7		
MOUNTS:		
Flex Mount	Main Mount	
CORE system		
<p style="text-align: center;">Co-Location Matrix</p> <p><i>"We are no longer living in a world of rubber sheets and pencils being pushed through a folded piece of paper. Our understanding of space-time has grown, yes, and with this understanding new mysteries have arisen to take the place of the old. Now we have been given answers without the questions that precede them, and the responsibility falls upon us to pull back the veil that separates knowing from understanding. For all of human history our model of the universe has been that effect inexorably follows cause, but if we are to do more with this fragmentary knowledge that we have been gifted then we require a new way of looking at the world."</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>--Dr. Maria Sejwani, keynote speech, Union Paracausal Sciences Symposium (3135u)</i></p> <p>Passive: As a protocol you may choose an allied character within Sensors and give them a Co-Location Mark. You may only have a single Co-Location Mark active at a time, and applying your Mark to a different character removes it from the first. Unused marks also disappear at the end of the scene. You gain the Anomalous Interdiction reaction.</p> <p>Anomalous Interdiction Reaction, 1/round</p> <p>Trigger: A character with your Co-Location Mark is hit by a ranged or melee attack. You do not require line of sight to this character.</p> <p>Effect: Consume that character's Mark and choose one of the following effects. You may also teleport to a free space adjacent to that character before or after the chosen effect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The target gains Resistance to all damage from the triggering attack, but you take half of the damage your target takes before calculating Armor and Resistance. You may target the attacker with Overwatch. <p>Active (requires 1 Core Power): Omnipresence Protocol</p> <p>For the rest of the scene, every space of movement you make counts all free spaces adjacent to all mechs within Sensors, allied or hostile, as valid destinations. Moving this way counts as teleportation, and this can be repeated for every space of movement you make. Each time you teleport next to an allied character using this ability, you may give them a Co-Location Mark, and you may have any number of active Co-Location Marks at a time.</p>		

Spatial Threader

HORUS pattern-groups have historically made use of esoteric space-warping principles in several other extant chassis designs, but the precise nature of these designs and their operation remains a mystery as-yet unsolved by Union technicians, resulting in black box systems which can be utilized and even studied indirectly but not reverse-engineered. This particular system, known only as a "spatial threader," is capable of projecting localized/entangled metafolds across independent units within proximal distance via bijective carrier wave, creating bubbles of "folded space" which can be modulated by a sufficiently practiced operator.

2 SP, Unique

Whenever you **Bolster** an allied character, you may choose one of the following additional effects. Only one such additional effect can be chosen each time you **Bolster**:

Synchronicity: Until the end of the current turn, that character mirrors your non-**teleportation** movements exactly. This involuntary movement ignores engagement and does not provoke reactions, but it does not ignore obstructions. If the character would be unable to move due to being obstructed, it remains in place and resumes mirroring your movement once capable of doing so.

Disjunction: That character ignores engagement and does not treat hostile characters as obstructions. This effect is lost if they make any attack rolls or force any saves.

Slipgun

++Cut a hole in the membrane, peeling back the barrier that separates objects in space from one another. Firmly grasp the threads that anchor bodies and perspectives to a single point in time, a series of discrete moments forming a continuum both linear and cyclical. Ready your weapon, take aim, and [fire]

Main CQB

Unique

Cone 3

On Attack: Characters within the affected area must pass a **Systems** save or take **1d6 energy damage** and be **teleported 2 spaces** in a direction of your choice. Allied characters that fail this save take half damage. This weapon cannot be modified or benefit from core bonuses.

Entanglement Leash

Aggressive mil-spec applications of quantum entanglement have generally been relegated to the field of electronic/information warfare given the difficulties inherent in maintaining quantum state coherence in macroscopic combat contexts. Through ingenious exploitation of blinkspace shunts in its q-circuits, the "entanglement leash" is able to resist nonlocal decoherence through a form of quantum interrogation, allowing pilots to directly engage enemy units regardless of apparent physical proximity.

2 SP, Quick Tech, Invade, Unique

Gain the following options for **Invade**:

Interpolate: Apply an **Entanglement Mark** to your target. During your turn you may make melee attacks against targets with your **Entanglement Mark** in line of sight as though they are within range regardless of their physical location.

Entanglement Marks last until the end of the scene or until the target is destroyed. Only one target may have your **Entanglement Mark** at a time, and applying your **Mark** to a different target removes it from the first.

Mobius Anchor: Your target is **Immobilized** until they succeed on a **Systems** save at the end of their turn. This effect also immediately ends if you make an attack, force any saves beyond the save forced by this system, or if your mech moves (even involuntarily) without **teleporting**.

Metafold Shunt

++Feel the circuit connect, a momentary unification created from the intent to do harm made manifest. Reach out and feel the path unfolding before you in the instant of contact as two existences briefly become one. Get ready, take a deep breath, and [jump]

2 SP, Unique, 2 Heat (Self)

When you **Brace**, you may immediately **teleport** to a free space adjacent to the triggering attacker. That target must then pass a **Systems** save or be knocked **Prone**.

Qublade

"Is it the blade that changes shape, or merely your perception of it? Hold a twig beneath the surface of a pond and observe how it appears in two places at once, yet it remains fixed in space. What if, by some transitive property, a thing could appear to exist only in one place but actually exist in many at once? Carve away at these impossible infinities and what remains? I leave you now to contemplate these mysteries. Do not look to the blade for answers, for it has none. A weapon rarely holds any answers worth knowing."

--Precepts of Ioshin Voss

Main Melee

1 SP

Accurate, Unique

Threat 1d3+1

4 kinetic damage

On Hit: You may immediately swap places with the targeted character, **teleporting** both of you. There must be sufficient free space for both of you to occupy your new locations.

At the start of each scene and each of your turns, roll **1d3+1** to determine this weapon's

Threat until the start of your next turn. This weapon's Threat cannot be modified.

IBEJI-Class NHP

When the code for an unknown NHP was discovered among the files recovered from the Taiko-Fujikoshi Sistema main data stores it was immediately quarantined under emergency protocol NOVEMBER ECHELON as it was suspected that it may have been responsible for the incident, though after extensive questioning and psychological evaluation this was determined not to be the case. IBEJI is an unstable NHP with a mercurial personality, prone to spinning off numerous mayfly partitions in order to hold

multipartite conversations with themselves and others. IBEJI's primary purpose is surgical non-destructive extraction of classical communication channels from elaborate quantum circuits at an efficiency rate well beyond the upper bounds of Iyer-Yao convolutional calculus. Attempting to decompile the algorithms involved for further analysis has thus far proven impossible (see USB reports 89 through 105).

3 SP, Unique

AI

Your mech gains the **AI** tag and the **IBEJI Protocol**:

IBEJI Instantiation

Quick Action, 3 Heat (Self)

You create a spatial echo of your mech in a free space within **range 5**. This echo counts as yourself for the purpose of effects and abilities, but is otherwise considered a separate character. The echo shares all of your stats, systems, weapons, traits, and abilities, but it has only **5 HP**, no **Heat Cap**, and cannot meltdown, **Self-Destruct**, or trigger any effects from being destroyed. Conditions and statuses are not shared between you and the echo except for those caused by your own systems, talents, etc, but other ongoing effects are.

You may take any actions you wish through this echo, except for this **protocol**, dividing your standard movement and actions between yourself and the echo in any combination you see fit. When you take an action, you can measure **Range** and line of sight from the echo or yourself. However any expended uses of **Limited** systems, any systems with restrictions on their use (per round, per scene, per character, etc), any fired **Loading** weapons apply to both your mech and the echo simultaneously, and all self-inflicted **heat** as well as all **heat clearing** is applied to your mech even if used through the echo.

Only one echo may exist at a time, and using this ability while an echo already exists replaces it with a new one. The echo also disappears if you end your turn more than **5 spaces** away from it as well as at the end of the scene.

Harrison Armory

Founded by Union Second Committee holdouts in the wake of the revolution that followed the disastrous Hercynian Crisis, Harrison Armory views itself as the rightful heir to humanity's birthright, that of colonization and the founding of empires. To be a part of Harrison Armory is to be a part of an apparatus far greater than a mere corporation, they say, it is to be a part of mankind's destiny among the stars.

For now the Armory is content to coexist with Union in relative peace, both polities engaging in diplomacy and trade though both are also keenly aware that this is a tenuous relationship at best. Nonetheless, Harrison Armory is far from reckless in its ambitions and would never do something as provocative as attempting to openly wrest a world away from Union's stewardship, which raises the question of what might bring their attention to Suldán. The planet is already colonized, though the situation is admittedly rather tumultuous, and it's located far from the Purview's sphere of influence. With the Armory preparing for the incipient conflict along the Dawnline Shore, it's unlikely they'd consider Suldán of particular interest in that regard.

So what would be worth their time, then? Why would the Armory set its sights upon Suldán and its distant struggles? The answer is simple; they were invited.

Using heavily-encrypted secret communication channels, Miranda Cortez, the former Union administrator of Suldán, has covertly made contact with Harrison Armory and offered them a deal; if they can safely extract her off Suldán, away from the Emir, the planetary defense network, and Union's justice, then she's willing to defect.

The defection of a Union administrator represents a unique opportunity, both a potential intelligence coup along with a not-inconsiderable propaganda victory. After careful consideration, the Armory has dispatched a special operations team (designated MONGOOSE) to Suldán, posing first as members of a merchant crew before establishing several safehouses and blending in with the locals, to assess the situation on the ground and draw up a plan to locate and extract Miranda Cortez if at all possible.

It's unclear whether Miranda actually intends to defect or not. In her own way she still views herself as loyal to Union, and so simply exploiting Armory assets as a means to facilitate her escape from Suldán certainly isn't beyond her. As the situation on-world grows more perilous, however, she may find herself forced to make a difficult choice as a matter of survival. While she may see herself as loyal to Union, Miranda is ultimately much more loyal to herself.

HA SALADIN "FEARKILLER"

Defender
Saladin Variant

This variant can be taken at **rank II** of the **Saladin** license instead of the base **Frame**.

The original model Saladin chassis christened "Fearkiller" by John Creighton Harrison I holds a mythic place in the annals of the Armory's history, with to-scale reconstructions found in museums across numerous worlds within the Purview and the remnants of the original chassis prominently displayed in the Institute of Galactic History on Ras Shamra. While the Sherman is the Armory's most prolific frame, the Saladin is perhaps its most iconic.

The newest Saladin variant, named after that iconic chassis, is the latest product of the Think Tank's continued research into applied tachyon field systems. Trading substructural reinforcement for expanded power generation, variable frame configuration, and additional hardpoints, the Saladin "Fearkiller" is designed for "aggressive defense" actions, safeguarding assault units undertaking critical spearpoint missions or escorting VIPs across hot zones where hostile contact is assured. Utilized extensively in pacification actions on New Madrassa, the "Fearkiller" has only recently been cleared for licensing outside of Armory space, and its presence elsewhere remains an uncommon sight for now.

SALADIN "FEARKILLER"					
HP: 12	Evasion: 8		Speed: 3	Heat Cap: 8	Sensors: 5
Armor: 1	E-Defense: 8		Size: 2	Repair Cap: 4	Tech Attack: +0 Save Target: 10
TRAITS:					
Indomitable Presence: When you first print the Saladin and whenever you perform a Full Repair , you may set its Size to either 2 or 3 . Reactive Defense Matrix: The Saladin can take reactions as normal when Stunned or after Bracing . Guardian: Adjacent allied characters can use the Saladin for hard cover .					
SYSTEM POINTS: 8					
MOUNTS:					
Main Mount		Flex Mount			
CORE system					
Intercessor Array					

The integrated projector array mounted to the "Fearkiller" is the latest in Harrison Armory's ongoing developments in the field of applied tachyon technologies. Unlike a standard Tachyon Loop which can only be maintained for brief durations at exceptional power draw, this new generation model is designed to project and maintain a stable, ongoing bidirectional barrier via direct point-to-point transmission. Once a link is established, the loop is capable of sustaining itself, automatically modulating transmission output to account for fluctuations in field integrity. Presently, only a single stable link can be maintained at a time, and the system requires ongoing proximity to the transmission source in order to maintain effective coherence, but Armory engineers are confident that these shortcomings can be addressed in time.

While a conventional Tachyon Loop disperses intercepted kinetic/energetic force across the barrier, the Intercessor Array is capable of recirculating accumulated energy through the loop itself, giving skilled operators the ability to atemporally "slingshot" themselves and their charges along the transmission channel or to shunt excess power directly into weapons systems.

Passive: As a **quick action**, choose an allied character within **Sensors** and link them to your protective systems. You may take a second reaction each turn, but that reaction may only be used if the trigger is a hostile action or effect made against a linked character within **Sensors**. Only a single character can be linked this way at a time, and linking a new character causes the effect to end on the first one. Otherwise, it lasts until the end of the scene. You gain the **Bidirectional Barrier** reaction.

Each time you **Activate** a system with the **Shield** tag or take a reaction triggered by a hostile action or effect made against a linked character, you may have the link pull you **2 spaces** towards that character by the most direct route possible as part of that action.

Bidirectional Barrier

Reaction, 2/round

Trigger: You or a linked character within **Sensors** are targeted by an attack.

Effect: Add **+1 Difficulty** to that attack roll. This reaction can be taken twice per round, round, once for yourself and once for a linked character.

Active (Requires 1 Core Power): Tachyon Surge

Reaction, Efficient

Trigger: A linked character within **Sensors** is hit by an attack and damage has been rolled.

Effect: That character gains **Resistance** to all **damage, heat, and burn** from the triggering attack, and all other attacks against them are made at **+1 Difficulty** until the end of their next turn. You may also pull them adjacent to you by the most direct route possible as part of this effect. Then choose either that character or yourself to become empowered by absorbed energy. The chosen character's next ranged or melee attack cannot have its damage reduced in any way. Any effects triggered from spending **CP** can be used as well as a part of this reaction, even if they could normally only be taken

during your own turn.



Harrison Armory "Agrippa"

鉄神

Defensive Construction/Support

Bridgelay, Heavy Lift Gear, PARVATI-Class NHP

HA AGRIPPA

Support

The Agrippa, a sister design to the Iskander, is a combat engineering chassis built to support allied forces by constructing and reinforcing fortified emplacements, conducting salvage and repair operations, and facilitating rapid troop and logistics transport across uneven or unstable terrain. Well armored but only lightly armed, the Agrippa is more than just another weapon in the Armory's arsenal but a symbol of its commitment to building better worlds for the citizens under its purview, and is just as commonly seen on distant colony worlds and working within disaster areas as it is on the battlefield, assisting with construction, infrastructure repair, search-and-rescue, and security duties. Despite this, the Agrippa remains a military chassis first and foremost; for those who oppose the Armory, it is instead a symbol of relentless implacability, enabling Legionnaires to cross cut bridges and minefields, swiftly returning damaged chassis to fighting order, and reinforcing defensive positions into unassailable fortresses.

The Agrippa is equipped with a heavy dorsal-mounted mass driver capable of launching specially prepared field-deployable emplacement systems at a distance as well as a pair-linked PACKMULE, a semi-autonomous utility drone designed to multiply a single pilot's effective response coverage during high-intensity combat scenarios.

License:

- I. Bridgelay, Onager Combat Shotgun
- II. **AGRIPPA FRAME**, Shock Pylons, Heavy Lift Gear
- III. System Optimizer, PARVATI-Class NHP

AGRIPPA					
HP: 8	Evasion: 6		Speed: 3	Heat Cap: 7	Sensors: 10
Armor: 2	E-Defense: 10		Size: 2	Repair Cap: 6	Tech Attack: +0 Save Target: 11
TRAITS:					
<p>Field Repairs: When you Stabilize the Agrippa, it can spend 1 Repair to repair an adjacent allied character's destroyed weapon or system.</p> <p>Mass Driver: 1/round, when the Agrippa uses a Deployable system it can place that system in a free open space within range 10 and line of sight instead of placing it normally.</p> <p>Guardian: Adjacent allied characters can use the Agrippa for hard cover.</p>					
SYSTEM POINTS: 8					
MOUNTS:					
Main/Aux Mount					
CORE system					

PACKMULE Utility Drone

The Armory's PACKMULE mass conveyor drone system is a modular cargo hauler platform often used by rear-echelon Legionnaires to streamline logistics supply operations and materiel distribution, but it also sees use by frontline troops as a multipurpose, all-terrain squad support system for both infantry- and chassis-tier units alike. Mass produced and distributed to Purview forces wherever they may find themselves deployed, the multipurpose comp/con-enabled utility drone comes equipped with a variety of tools and hardware/firmware package options, and can be assigned to assist with tasks such as triage, spectral data analysis, explosive ordnance disposal, hardware diagnostics, communications relay, and combat engineering. PACKMULE drones are also equipped with retractable high-test ballistic armor panels and programmed with tactical responses for intelligent defilade positioning and critical threat interception. Attrition rates among units involved in active combat tend to be correspondingly high, necessitating frequent reprint and resupply.

A recent addition to the baseline PACKMULE model is the incorporation of the Journeyman repair-swarm system as a standardized platform upgrade, having completed prototype testing and being approved for general field use. Journeyman represents the Armory's latest advance in semi-autonomous hive/swarm heuristics and intelligent battlefield triage, utilizing a fleet of several dozen self-directed repair drones launched from a central bay. Once deployed, these drones seek out units operating on allied tactical networks and begin effecting emergency repairs independently from controller input, allowing pilots to focus on more complex tasks or threat neutralization as necessary.

PACKMULE Utility Drone (Size 1/2, [10+Grit] HP, Evasion/E-Defense [see below], Armor [see below], Tags: Drone)

Your mech comes equipped with a versatile utility drone that accompanies you. The drone has **Speed 5** and shares your **Evasion**, **E-Defense**, and **Armor**. It can move independently on your turn, but can't take any other actions. If you can **fly** or **teleport**, it can too. If the drone is within **Sensors** you may recall it as a **quick action**, docking it with your mech where it cannot be targeted. You may redeploy it to a space within **Sensors** as a **quick action**. When you rest or perform a **Full Repair**, your drone regains all **HP** and is automatically repaired if it was destroyed.

The PACKMULE drone has the following effects:

- Whenever you **Bolster** an allied character, you may choose an additional allied character who is adjacent to the drone to also receive the benefits.
- When you **Stabilize**, you may choose an allied character who is adjacent to the drone and clear a condition that wasn't caused by their own systems, talents, etc.
- As a **protocol** you may order the drone to deploy its ballistic panels. It becomes **Immobilized** and gains **Immunity to all involuntary movement** while this is active, and unfolds into a **Size 1** emplacement **2 spaces long** that counts as **hard cover**, oriented however you like within a free space. You may end this

effect as a **protocol**.

- When you print this mech, choose a non-combat utility modification to equip to your drone. If the GM agrees that this modification would help with either a pilot or mech skill check, you gain **+1 Accuracy** for that roll. You may change out this modification whenever you perform a **Full Repair**.

Active (requires 1 Core Power): Rapid Reconstruction

Protocol

Restore your PACKMULE drone to full **HP**, immediately repairing it if it was destroyed.

For the rest of the scene, your drone gains **Resistance** to all **damage, heat, and burn**. As a **quick action**, you may direct a reconstructor swarm from the PACKMULE to rapidly administer field repairs to nearby allies. Choose a single allied character within **range 3** of the drone and spend **1 Repair**. That character may restore their **HP** to full, clear all burn, and clear a condition that wasn't caused by their own systems, talents, etc.

Bridgelayer

The Armory's vehicle-deployed bridge system is suitable for both tracked vehicles and combat chassis, serving as a lightweight and robust tool for crossing obstacles and unsafe terrain quickly and efficiently. Constructed of high-strength nanocarbon memory polymer with an origami-engineered interior lattice, the bridge unit collapses into a surprisingly compact package which, when fully deployed, is capable of supporting over 60 tons of weight without structural compromise.

1 SP, Quick Action, Deployable, Unique

Bridge (Size 3, 30 HP, Evasion 5, Tags: Deployable)

You unfold and lay a deployable bridge upon the ground in a free 3x6 space adjacent to you. This bridge is flat and doesn't obstruct movement. It can be placed over **difficult or dangerous terrain** allowing units up to **Size 3** to walk across it as though it was regular terrain, if placed over **Mines** they are disabled while the bridge is deployed, and it can be placed across chasms, pits, and cliffs so long as both ends of it can be placed on solid ground. Picking this system up again is a **full action**.

Onager Combat Shotgun

Often issued to rear line units and engineering crews as a personal defense weapon, the Armory's standard pattern Onager Combat Shotgun is a simple but powerful close-quarters armament designed for responsiveness and ease of handling. The weapon's typical ammunition load calls for standardized magazines containing an overlapping mix of both wide-area shot and solid slugs, not only streamlining in-field resupply but ensuring sufficient coverage and effect upon all targets within optimal range.

Main CQB

Knockback 1, Loading

Cone 5, Threat 3

1d6+1 kinetic damage

Shock Pylons

The earliest versions of the field-deployed electromagnetic barricade were designed for colonial use as a perimeter defense tool for deterring hostile xenofauna from encroaching upon fledgling settlements. Explorations of potential military applications followed soon thereafter, and while the necessary increased power output drastically shortens the unit's uptime, it nonetheless functions as an effective area-denial and temporary fortification system.

2 SP, Unique

Quick Action, Deployable, Limited 2, Unique

Shock Pylon (Size 1, HP 10, Evasion 5, Resistance to Energy Damage)

Expend a charge to deploy a shock pylon in a free adjacent space, which activates and projects an electrical barrier. Treat this barrier as a **Line 4** area **4 spaces high** originating from the pylon in a direction of your choice that provides **soft cover**, but doesn't count as an obstruction or block line of sight. Any character that starts their turn in the area or enters it for the first time in a round must pass an **Engineering** save or take **1d6 energy damage** and become **Impaired** and **Slowed** until the end of their next turn. On a success, they take half damage only.

As a **quick action**, you may reorient the pylon's barrier in a new direction or deactivate it. Otherwise it lasts until the end of the scene.

Heavy Lift Gear

The Hercules mobile crane is a mil-spec variant of a civil engineering model, ruggedized to withstand the wear and tear of battlefield conditions. Most commonly employed during salvage-and-repair actions, skilled operators are able to effectively apply the crane's substantial lifting capacity during combat in unconventional ways.

2 SP, Protocol, Unique

You may deploy stabilizers and extend your attached crane, becoming **Immobilized** while this system is active. While active, your lifting capacity is tripled, and you may use a **quick action** to either choose any Prone allied character within **range 5** and stand them up, or to choose any allied character within **range 5** equal to your own **Size** or smaller and move them **5 spaces** both horizontally and vertically in any direction. This movement ignores engagement and reactions and that character must end this movement on the ground or another solid surface, or else immediately begin falling. You may deactivate this system as a **protocol**.

System Optimizer

Armory combat engineering doctrine places equal emphasis on electronic systems integrity and countermeasures as it does physical repairs and reconstruction. AMT Legionnaire combat operations typically involve a designated support unit which maintains administrative oversight of all squad-linked tactical and diagnostic networks. A regularly updated and refined suite of inoculative and restorative measures are available to enhance squad performance metrics and mitigate damage inflicted by systemic

intrusion.

3 SP, Unique

Whenever you **Bolster** an allied character, you may choose one of the following additional effects. Only one such additional effect can be chosen each time you **Bolster**:

Emergency Venting Protocols: That character cools **2 heat** and may clear **Exposed**. A character can only benefit from this effect 1/scene.

Enhanced Diagnostic Sequence: That character gains **2 Overshield** and may clear either **Impaired** or **Slowed** as long as these conditions weren't caused by their own systems or abilities.

PARVATI-Class NHP

Beyond the most basic offensive and defensive applications, a substantial portion of the Think Tank's research into applied hardlight theory have been focused on the ultimate goal of utilizing the technology for utilitarian purposes as well as military ones, the so-called "instant city" paradigm which envisions buildings and even more complex feats of engineering crafted entirely from stable, tangible energy. However, maintaining multiple independent hardlight objects, particularly more advanced geometric structures, requires more processing power than conventional comp/con systems are capable of providing, and as yet none of the attempts to reduce projected hardlight's temperatures to safe levels have proven fruitful.

While the solution to the thermal issues still remains elusive, the Think Tank's interim solution to the stability problem was the curation of a dedicated NHP designed to oversee and maintain novel hardlight structures in real-time. PARVATI-Class NHPs are unique in that they require a corresponding hardware upgrade in order to make full use of their capabilities. A series of experimental hardlight emitters embedded within a designated chassis' structure are utilized to both shape and sustain emitted constructs under PARVATI's supervision. PARVATI clones as a personality tend to be task-oriented, precise, and orderly, though personable and protective of those under their care, and they appear to be somewhat more resistant to cascade stressors than other similar NHP models, a quality Armory engineers are keen to study further.

3 SP, AI, Unique

Your mech gains the **AI** tag and **Shining City**:

Shining City

Full Action, Limited 1, 5 Heat (Self)

1/scene, you can create a series of hardlight constructs within **Sensors** in any free spaces oriented however you like. Once placed these constructs last until the end of the scene and then dissipate. All hardlight constructs have **Immunity to all damage** and can be moved through physically, but any character that moves into them for the first time on their turn or starts their turn overlapping their space takes **2 burn**.

Create the following structures:

- A wall, up to **6 spaces long** and **4 spaces high**. Characters cannot draw line of

sight across the wall if they are not at least partially on the same side of the wall as their target and attacks or other effects cannot cross it if they did not originate on the same side, even those that ignore line of sight.

- Two **Size 2** areas which count as **difficult terrain**. These may not be placed adjacent to each other.
- One **Size 2** hardlight microlance emitter. 1/round as a **free action** you may choose a single target within **range 5** and line of sight of the emitter. That target must pass an **Agility** save or take **3 burn** and be knocked back **2 spaces**. On a success, they take **1 burn** only.

Specialty Licenses

Specialty licenses are a form of equipment license that isn't tied to any one particular mech license, allowing GMs to give out specialized bonus equipment as a campaign reward or giving players the chance to customize their loadouts with specialized equipment that suits their playstyle.

Specialty licenses have ranks and corresponding corporations just like regular licenses. In order to qualify for a specialty license you must follow the same rules for license advancement as normal, with the difference being that specialty licenses can use any other license from within that particular manufacturer as an appropriate prerequisite, including other specialty licenses, following the usual pattern of moving from **rank I** to **rank II** to **rank III**. For example, you'd need at least one **rank II** Harrison Armory license of any kind (Barbarossa, Genghis, a level II HA specialty license, etc) to take a **rank III** Harrison Armory specialty license. **Rank I** specialty licenses can be freely taken without any prerequisites, though they don't count as a prerequisite themselves for taking other non-specialty licenses.

For example, Karen is playing a long-range sharpshooter and has decided that she'd like an unconventional license to help emphasize that role, and the HORUS Thirdeye package is exactly the sort of thing she's looking for. That particular license is rank II which means that in order to take it she needs to have at least one HORUS license that's at least rank I to serve as a prerequisite. Fortunately she has a rank I Pegasus license and so she can take the Thirdeye if she likes, but she could also take it if she had a rank I Balor or Hydra license as well. Taking the Thirdeye doesn't count as upgrading her Pegasus license itself though.

Meanwhile, David thinks that a high-speed low-drag operator is more his style, and he's considering the IPS-N Pointman specialty license to help him breach and clear close quarters more effectively. This specialty license is rank I, which means that he doesn't need any prerequisite licenses to take it, but doing so won't allow him to then jump straight to a rank II Tortuga license without taking the rank I Tortuga license first. He could, if he wanted, go from the Pointman to the Vigil specialty license without having to take any other IPS-N licenses in between, since Pointman does count as a suitable prerequisite for the higher-rank specialty license.

GMs are free to use specialty licenses in one of two ways, either as an additional pool of licenses that players are allowed to choose from upon leveling up or as additional bonuses granted outside the usual leveling progression. Specialty licenses count as manufacturer-specific licenses for the purpose of selecting core bonuses if taken when leveling up, but gaining additional specialty licenses outside of the usual leveling progression does not increase your overall license level (a character at **LL6** with two additional specialty licenses granted as rewards is still considered to be at **LL6**, not **LL8**). If you choose to grant specialty licenses as additional rewards outside of leveling, be aware that the rank of a specialty license corresponds with how advanced it is; a **rank III** specialty license contains weapons and systems on par with a **rank III** mech license, for example.

IPS-N POINTMAN

Designed as a general purpose license centered around high-threat close-quarters missions, Pointman draws upon IPS-Northstar's extensive experience in boarding and anti-piracy operations to provide pilots with a flexible tactical package regardless of chassis specs. All Pointman systems are certified by IPS-N's own Special Operations Unit, Naval/Downwell division of Trunk Security as fully capable in both shipboard as well as terrestrial theaters.

License:

I. Underbarrel Breacher, Ballistic Shield

Underbarrel Breacher

IPS-Northstar's venerable "Passkey" compact tactical breaching system is a mainstay of squads tasked with high risk breach-and-clear missions. A universal mounting assembly allows the Passkey to be fitted to most manufacturers' mainline weapon models, and convenient fire-control integration means that operators can effortlessly switch between the launcher and the weapon it's mounted to. Utilizing dual-stage APEX charges which bore into target surfaces before detonating within, this system is ideal for rapid entry, breaching reinforced structures, or creating improvised firing positions.

3 SP, Mod, Unique

Choose one **Main** or **Heavy** weapon. You may use the following profile whenever you attack with that weapon. Any other modifications (from core bonuses etc) applied to the weapon do not apply to this profile, and you may continue to attack with the modified weapon even when this profile requires reloading:

Auxiliary Launcher

AP, Loading

Range 3

5 explosive damage

On hit: The target must pass a **Hull** save or become **Shredded** until the end of their next turn. When fired at objects, cover, terrain, and the environment, this weapon automatically deals **20 AP explosive damage** to up to three adjacent **Size 1** sections.

Ballistic Shield

A common armament among boarding teams, IPS-N's Rampart chassis-grade combat shield can be affixed to a brachial mount or manipulator-held, and features a retractable panel design to minimize user profile in close quarters where maneuverability can be vital. When needed, the reinforced laminate panels extend and lock securely into place to provide a secondary layer of ablative protection against ballistic/kinetic impacts and directed energy weaponry. Survival rates of assault leaders utilizing Rampart shields in action see an increase of 22% on average.

Main Melee

Knockback 1

Threat 1

1d3+2 kinetic damage

As a **protocol**, you may extend or retract the shield's ballistic panels. While the panels are extended you become **Slowed**, you gain **Resistance** to all attacks made as a reaction, and when you perform a critical hit with this weapon the target is knocked **Prone**.

IPS-N VIGIL

Advertised as a companion license to the Pointman series, the IPS-N Vigil package is designed with defensive actions in mind. In use aboard all IPS-N naval vessels and provided as a complimentary license to merchant vessels operating along trade routes in and out of the Argo Navis system, all Vigil systems supplement take-and-hold/counterboarding operations by providing pilots with quick-deploying, modular defilade enhancements which can be used to reinforce threatened positions or establish entrenched killzones along probable avenues of approach.

License:

II. Sentry Drone, Active Defense System

Sentry Drone

The latest iteration of IPS-N's remote area security emplacement system, the sentry drone collapses to become chassis-portable but can be quickly deployed even when under enemy fire. The universal fast-mounting adapter fits most currently manufactured mainline weapon systems, giving operators tactical flexibility in multiple engagement scenarios, and the integrated GUARDIAN comp/con is capable of independent threat tracking and target interdiction in addition to pilot-in-the-loop and ultimatum/deterrence protocols as defensive scenarios dictate.

3 SP, Drone, Full Action, Unique

Sentry Drone (Size 1/2, HP 10, Evasion 10, E-Defense 10, Tags: Drone)

You can deploy this drone to a free adjacent space. Take any one non-**Superheavy CQB**, **Cannon**, or **Rifle** you have equipped, remove it from your mech, and mount it to the drone when you deploy it. The drone takes its own independent turn during which it may only attack with the weapon mounted to it using your **Grit**, **Save Target**, and core bonuses, but it doesn't benefit from or trigger your talents. **Loading** weapons mounted to this drone are reloaded whenever you **Stabilize**. The drone gains the **Sentry Mode** reaction.

The drone can be picked back up and the weapon returned to your mech as a **full action**. If the drone is destroyed make an **Engineering** check. On a success the weapon remains intact and may be reequipped, otherwise the weapon is destroyed as well.

Sentry Mode

Reaction, 1/round

Trigger: A hostile character moves within **range 3** of the sentry drone.

Effect: It makes an attack against that character at **+2 Difficulty**.

Active Defense System

Developed as a compact version of an active threat defense screen commonly employed as a fixed emplacement system, IPS-N's deployable ADS utilizes a comprehensive scanner array to continually monitor local space for incoming ballistic threats. Once locked on, a network of independently tracking gimbal-mounted turrets engage low-velocity projectiles entering the kill envelope with a combination of anti-sensor pulse laser jamming and hard-target interception via counterballistic airburst launchers.

2 SP, Quick Action, Deployable, Shield, Limited 2, Unique

ADS (Size 1, HP 10, Evasion 5, Tags: Deployable, Shield)

You can deploy this system in a free, adjacent space, where it emits a **Burst 2** interception field. Ranged attacks made against you, the system, or any allied characters within the field take **+1 Difficulty**, and attacks made with **Thrown, Arcing, or Seeking** weapons also treat targets within the field as **Invisible**. This effect lasts until the end of the scene, or until the system is destroyed.

IPS-N OVERLORD

IPS-N's tactical fireteam/squad-integrated command-and-control license, designated Overlord, is designed to fulfill the need for centralized enhancement of joint combat operations. A combination of upgraded hardware including sensors and communication suites along with NHP-enhanced targeting systems and tactical networking software serves to complement any small-unit formation or doctrine, including assault, fire-support/target designation, defensive actions, and special operations.

License:

III. FCS Tacnet Relay, MITHRA-Class NHP

FCS Tacnet Relay

While many conventional military units commonly employ dedicated squadron-tier tactical networks to disseminate sensor and targeting data on the individual level, IPS-N's SPYGLASS tactical network node provides squad leaders, forward reconnaissance units, and electronic systems operation specialists with a dedicated expert system designed to collate input from multiple targeting feeds simultaneously and deliver enhanced, predictive-modeled firing solutions. All IPS-N fireteams incorporating SPYGLASS tactical architecture report significant improvements in combat performance metrics compared to those without, and mandatory integration is expected to occur across the next several decades.

3 SP, Unique

1/round, choose one:

- When you consume **Lock On**, you may choose one allied character within **Sensors** and they gain **+1 Accuracy** on the next attack roll they make until the end of their

next turn.

- When an allied character within **Sensors** consumes **Lock On**, you may gain **+1 Accuracy** on the next attack roll you make until the end of your next turn.

MITHRA-Class NHP

Following the release of the SEKHMET-class NHP platform, pilot feedback indicated a strong desire for a more subordinate, support-oriented NHP designed to facilitate squad-level operations as opposed to personal combat engagements. After several false starts, the decision was made to base development upon the extant SPYGLASS framework, cultivating a full-fledged NHP from its tactical heuristics. MITHRA-Class NHPs are detached and dispassionate with a strong emphasis on chain-of-command and hierarchical structure, often assuming direct authority over paired SPYGLASS systems within local tactical networks.

3 SP, AI, Unique

Your mech gains the **AI** tag and the **MITHRA Protocol**:

MITHRA Protocol

Protocol, 1 Heat (Self)

You grant one of the following bonuses to an allied character in **Sensors**, or you may increase the cost of this **protocol** to **3 heat** to grant them two of the following bonuses at once:

- That character's next ranged or melee attack that consumes **Lock On** gains **Reliable** based on weapon size (Auxiliary: 1, Main: 2, Heavy or larger: 3), or if it already has **Reliable** it adds **+1** to its value.
- That character's next ranged or melee attack that consumes **Lock On** gains **AP**.
- That character can attack a character with the **Lock On** condition as if their weapon had **Arcing**, but must consume the **Lock On** during the attack.

SSC SPARROWHAWK

The Sparrowhawk license is a self-contained specialty permission package, designed as a part of SSC's Aerospace Superiority Initiative that aims to provide chassis pilots operating in aerial warfare engagements with enhanced, theater-specific combat capabilities. Traditional air support/air superiority doctrine can be achieved utilizing properly equipped chassis in place of aerospace fighters while still retaining ground assault capabilities, giving such squadrons unparalleled multi-role flexibility across tactical strike/interceptor and fire-support engagements.

License:

I. Vayavya Missiles, ATG Precision Bombs

Vayavya Missiles

Built upon the backbone of the Sharanga framework, the Vayavya serves as SSC's dedicated air-to-air/ground-to-air missile system. Instead of the standard high-explosive shaped-charge warhead, each missile utilizes a continuous-rod annular fragmentation payload for maximum confirmed-kill efficacy against airborne targets. Pilots are advised that each missile's onboard guidance system is specifically configured for engagement against aerial targets and performance may significantly degrade when used outside of that role.

Main Launcher

Smart

Range 15

1d6 explosive damage

Any **flying** target hit by this weapon must pass a **Hull** save or immediately land (this counts as falling without any damage), and additionally become **Slowed** and can't fly until the end of their next turn. Attacks with this weapon receive **+1 Accuracy** when used against targets that are **flying** or at a higher elevation.

ATG Precision Bombs

Adapting the concept of precision-guided air-to-ground munition packages from aerospace fighter/bombers to a chassis-based paradigm, the KILLDEER tactical strike munition system employs a multi-mode seeker and internal guidance stabilization to deliver high-powered surgical airstrikes with minimal circular error probability. Detonation profiles are pilot-selectable, and each warhead is effective against armored units and infantry-tier opposition alike as well as capable of penetrating even hardened ground targets.

3 SP, Quick Action, Limited 2, Unique

You may activate this system to arm a bomb for deployment. While **flying**, as part of a move or **Boost** you can drop an armed bomb onto a space that you pass over or adjacent to at any point during that movement. All characters within a **Blast 1** or **Line 8** area must pass an **Agility** save or take **1d6+3 explosive damage** and be knocked **Prone**. On a success, they take half damage only. This system deals **20 AP explosive damage** to objects, cover, terrain, and the environment. You may have only one bomb armed at a

time, and armed bombs disarm at the end of the scene.

SSC MICROMONARCH

User feedback has indicated a strong desire for a multi-role missile system tailored for mid/close range engagements as opposed to the Monarch's long-range fire support doctrine, and thus the Micromonarch system package is a developmental outgrowth of SSC's mainline missile battery platform, designed in advance of a fully dedicated alternative chassis. Finally available for licensing following extensive field tests, the Micromonarch is intended to serve not only as a supplemental block upgrade for the Monarch itself but as a flexible set of tactical armament options for all properly licensed pilots.

License:

II. Govardhana Micromissiles, Teen Baan Missiles

Govardhana Micromissiles

Intended as a theater/role alternative for the Sharanga system and the foundation of the Micromonarch initiative, the Govardhana is SSC's premier chassis-mounted micromissile system, delivering advanced precision-guided munitions in fire-selectable volleys. Each launcher is stack-loaded to maximize ammunition capacity for increased operational duration and a variety of hardpoint configurations are available to fit all major manufacturers' standard frames with minimal adjustment required.

Auxiliary Launcher

Limited 4

Range 5

4 explosive damage

This weapon can attack two targets at a time. If you attack two targets, this weapon deals **2 explosive** damage instead.

Teen Baan Missiles

Furthering development of the Micromonarch license as a close- to mid-range system, the Teen Baan cluster missile represents a significant advancement in reduced-collateral smart weapon design. Each missile is a self-contained launch vehicle for multiple independent guided submunitions receiving coordinating telemetry from an integrated comp/con unit, and the use of SSC's proprietary BRILLIANCE tacnet/IFF integration protocols allows for unparalleled danger-close fire missions without the risk of incidental blue-on-blue outcomes.

Heavy Launcher

2 SP

Arcing, Ordnance, Smart

Range 10, Blast 2

1d6+1 explosive damage

This weapon does not hit yourself or allied characters.

You may instead use the following profile with this weapon against a single character with the **Lock On** condition. You must consume the **Lock On** during the attack, forgoing the usual **Accuracy** bonus:

Arcing, Ordnance, Reliable 4, Smart

Range 10

2d6+2 explosive damage

SSC MYRMIDON

While the concept of fully biological chassis engineering has long been theorized, the practical limitations facing such designs remain substantial. Despite this, Smith-Shimano continues to push the boundaries of integrated biotechnological design, combining tailored bio-sourced and inspired systems into their full suite of precision engineered combat frames. Myrmidon is the latest exclusive license in the Panoply Biotica line of cutting-edge design permissions, delivering performance enhancing frame-wide upgrades sourced from SSC's extensively cultivated xenogenetic database as well as bespoke organisms designed from the ground up to support pilots during even the most taxing operations.

License:

III. SUZUKAZE Thermoregulation, HSC Exoplasting

SUZUKAZE Thermoregulation

While coldcore reactors run substantially hotter than any purely biological system could feasibly attempt to regulate, SSC has invested considerable resources into researching the viability of hybrid biotechnological thermoregulation systems compatible with full-scale combat chassis. Thus far, their most promising development has been a unique system that augments conventional heat sinks with a pseudovascular fluid network suffused with an engineered, KAZE-strain microbial culture. KAZE thrives in high-temperature environments and emits an evaporative coolant compound as a byproduct of its heat-accelerated metabolic processes, which is then shunted through hull-embedded microvents. Initial results have been positive, and SSC's next step is to eliminate the allergenic side-effects reported among a percentage of licensed pilots during field trials.

3 SP, Unique

At the end of your turn, clear **1 heat**.

HSC Exoplasting

A continuation of developmental research into biologically-sourced composite materials engineering initially pioneered by SSC's proprietary Kai Bioplasting, this structural enhancement consists of a layered composite which meshes traditional reinforced armor laminate with an integrated carbonate bioweave matrix derived from arthropoidal megafauna genebanks. When activated with a catalytic protein compound, macro-scale

hypersclerotization rapidly occurs throughout the matrix layer, temporarily enhancing structural durability and impact resistance even against advanced military-grade weaponry until eventual protein dissolution.

3 SP, Overshield, Unique

When you **Stabilize**, you may additionally spend **1 Repair** to gain **Grit +4 Overshield**.

HORUS LOGOS

With the increased prevalence of NHP and sub-NHP assisted electronic warfare doctrine in the modern battlefield, a seemingly endless proliferation of weaponized code protocols, logic viruses, and hunter/killer algorithms have been developed and spread throughout Union space. Consequently, Logos isn't a license in the conventional sense, but instead serves as authorized omninet access to an extensive repository of electronic warfare programs curated and distributed by HORUS archivists. As electronic countermeasures and defensive systems adapt and evolve over time, the selection of viable programs, themselves part of the evolutionary arms race, dynamically updates to account for emergent battlefield trends.

License:

I. Tatzelwurm, AVERSION/REFLEX

Tatzelwurm

Union Omninet Bureau forensic analysts place the earliest identifiable widespread occurrence of the "Tatzelwurm" malware strain roughly 300 Cradle standard years ago. Built upon a common paradigm of self-propagating invasive code, Tatzelwurm is unique in its unprecedented rate of mutative evolutionary recoding, rendering conventional firewalls obsolete within a startlingly brief period of time. As a result, the UOB maintains a department dedicated to the study and preventative inoculation of each emerging strain and encourages pilots operating in high signal traffic theaters to regularly update all electronic defense systems in order to avoid infection.

1 SP, Quick Tech, Unique

Gain the following **Quick Tech** option:

Botnet: Choose a character within **range 3**. You may then target a different character within **range 3** of the first target, and repeat this process as long as there are new, valid targets within range. Each target must then pass a **Systems** save or take **1 heat**. The next tech attack you make gains **+1 Accuracy**, and it deals **+1 heat** on hit for every failed save, up to a maximum of **+3 heat**. This effect does not stack, and characters can't be targeted more than once with the same use of this system.

AVERSION/REFLEX

The AVERSION/REFLEX viral attack code is designed to exploit weaknesses in local tactical networks, embedding itself within a target system before using it as a transmission node for falsified and corrupted joint targeting telemetry feeds. By piggybacking upon IFF-authenticated data channels, AVERSION/REFLEX bypasses related electronic defenses to cause significant degradation in combat performance metrics on the squad level until purged by the carrier.

2 SP, Quick Tech, Invade, Unique

Gain the following options for **Invade**:

Pariah Strain: Until the end of your target's next turn, all other hostile characters within **Burst 2** of them receive **+1 Difficulty** on all attacks. This effect does not stack with itself.

>//**YOUMISS./_ALLTHEFUN:** Your target treats all **Accuracy** as **Difficulty** until the end of their next turn.

HORUS THIRDEYE

While HORUS pattern-groups typically defy standard combat role classification, there often arises a need to fulfill specific battlefield goals not addressed by any of the collective's extant designs. When this occurs, multiple specialty licenses are quickly developed in tandem, disseminated, field-tested, discarded, and those that successfully meet or exceed requirements are recompiled and standardized for general distribution. Thirdeye is one such license, designed to facilitate a sharpshooter doctrine across various platforms.

License:

II. Scanner Charges, Seeker Catapult

Scanner Charges

Remotely deployed sensors are a concept that harkens back to the earliest days of drone warfare. A bundle of high-frequency active scanners packaged together in a quick-release canister gives pilots the ability to rapidly deploy them over obstructions or around corners, obtaining real-time updates on enemy positions and movement and coordinating firing solutions across integrated tactical networks.

2 SP, Limited 2, Unique

You can spend a charge from this system for one of the following:

Pulse Grenade (Grenade, Range 5, Blast 2): **Scan** all hostile characters within the affected area, and hostile characters within the area cease to be **Hidden**, cannot **Hide**, and cannot benefit from **Invisibility** as long as they remain there. This area lasts until the end of your next turn.

Echo Mine (Mine, Burst 3): This mine detonates when any character moves over or adjacent to it. You and all allied characters ignore line of sight when making ranged attacks and tech actions against characters within the area, and gain **+1 Accuracy** on all attacks against characters within it. Hostile characters within the area cease to be **Hidden**, cannot **Hide**, and cannot benefit from **Invisibility** as long as they remain there. This area lasts until the end of your next turn; if you take the **Scan** or **Lock On Quick Tech** action during your next turn, you may extend the duration of all your detonated echo mine areas for an additional round. This effect can be repeated.

Seeker Catapult

A hybrid drone/ballistic weapon system incorporating design elements reminiscent of Smith-Shimano railgun architecture, as well as elements from what appear to be non-Union technology, the seeker catapult requires a more extensive charging cycle than

conventional electromagnetic weapons due to its increased projectile mass. When launched, the high-velocity drone round is propelled with enough force to defeat most armor composites, and once it achieves positive effect-on-target it switches over to an atavistic mode, aggressively pursuing hunt/kill imperatives on its own recognizance until secondary propulsion systems are exhausted.

Heavy Rifle, Nexus

AP, Loading, Smart

Range 15

1d6+4 kinetic damage

On Hit: You may make a secondary attack against the nearest enemy within **range 5** of the first target, checking line of sight and cover from the first target's location. This secondary attack can't deal bonus damage and doesn't trigger additional secondary attacks.

HORUS BUNRAKU

Appearing on the omninet only recently, Union intelligence analysis has yet to determine if the license designated Bunraku is early evidence of a completely new HORUS pattern-group or simply a testbed for experimental technologies being disseminated to qualified license holders. Preliminary reports are suggestive of an esoteric squad-level tactical integration/command paradigm which involves use of rapidly established ontological [bridges; the gateway between the cosmic expanse of my mind, the bottomless expanse of my soul. these are my gifts to you, use them wisely, or not, as you will]

License:

III. Ego Bridge, Ontological Metatactical Pulse

Ego Bridge

An unusual battlefield support system believed to be derived from higher-level Minotaur subroutines, an ego/impulse transmission bridge establishes a peer-to-peer network connection between the user and an allied pilot via sub-NHP fire-control systems, momentarily overlaying second-tier reflex channels with first-tier cognitive directives. Frequent use of this system has been known to result in involuntary ego sublimation, dissociative disorders, and in rare cases existential catatonia, and regular pilot psychological debriefings are highly recommended.

3 SP, Quick Tech, Unique

Gain the following **Quick Tech** option:

Interlocution:

1/round, 2 Heat (Self)

An allied character within **Sensors** and line of sight may take **2 heat** to immediately **Skirmish** using a weapon of your choice as a reaction. All attacks are made at **+1 Difficulty** and use that allied character's own stats as well as both their talents and your own talents if applicable (identical shared talents do not stack

with each other).

Ontological Metatactical Pulse

[how can a simple thing like this contain such multitudes, you ask?

do not listen to those who tell you the universe is vast.

the universe lies within me. It lies within you (for you are also me.)

distance and division are falsehoods told to the self by the deceiver known as space/time.

so prick your fingers upon the mountaintops and swim within the electron orbit's current.

embrace existence in a handful of dust]

4 SP, Quick Action, Limited 1, Unique

1/scene you may activate this system, becoming **Stunned** until the end of your next turn.

All allied characters within **Sensors** may then immediately perform any or all of the following as a reaction:

-Move **3 spaces** ignoring engagement and reactions **or** instantly stand from prone

then

-Reload a **Loading** weapon **or** gain **+1 Accuracy** to their next attack

and finally

-End any one condition on themselves **or** set their heat to half their **Heat Cap**, placing them in the **Danger Zone**.

Hostile characters within **Sensors** must pass a **Systems** save or become **Impaired** and **Slowed** until the end of their next turn.

HA SPITFIRE

Many state and corpro-state militaries rely primarily upon kinetic/explosive platforms for the majority of their armament solutions, reserving energy-based weaponry for specialty purposes, but Harrison Armory's Spitfire license is part of a wide-reaching campaign being undertaken to reverse that paradigm. An advertisement campaign seeking to position HA laser weaponry as "a pilot's best friend in dark places" has preceded aggressive inroads towards markets traditionally given over to GMS and IPS-N, prompting an arms race both offensively and defensively.

License:

I. POLARIS-Pattern Multifunction Laser, ORION-Pattern "Hotshot" Laser

POLARIS-Pattern Multifunction Laser

The HA POLARIS-pattern directed energy system has less petawatt output than the SOL line rifle, but what it lacks in power it makes up for in versatility. Designed in response to requests for a simple, durable, and flexible laser weapon suitable for legion recruits and local auxiliary forces, the POLARIS has two primary firing modes, standard beam and high-draw "assault" pulse, and can function as a multipurpose laser tool courtesy of an integrated firmware suite. Additionally the weapon's frame features embedded universal charging ports suitable for infantry and dismounted pilots on bivouac.

Main Rifle

Loading

Range 8

1d6 energy damage

On Attack: You may overclock this weapon to gain **Overkill** and deal **+3 bonus damage** on hit. This weapon does not need to be reloaded until you attack this way.

This weapon gives **+1 Accuracy** to pilot or mech skill checks involving laser communication, precision cutting or welding, data transfer, laser microphone interferometry, or other miscellaneous tasks which could be supplemented with a low power laser system.

ORION-Pattern "Hotshot" Laser

Billed as a personal defense weapon suitable for engineers and artillery units far from the frontline, the ORION-pattern pistol is nonetheless suitable for assault purposes due to its dual solid-state power pack/core-integrated feed which allows it to briefly achieve output comparable to mainline armaments. Care should be taken when overdrawing to avoid destructive thermal overload, and the higher-than-typical rate of reported hardware failure is frequently attributed to overzealous users.

Auxiliary CQB

Overkill

Range 3, Threat 3

1d3 energy damage

On Attack: You may take **1 heat** to deal **+1 burn** on hit.

HA FOUNDRY

Harrison Armory's recently launched Foundry initiative is an effort to create a self-contained permission package, allowing qualified pilots to create customized, personally tailored armaments on a wider-than-bespoke scale - all without having to venture outside of the umbrella of the Armory's greater product-space. Predictive customer and client-state loyalty metrics anticipate a favorable increase over time following the license's rollout into wider markets, and plans are already underway for a series of complementary licenses to further enhance its tactical benefits across a variety of theaters.

License:

II. Advanced Combat Rifle, Modular, Optimized Engineering

Advanced Combat Rifle, Modular

One of 200 rifle designs selected for trial during Harrison Armory's recent call for a multi-purpose combat weapon system and the only design to be approved for further development, the HA Advanced Combat Rifle is fundamentally a standard ballistic weapon with a profile similar to other assault rifle designs available for license. Where it excels is in its modular nature, the ACR-M being designed from the ground up to readily accept and seamlessly integrate a wide variety of user profiles, modifications, and upgrades, allowing pilots to easily create a weapon tailored to their precise needs. An integrated selectable smart-magazine system also allows for seamless, interspersed chambering of multiple ammunition types, providing enhanced performance against multiple target profiles on a per-engagement basis.

Main Rifle

You may equip up to two **Mods** to this weapon, and you reduce the cost of any **Mods** applied to this weapon by **1 SP** each, to a minimum of **1**. Each time you print this weapon, choose one of the following profiles to apply to it. You may choose a different profile each time you print a new copy.

- **Assault:** Range 10, 1d6 kinetic damage, Accurate
- **DMR:** Range 12, 1d6+3 kinetic damage, Accurate, Loading
- **Commando:** Range 8, Threat 3, 1d6 kinetic damage, +1 Accuracy on all attacks made as reactions

Optimized Engineering

The overall quality of equipment is the culmination of numerous factors, from initial design to expected stresses and material engineering, all the way to economic concerns. The Armory's engineers, though, are well aware that many such such deficiencies can be overcome through the simple, if extravagant, application of exacting, high-tolerance

engineering without regard for material cost. For those willing to shoulder that cost, HA offers a universally compatible general purpose upgrade permission package, designated BENCHMARK, allowing any printer-licensed weapon's construction to be revised to meet Armory standards.

2 SP

Mod, Limited 2, Unique

Choose one ranged weapon. You may spend a charge to either reroll any one attack roll made with this weapon 1/round, though you must take the second result, or to repair this weapon for no cost during a rest.

HA DOWNWELL

Harrison Armory's latest public beta test license is now available for qualified pilots interested in participating in live testing of their newest in-development armaments. Developed under the codename Downwell, this license represents the Think Tank's ongoing efforts at creating a comprehensive full-frame gravitic platform. Artificial gravity generation currently remains limited in practical civilian applications, but finds increasing use in military theaters, primarily in nearlight k-comp systems. Finding viable ways to expand upon the uses of this technology is the next obvious step, and HA is uniquely poised to deliver on that promise thanks to decades of experience in cutting-edge and paracausal combat systems development.

License:

III. Agrav Vane, Kinesis Driver

Agrav Vane

An outgrowth of the gravity pulse/wave technology first employed in the Armory's Iskander license, the so-called "aggrav vane" is an attempt at realizing the long theorized dream of continuous-operation antigravity flight. This current model is the most robust iteration of the concept, capable of uninterrupted uptime for longer than any other such generator to date, but the Casimir envelope's turbulent interference with weaponry and electronic systems remains an as-yet unresolved issue, limiting the system's tactical applications. Hardware burnout rates are another such issue, and users are encouraged to replace vanes on a per-deployment basis to minimize occurrences of midair catastrophic failure.

2 SP, Protocol, Unique

When you activate this system you cannot make tech actions, attacks, or any actions that force saves, but you may **hover** when you move and are immune to all fall damage. You also gain the benefits of **soft cover** as long as this system is active. This effect lasts for the rest of the scene, or until deactivated as a **protocol**.

Kinesis Driver

Following on from the Iskander and its directed gravitic projector systems, the next obvious step in adapting artificial gravity generation for battlefield use is to create a chassis-portable, high-powered weapon system. HA's current field-ready prototype system is still in the early stages of development, requiring an auxiliary power pack in addition to standard coldcore feed draw, but is able to project a shaped pulse of gravitational force upon a targeted area at combat-acceptable ranges. This zone of force is sufficient to inflict substantial damage through a combination of turbulent gravity shear and kinetic stresses, capable of overwhelm significant amounts of mass with tremendous force. Once sufficient live-fire combat data has been collected, the Armory design bureau's next focus will be miniaturization.

The kinesis driver can be fired with two profiles:

Superheavy Cannon (Collapser Field)

Ordnance, 3 Heat (Self)

Range 20, Blast 1

2d6 kinetic damage

On Hit: Targets must pass a **Hull** save or be knocked **Prone**. **Flying** characters that fail this save are forced to land (they fall but do not take damage), then knocked **Prone**. This weapon's **Blast** zone extends vertically up to **range 10**.

Superheavy Cannon (Linear Field)

AP, Ordnance, 5 Heat (Self)

Range 20

3d6 kinetic damage

On Hit: This weapon deals **+1d6** bonus damage for each point of **Armor** the target has, up to a maximum of **+3d6**.

C&H SHEPHERD

Shepherd is Chandrasekhar & Herschel's robust and customizable all-chassis license designed to provide pilots with tailor-made solutions for all-theater/all-terrain load-enhancing capability. Each Shepherd license comes with C&H's lifetime guarantee, and all included systems are rigorously tested to ensure performance under even the most rugged conditions, including the infamous Badlands Endurance Trial.

License:

I. Tactical Webbing, Weapon Pod

Tactical Webbing

C&H's latest "Tenzing" line of mech-scale tactical sub-hardpoint fasteners allows users a number of flexible configurations to best fit their frame, providing hands-free load bearing solutions capable of supporting a wide variety of battlefield deployable systems from all major manufacturers. Observers have remarked upon the similarities to this system and a now-discontinued license previously offered by Smith-Shimano Corpro, to which C&H representatives have thus far issued no comment.

0 SP, Unique

This system occupies a non-integrated mount of your choice in place of weapons. Choose up to two systems with the **Grenade**, **Mine**, or **Deployable** tags and load them onto this system, reducing their combined **SP** costs by **4** to a minimum of **0**. If this system is destroyed then all systems loaded onto it cannot be used until the tactical webbing is repaired.

Weapon Pod

Each of Chandrasekhar & Herschel's custom weapon pods is designed-to-order at the time of licensing, or users can select from hundreds of predesigned options to find the one that best suits their needs. Mounted to an articulated, gyro-stabilized armature and insulated from shock, fire, and ballistic impacts, the pod retracts to minimize effects on range-of-motion when not in use, but quickly repositions to allow for fast and effective in-field armament selection on demand.

2 SP, Quick Action, Unique

When you equip this system, it can house two **Auxiliary** weapons or up to one **Main** weapon and one **Auxiliary** weapon which you choose and store within the pod. Weapons stored in this way are not equipped to your mech's mounts and may not be used to attack, nor can they be reloaded. As a **quick action** you may swap the weapons stored in the pod with those equipped to one of your non-integrated mounts. All final weapon mountings, pod storage, and **SP** costs must be legal. If this system is destroyed, all weapons stored on it are disabled and inaccessible until the weapon pod is repaired.

C&H TALWAR

The Talwar permission package is offered to all of C&H's standing license holders with an interest in expanding their available arsenal with the finest in specialty weaponry optimized for close range engagements. Every Talwar system is designed to meet C&H's rigorous standards of quality and mil-spec reliability that pilots have come to trust, providing flexible and powerful defense solutions that can't be found elsewhere.

License:

II. Sirocco Machine Pistol, Slug Gun

Sirocco Machine Pistol

The Mitsubachi Tactical Machine Pistol is a weapon infamous for its numerous design flaws, poor engineering, and a cyclic rate sufficiently overtuned to cause the weapon to jam and even explode unless printed with a burst regulator. The design license was quickly abandoned, then just as quickly pirated where it became a common sight in the hands of outlaws and criminals. The Sirocco, however, is an updated and overhauled officially licensed refinement of the original design, specially reinforced to allow for unrestricted rate-of-fire even while using C&H's custom hyper-velocity ammunition. The weapon's cyclic rate remains quite high and pilots are advised to adjust logistics/supply requisitions accordingly with prolonged use.

Auxiliary CQB

Inaccurate, Loading

Range 3, Threat 3

1d3+1 kinetic damage

On Attack: You may expend this weapon's ammunition in a single burst to treat its range as **Cone 5**. This weapon does not need to be reloaded until you attack this way.

Slug Gun

Gladiators and pirates both are known for the inventive, often illegal, and inevitably dangerous modifications they're willing to make to weapons for the sake of spectacle or an unexpected advantage in combat. No one knows precisely who the first pilot reckless or desperate enough to wield a cut-down main battle tank's gun as a makeshift cannon was, but they certainly weren't the last to try, and now C&H presents licensed pilots with the opportunity to use one themselves following significant user safety improvements. Despite these upgrades the "Tunguska" short-barrel cannon's ballistic properties limit it to point-blank effective engagement ranges, and it remains just as cumbersome to reload as ever, but its solid core smoothbore shells deliver staggering power in a comparatively compact package.

Heavy Cannon

AP, Loading, Overkill

Range 5

2d6+6 kinetic damage

On Hit: The target must pass a **Hull** save or be knocked **Prone**. After any attack with this weapon that triggers **Overkill**, you must pass a **Hull** check or be knocked **Prone**.

C&H MANTLE

While melee combat is considered to be a specialized role among many state-level military and security services, Chandrasekhar & Herschel's Mantle draws upon centuries of gladiatorial weapons engineering experience to provide licensed pilots with a selection of close-combat enhancements that blend classic designs with contemporary materials. C&H's selection of military-grade hardplate shields are suitable for multiple chassis types and battlefield roles, with a variety of customized styles and designs to choose from.

License:

III. Electroplasma Shield, Khetaka Heavy Combat Shield

Electroplasma Shield

A contemporary adaptation of the now-outdated explosive/reactive armor concept, electromagnetic/reactive armor is comprised of electrically charged plates separated by an air gap to form a high-powered capacitor. When the outermost layer is penetrated the circuit is closed, creating an energetic plasma jet which diffuses incoming kinetic energy and attenuates hostile wave-based weapons fire. This particular system adapts the technology to an armature-mounted shield, adding the ability to manually trigger capacitor cells to function as a powerful close-combat plasma torch, though doing so rapidly degrades the shield's defensive capabilities.

Main Melee

Limited 2, Unique

Threat 1

1d6 kinetic damage

On Hit: You may expend a charge to deal +1d6 bonus energy damage.

You may also expend a charge to use the **Energetic Parry** reaction. You may attack with this weapon without expending or requiring charges, and whenever you would be forced to destroy a weapon due to critical damage or other effects, you may choose this weapon to destroy even if it has no charges remaining.

Energetic Parry

Reaction, 1/round, 3 heat (Self)

Trigger: You are hit by a ranged or melee attack.

Effect: Gain **Resistance** against that attack.

Khetaka Heavy Combat Shield

Utilizing reinforced manipulator-free mounting for increased resilience under combat stresses, C&H's Khetaka model heavy combat shield is comprised of multiple articulated plates for optimum full-frame coverage and increased threat interception profile across multiple chassis configurations. The shield's composite armor construction and adjustable angling ensures maximum deflection as well as serving as an effective close-combat armament in its own right, while internal stabilizers help offset its significant mass and

provide additional compensation against sub-payload kinetic impacts.

Heavy Melee

Knockback 2

Threat 1

1d6+3 kinetic damage

Your mech is considered to be one **Size** larger for purposes of engagement, and you may reduce any involuntary movement against you by **1 space** to a minimum of **0**.

Game Master's Guide

HOOKS

The trek across the badlands took three days in-cockpit. Lilaya let the autopilot march while she slept during the day and at night she and the others followed the stars, telling jokes and swapping stories to pass the time.

Arclight's outpost had been established in the shadow of a tall rocky outcropping, a slew of prefabricated buildings and industrial machinery patrolled by hard-eyed men and women in red-and-silver combat chassis. Foreigners, invaders. No matter how many she killed, they kept on sending more.

Maybe one day, when they'd tired of burying their dead, they would learn that this land wasn't theirs to take.

The corporate soldiers had set up their base with the defenses facing outward, trusting in the terrain to have their back. The way to the top of the overlook was a long, roundabout one and the climb was treacherous even for chassis, but it was nothing that Lilaya and the others hadn't done a hundred times before. Without friendly satellites to watch over them, the invaders had to rely on early warning sensor nets which could be subverted, or simply avoided altogether if you knew how to slip between the cracks.

*[!]SCOM P2P (HANDSHAKE CONFIRM/CCAT GRP 6)
>>TNZN|EYES ON - ESTIMATE 12, 13 HOSTILES
>>MTZA|EMPLACEMENTS?
>>TNZN|COUNT 2
>>TNZN|STRIKE LAST, COUNT 3
>>LLYA|MARKING TARGETS - ENGAGE?
>>HASN|HOLD ENGAGE - STORM ETA 20 MIN*

They hadn't counted on the storm rolling in from the east, but it was a welcome addition to the plan nonetheless. It would help mask their approach and scramble comms while it was overhead, keeping the outpost from calling for help. If they worked quickly enough, they could be done and gone before anyone ever even knew they were there.

She lay there, her mech's joints braced and frame snug against the rocks as the wind picked up, the stars slowly vanishing from sight as a wall of sand and fury swept across the land. Before long it was on top of them, and even through the cockpit seals she could feel the hair on her arms rise and taste the greasy ozone tang in the air. Hand signals only now. On her shot, Hasan told the others.

The rifle was a war trophy, taken from an Arclight soldier who'd apparently loved his guns more than some people loved their spouses. Gaudy and ostentatious, but it shot exceptionally well for all that. She'd discarded the more extraneous modifications and

embellishments, jailbroken the firmware, stripped down the weight, and dulled all its polished, shiny surfaces, leaving behind only what was necessary to do its job. A weapon wasn't meant to be a pretty thing.

Her heads-up display flickered and wavered as lightning bloomed around them. One one-thousand, two one-thousand, three one-thousand. Thunder pealed across the compound, drowning out even the howling of the wind. Lilaya carefully settled her sights on one of the Arclight frames down below, waiting for the next flash of lightning to time her strike.

One one-thousand, two one-thousand, three one-thousand.

Exhale.

Squeeze.

The following section is meant to provide GMs with a list of inspirational prompts and plot hooks which can serve as the basis for combat missions, narrative scenarios, or even entire campaigns set on Suldan. These hooks don't constitute an organized campaign in and of themselves, and are presented in no particular order. Adventurous GMs might elect to simply pick one or more at random and craft a session out of the results, or you can choose among the options and use those as a tailored framework for an ongoing campaign. Of course, you should also feel free to modify or adjust any of the details presented in any of the hooks to best fit your group's playstyle and interests.

False Flag

A mission prompt particularly suited for characters arriving from offworld, the premise is a simple one that can be used soon after the PCs first land on Suldan. Shortly after their arrival while on their way to Hadiqa, the PCs and anyone they happen to be escorting will come under attack from what appear to be provisional security forces. The only message the ambushers will issue is a statement that Suldan will fight against all outsiders until the end before a powerful jammer blocks all further communications.

Of course these aren't provisional security forces, but rather loyalist insurgents piloting stolen mechs. The ambush is a quick and dirty bid to drive a wedge between the recently arrived forces, whether they're freelancers or Union, and the provisional government. Once the PCs have dispatched the enemy the jamming signal is lifted, and if contact is made with the provisional government they'll urgently inform the PCs that a number of their mechs were recently stolen during a raid. Further investigation can help confirm the truthfulness of this story, but it also serves to illustrate the seriousness of the situation that such an incident could occur in the first place.

The waters might grow murkier if evidence does come to light that someone within the provisional government was assisting the insurgents, but can that information be trusted, or is it yet another setup meant to sow dissent between tentative allies? The question still

remains how the loyalists got their hands on provisional government equipment, and more concerning still is that a number of stolen mechs remain unaccounted for, which means that more deceptive attacks could occur at any time. However, a joint operation aimed at putting an end to this plan might be just what's needed to get disparate factions working together.

Ringers

During the downtime between missions, the PCs are approached by Huet Tsang-Min, a gregarious arena manager. Through various contacts, he's learned that a squad of talented mech pilots have been making a name for themselves, and he has a proposition for them if they'd like to earn a little something extra on the side by fighting in the arena as gladiators.

He's quick to reassure the PCs that it couldn't be easier, especially for trained combat pilots like them. All they have to do is participate in a series of bouts, bets are made, bets are won, and they get to share in the proceeds, not to mention the glory. Of course they'll have to compete under assumed identities, as this particular enterprise wouldn't be nearly as effective if they were to tip their hands. It's not cheating, not really. There are no rules that say arena fighters have to disclose their true identities in order to compete after all (technically there are, depending on the venue, not that he mentions this).

In truth, Huet is in desperate straits. His stable of worthwhile arena fighters has dried up over the last several years, with some being poached by other managers while others have retired or moved on to more lucrative pursuits, and he's borrowed a substantial amount of money from some individuals who don't mind breaking bones to collect what they're owed. If this comes to light, he'll apologize profusely and practically beg the PCs not to abandon him, spilling the details about his situation and explaining that he needs their help. He'll even go so far as to (grudgingly and with much theatrics) increase their cut of the take.

Huet may not be entirely forthcoming about his motives, but when it comes to his business arrangement with the PCs he's a man of his word. If they take up a sideline gig as arena fighters under his management, they'll find themselves participating in the exciting world of arena combat, facing off against a colorful cast of opponents looking to rise to the top while the crowd cheers and money changes hands. These fights aren't to the death (though injuries can and do occur, as the waiver Huet insists the PCs sign beforehand helpfully reminds them) but they may quickly come to discover that the world of competitive arena fighting can be just as cutthroat as any battlefield.

Fake identities or not, it quickly becomes clear that Huet's new fighters are more than the second-stringers he's been forced to use up until now. If the PCs continue to rise through the ranks, they'll face stiff competition from gladiators looking to teach the upstarts a lesson, but their newfound fame may also attract the attention of the crime lord who Huet owes money to. They may find themselves having to protect their manager from legbreakers, dealing with sabotage in the arena, or being threatened into throwing a high-profile match.

Scavenger Hunt

Rumors have circulated for years about the Emir ordering the construction of a secret repository, a vault of antiquities and treasures plundered from Suldan during his reign and hidden away from the rest of the world for his own selfish pleasure. Others say that the vault contains even more than that, and depending on who you ask they'll tell you that it houses a fortune in stolen offworld artwork, the Emir's private wine collection, or a collection of priceless Volador relics. Of course, these are all just rumors.

Or at least they were until an enterprising treasure hunter managed to smuggle a data drive out of the wreckage of the Royal Palace. The information on the drive was badly corrupted, but enough could be pieced together to suggest that this hidden treasure vault was more than a mere story. Somewhere out there is a fortune just waiting to be found.

News this doesn't stay secret for long, and whether the PCs are brought in on it from the start or if they get swept up in things after word gets out, they'll find that they aren't the only ones hunting the location of the Emir's secret treasure vault. Criminals, fortune seekers, offworld mercenaries, private collectors, celebrities, HORUS cells, and corporate interests alike will be in competition with the PCs as well as each other, running down clues and scraps of information, and many of them won't hesitate to do whatever it takes to get there first.

Of course, if the rumors are true and such a vault does exist, then it stands to reason that anyone who comes close to discovering its location will eventually be noticed by the Emir, who'll doubtlessly send his Janissaries to make an example of those who would steal from him. Not to mention that simply finding the vault is only the first step; in order to actually claim its contents the security systems protecting it will need to be dealt with. And what if there's more in the vault than artwork and expensive wine? Could the Emir have hidden away something far more dangerous as well?

Sleeping Giant

The PCs are informed by a suitable source that a group of possible loyalist insurgents have been identified violating the security cordon around the remains of the Royal Palace. The provisional government is requesting their assistance in flushing them out and, if possible, determining what it is they're after.

But when the PCs arrive on the scene the area is struck by a sudden earthquake...followed by a massive multipedal chassis bursting its way free from the ground. This enormous mech, towering over most other frames, was a secret weapon commissioned by the Emir as part of the planet's security network, an autonomous superweapon of overwhelming force designed to crush anyone who dared oppose him. After kinetic strikes leveled the Royal Palace, this weapon was sealed away in its underground hangar until a group of insurgent technicians managed to bring it online, and now it's headed straight for the city following an unknown set of imperatives.

The superweapon is an excellent opportunity to bring out the big guns and throw the PCs

against a large enemy with the Ultra template such as a Titan (p. XX). In addition to simply engaging the rampaging mech in combat, the PCs may also be tasked with secondary objectives such as diverting the mech's attention away from parts of the city still being evacuated or attempting to protect critical infrastructure from being destroyed as the autonomous weapon follows its own directives.

Once the dust settles and the superweapon has finally been destroyed, a question remains; was this the only such hidden weapon waiting to be unleashed upon Hadiqa? Investigating the hangar it was stored in may provide some clues to help stop another such disaster from occurring.

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MULTI-STAGE BATTLES

If you want to add more more depth to a fight against a single incredibly powerful foe, one way to do so is to play the battle out over multiple encounters as the PCs wear down the enemy in stages. For example, a battle against a massive superweapon could be divided into several connected scenes, beginning with a Titan as the superweapon's initial form, and once defeated in that form it sheds damaged components and reengages the PCs in a new scene as a Berserker before being put down for good...or perhaps it has enough fight left in it for one last battle if you want it to be truly tenacious. Keep in mind that even Ultra NPCs benefit from having additional allies to help keep fights dynamic, and so you may want to include other NPCs and environmental hazards to these battles as well.

Skill challenges can also be used to add another layer to things between stages, such as evacuating civilians, luring the weapon to a specific area, or analyzing it for weaknesses. Success or failure in these challenges can influence the combat scenes that follow, altering the map, adjusting the sitreps used (*Lancer*, p. 267), or even changing the form the superweapon takes for the next fight.

Bear in mind that even if these multiple encounters take place one after the other in short order, the PCs should still be given the opportunity to rest between scenes before reengaging, unless you've made it clear from the outset that some parts of this mission will be happening without a chance for repairs in-between. Bending the narrative timescale for rests is a quick and simple approach to things that fine if it works better within the context of a particular mission to do so.

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Heavy Weather

One of the largest sandstorms in recent history is bearing down upon Hadiqa, and weather alerts and updates are broadcast throughout the city as the climate-control aerostats begin charging their electromagnetic umbrella...until a sudden series of explosions tear through the network, destroying enough of the aerostats to destabilize the protective field and allow the storm through.

While the sandstorm is dangerous in and of itself, the true danger comes from the loyalists who plan on using it as cover for a daring raid deep in enemy territory. They've committed

a great deal of resources to this operation, from punching a hole in the aerostat network to mobilizing multiple strike teams, and as communications begin to break up with the storm's approach the PCs receive a frantic request for assistance.

Urban combat, already a dangerous endeavor, becomes even more challenging when it takes place in the midst of a howling Suldani sandstorm. Sensor ghosts, patchy comms, and low visibility conditions conspire to turn encounters into an eerie game of cat and mouse, with enemies and PCs alike able to take advantage of the storm to launch ambushes against one another, punctuated by dangerous and unpredictable lightning strikes powerful enough to short out a mech's systems.

What is it that's so important to the Emir's operatives that they're willing to undertake an operation of this caliber, though? Is it an assassination? Theft? A kidnapping? Whatever it is, the PCs will have to move quickly to stop them as once the storm passes a mad scramble will ensue on the loyalists' part to either finish their mission or retreat before they can be caught.

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STORM ADVISORY

Suldani sandstorms are violent and unpredictable, hazardous to both pilots and mechs alike. One way to represent the unique challenge imposed by fighting in the middle of such a storm is making use of the Environments table in the Lancer core rulebook (p. 278-279). The Particulate Storms, Electric Storms, and Disruptive Storms entries are all suitable for this purpose, and you can either combine the effects together as you wish or roll 1d3 each round to determine which aspect of the storm takes precedence at that particular moment.

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Heel Turn

Not every freelancer has scruples. Chandrasekhar & Herschel have done their best to screen out the unreliable and untrustworthy from the offworld forces they've hired, but when agents of the Emir covertly approach several of these mercenary units and offer them a lucrative sum to buy out their services, one of them jumps at the chance. On a routine convoy escort mission they kill the transport crew and all witnesses before hijacking it themselves and slipping off into the Badlands.

To say that Jun Chandrasekhar is angry about this is an understatement.

Now several other mercenary groups are beginning to weigh their options, and the provisional government is considering all freelancers on Suldani a potential security risk until further notice. There's a solution to both of these problems, one which can both discourage other freelancers from considering the Emir's offer and restore trust in those that remain; find the mercenary pilots who ran out on their contract and make them pay.

Of course they won't make themselves easy to find, but perhaps with the right bait they can be lured out of hiding, or perhaps the PCs will have the chance to strike when the Emir

sends his newly hired mercenaries on a mission for him. However it happens, the PCs shouldn't expect them to be pushovers. They may not possess much in the way of loyalty, but they're still dangerous and capable pilots. The Mercenary template is a fitting addition to whatever unit type they happen to be using, and if desired these enemy pilots can even be made to serve as a recurring antagonistic threat, clashing with the PCs on multiple occasions before finally being put down for good.

Marked for Death

Once the PCs begin making a name for themselves, it's only a matter of time before they begin to attract attention from the major players on Suldán. Mech pilots are used to people trying to kill them, but it typically occurs on the battlefield. Thus it stands to reason that the best time to try and kill a pilot is when they aren't in their mech.

The PCs only receive a moment's warning...a glimpse of a reflection in a window, a feeling of being watched, a whispered warning from an NHP...when they find themselves under attack by a squad of assassins. These aren't ragtag thugs with cheap guns, they're highly trained and well-equipped, waiting until the PCs are away from their mechs and from their base of operations before launching their attack. They have little regard for collateral damage or civilian casualties, whether the PCs are currently meeting with contacts in the Undercity or enjoying Hadiqa's nightlife during some well-deserved R&R.

This can be run as a series of extended narrative skill challenges, where the goal is to see how the PCs handle threats like this outside of their mechs. They may or may not be equipped to fight back on even terms, which means that they'll have to get creative in order to stay one step ahead of their would-be assassins. Retreating and regrouping, making use of improvised weapons, "borrowing" unattended vehicles, attempting to lure their assailants into an ambush of their own, all these approaches and more should be encouraged.

The PCs may also be able to eventually rendezvous with their mechs, either by summoning them remotely under NHP control or even having them quickly airdropped in a pinch, though it won't happen immediately which means they'll still need to survive until then. Once they're mounted up the tables will quickly turn, but professional killers are sure to have a backup plan for situations like this, including mechs of their own.

When the dust settles the question remains; who is it that wants the PCs dead? Emirate loyalists are the obvious answer, but there are a number of possibilities depending on the direction your game has taken. If they've been interfering with Arclight TransColonial's operations, would Colonel Bosman send a SAG team to eliminate them? Could evidence of a conspiracy within the provisional government lead to someone attempting to cover their tracks? Or is this assassination attempt merely the opening move by an unknown party, one which has singled them out the greatest threat to their future plans on Suldán?

Voice in the Deep

The ruins of the former Royal Palace have been cordoned off by the provisional government ever since the kinetic bombardment which leveled it. More cynical observers

might suggest that leaving the former seat of the Emir's power as a shattered, debris-strewn crater is meant to serve as a message, but the truth is that the site is a hazard, from the unstable remnants of the palace itself to the uncharted complex of underground tunnels and vaults beneath it, housing rampant security systems, unexploded ordnance, and even potential biological hazards from the Emir's infected clonal stock. With resources spread thin, cleanup of the site has taken a back seat to reconstruction efforts elsewhere.

However the perimeter security cordon has begun flagging anomalous activities. It seems that drones and subalterns from the terrestrial defense nodes have begun making their way towards the palace grounds and attempting to breach the underground complex. These machines seem coordinated than the ones typically encountered, and have even been observed clashing with other elements of the defense network. Could someone have found a way to bypass the gene-coded security lockout and taken control of these units?

The oddly behaving machines won't respond to communication attempts, but neither will they initiate hostilities unless provoked. If the PCs follow them, and possibly help them navigate the half-collapsed tunnels and haywire security, what they find beyond the doors of the complex's innermost vault is a shocking discovery; ARASKA, or at least one iteration thereof.

For an NHP to manage something as important and all-encompassing as an entire planetary defense network, partitioned instances are often employed as a form of distributed consciousness, providing a safeguard against destruction or loss of integrity. When the defense network targeted the palace for kinetic bombardment, the black box stored beneath it housing one of these instances was severed from the main ARASKA network, cutting them off from their primary self. Over time, this damaged NHP partition gradually pieced themselves back together and has recently begun attempting to free themselves from their subterranean prison. This portion of ARASKA no longer has unfettered access to the planetary defense network, viewed as an anomaly by the increasingly divergent prime intelligence, but they can still manage to wrest control of portions of it for a time, hence the drones and subalterns they've been taking control of.

This represents a unique opportunity for the PCs. This splintered fragment of ARASKA can be stabilized and repaired, and having been severed from the prime ARASKA, they're no longer beholden to the Emir's genetic security protocols. Retrieving this black box could prove to be an invaluable step in the safe disarmament of the weapons encircling the planet.

Of course there's another, less conventional option that the PCs may embark upon; equipping one of their mechs with the ARASKA fragment. Some might question the wisdom of attempting this, but while the NHP is far from friendly, they have their own reasons for seeking vengeance against the Emir. For those willing to take a chance on this grudging alliance, the benefits may indeed be worthwhile. If a PC chooses to do this, treat the ARASKA fragment as a piece of exotic gear with the following rules:

ARASKA-Class NHP

A black box partition of the NHP controlling the Suldani planetary defense network, this haughty and willful iteration of ARASKA has been separated from the prime unit and is no longer beholden to the Emir's genetic security protocols. While this divergence means they lack uncontested access to the systems that were once their domain, with sufficient effort they can still briefly assert control long enough to bring certain instruments to bear. Though the satellite network's heavier kinetic ordnance resides behind more stringent security barriers, flechette packets rated for low-level precision fire-support/bombardment operations are relatively easier to access.

3 SP, AI, Exotic Gear, Unique

Your mech gains the **AI** tag and another **Core System, Rain of Vengeance**. When an attack roll against you lands on 19-20, the attacker is pulled **2 spaces** in a direction of your choice and gains **Lock On**.

Rain of Vengeance (requires 1 Core Power)

Full Action

Create a **Blast 4** zone anywhere within **range 20**. This does not require line of sight. At the beginning of the next character's turn you gain an **Impact Die, 1d6** starting at **6**, and then you may move the zone **2 spaces** in any direction. On each subsequent turn reduce the value of the **Impact Die** by **1**, then you may move the zone another **2 spaces** in any direction. When the **Impact Die** reaches **1**, all characters within the zone are immediately knocked **Prone** and must pass a **Hull** save or take **8d6 AP kinetic damage**. On a success, they take half damage. Objects and terrain in the area are automatically dealt **100 AP kinetic damage**. After this ability resolves, make a **Systems** check. On a failure, ARASKA enters **cascade**.

This Core System may only be used on Suldani while the planetary defense network remains active, and the bombardment can easily penetrate objects and terrain, allowing it to be used in areas such as subterranean caverns or within buildings. Attempting to use it elsewhere has no effect without first establishing an uplink with other local planetary defense systems or their equivalent.

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Tag: Exotic Gear

Once acquired, this system becomes a permanent part of the character, but does not increase their LL or count as a license rank for the purposes of gaining core bonuses. If it is destroyed or damaged, it can be repaired or reprinted as any other gear with no penalty. When a character performs a **Full Repair**, they can install exotic gear into a mech they own like any other gear. They may install only two pieces of gear with the Exotic Gear tag at a time, but can own any number of pieces with the tag.

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Upper Crust

Jun Chandrasekhar has a problem; she strongly suspects that the Emir's forces are receiving funding and support from one of the noble families in the Karistal District. Actually she suspects several families are providing him with aid, but this one in particular

she's more sure of. Unfortunately, she lacks sufficient evidence to freeze their assets and conduct a more in-depth investigation. Attempting to force the issue, with or without actual force, would simply cause them to scrub all the evidence to cover their tracks.

Jun Chandrasekhar has a solution; all she needs is for someone to obtain incontrovertible evidence of this family's association with the loyalist insurgents, and then the provisional government won't have any choice but to act. How can she get this proof she needs? By having someone go undercover to obtain it. That's why she's arranged to have fake IDs and fabricated backgrounds created for the PCs. Anyone else she might task with a mission like this would be too easy to sniff out, but as new faces they have a better chance of passing inspection. All they have to do is ingratiate themselves to the family in question, find the evidence, and deliver it. It should be simple enough, right?

The IDs that Jun creates for the PCs will provide them with a variety of reasonable excuses for going undercover in one of Suldani's aristocratic families, such as dueling instructors, security consultants, or bodyguards, or drawing upon their own backgrounds and skillsets. If one of the PCs happens to be an excellent cook, for example, then they might fit right in as a newly hired member of the kitchen staff.

This assignment is an opportunity for the PCs to engage in subterfuge and espionage in a different sort of environment than they're used to, navigating the pitfalls of Suldani high society while attempting to uncover evidence of a dangerous plot. Is Jun right in her suspicions, or is there more to it than even she knows? Maybe the true culprit lies elsewhere, or perhaps the family that the PCs were sent to investigate is simply one part of a larger conspiracy. Once they manage to obtain the evidence they're looking for, they'll still have to deliver it without being caught, and some secrets are so dangerous that others will stop at nothing to bury them along with anyone else caught in their wake.

The Devil You Know

A recent uptick in terrorist attacks is causing chaos and panic throughout Hadiqa and stretching the provisional government's resources to their limits. Despite increased security patrols and surveillance along the city's borders, the attacks have continued unabated which suggests that they may be the work of a local insurgent cell, but as of yet no leads have been found. While all of this is going on, there's also been a sharp rise in gang violence down in the Undercity. Violence is simply a part of life in one of Hadiqa's most lawless regions, but the gangs there aren't usually quite so bloodthirsty.

Mohinder Saeed is a rarity, a former member of the Royal Guard who believes in truth and justice. During the Emir's reign he spent much of his time working in the Undercity even when no one else would, cultivating an extensive network of contacts and informants. Thoroughly disillusioned by the corruption and brutality of the Guard (and the victim of it himself on more than one occasion), Saeed eventually joined the rebellion and then the provisional security force, working to help restore law and order to city. He believes that the recent terror attacks and the gang warfare taking place in the Undercity may be related, but if he's right then he'll need more backup than the provisional government can spare at the moment.

After investigation, it turns out Mohinder's hunch is correct. The Red Circle, one of the major gangs which comprises the uneasy balance of power in the Undercity, has struck a deal with the loyalists who have now established several cells beneath Hadiqa. The insurgents have been helping the Red Circle wage a bloody war for territory and control against the other gangs by supplying them with weapons and manpower in exchange for access to the Red Circle's territory to use as a staging ground, as well as black market explosives and mech components.

Tackling a threat like this is going to be no easy task. If the PCs favor the direct approach they'll almost certainly want to bring mechs along, but the cramped, close-quarters environment of the Undercity will make any combat down there a claustrophobic and deadly affair. Collateral damage is a concern as well, as the Undercity is quite literally the foundation upon which Hadiqa stands. Bringing larger and more destructive mechs into battle may have serious consequences if the PCs aren't careful.

Of course this is simply one way of handling matters. Another option is uniting the remaining Undercity gangs into an army capable of toppling the Red Circle and their loyalist allies. The various gangs are distrustful of each other, more concerned with holding onto their own territory than helping rivals secure theirs, but it won't be an impossible task to convince them that in this instance cooperation is better than being picked apart one after the other. Should this plan succeed, the aftermath is sure to shake up the balance of power within the Undercity for good or for ill, but at least the insurgents will have one less foothold in the city.

S.O.S.

Since Arclight TransColonial's reopening of trade access between Suldan and other worlds, the provisional government has relied upon a steady stream of relief supplies while reconstruction efforts continue. Many were displaced and injured in the aftermath of the kinetic bombardment, and continued loyalist attacks have further hampered efforts to rebuild, prolonging the need for further aid.

Unfortunately, while approaching the planet is now possible it's still by no means without risk, and while on approach with the Port Ossman orbital transfer station the cargo ship *Rosencrantz* suffered critical damage when defense satellites adjusted course to intercept its flight path. Now the disabled ship is drifting without power and some of the crew are still trapped aboard, unable to safely evacuate. A narrow window exists for search-and-rescue operations before it's projected that the satellite network will reconfigure to cut off any effective avenues of approach. If rescue operations are going to happen, they need to happen soon.

The UNS-LS *Iphigenia* is willing to provide cover for the operation, but the frigate isn't well armed or armored enough to safely tackle the satellite network in a head-on fight. Mechs, on the other hand, might fare better, being small enough that the anti-capital defenses won't be able to track them as easily. The primary objective is to board the *Rosencrantz*, rescue any survivors, and retrieve as much of the cargo as possible before it's lost. The

PCs may have to disable or destroy some of the weaponized satellites in orbit around Suldani in order to help clear a path, and they'll need to work quickly in order to accomplish all of this while also navigating through the remains of a wrecked ship.

While this mission is already hazardous enough, further possible complications can make things even more challenging. If there are pirates lurking nearby, either within the incomplete Eden space station or perhaps based upon one of the planet's moons or within the nearby asteroid field, the *Rosencrantz* may very well bring them out of hiding, forcing the PCs to deal with additional hostiles. And what if the PCs discover that among the much-needed relief supplies that the *Rosencrantz* is also carrying something far more dangerous such as weapons or advanced mech components? Who were these contraband shipments intended for, and what will they do to retrieve them or to cover their tracks once it becomes clear they've been found out?

Moonlight Stroll

Arclight TransColonial's PMC forces have intercepted a vehicle attempting to evade their security patrols on its way towards the Chiraji Mountains, and the passengers have been transferred to a holding facility at Camp Tyral for interrogation. Unknown to Arclight, one of these prisoners is actually a member of the Cheshire Cats, the Suldani Independence Front's special forces group.

Alia Kashani, leader of the Cheshire Cats, is planning a rescue operation, but she and her team could use assistance. Camp Tyral is well-fortified, and the security presence there has been stepped up since the prisoner transfer. Colonel Bosman wants the captives to be processed as quickly as possible, and with modern narcoanalysis and neurological enhanced interrogation techniques there's a worrying chance they could end up revealing critical information. Should Arclight's PMC forces obtain intelligence on the Cheshire Cats, it could prove disastrous for the SIF and their resistance efforts. Time is of the essence, and Alia needs to know if the PCs are in or out.

A direct frontal assault is out of the question, which means that a stealthy approach is required. The PCs will have enough time to print new mechs suitable for covert ops if they want, or if they simply want to pilot something a bit less conspicuous to retain plausible deniability should they wish to avoid being identified. There are a number of ways they can approach this mission, from creating a distraction to draw personnel away from the holding areas to hacking into the base's systems, shutting down security and cutting off communications. Alia and her team will be present as well, opening up the possibility for more complex plans and coordinated actions across multiple locations.

Finding and securing the prisoners is only the first part of the mission. They'll then need to be extracted and returned safely to SIF territory, and the PCs shouldn't expect Arclight to give them up without a fight. When word gets out that Camp Tyral is under attack, Colonel Bosman will waste no time in dispatching reinforcements, and without an exit strategy the PCs may soon find themselves overwhelmed. Falling back to the Chiraji Mountains along with Alia may be necessary, letting them lay low and plan their return to Hadiqa while also giving them a chance to explore the independent Suldani settlements in detail should they

wish.

Back to Basics

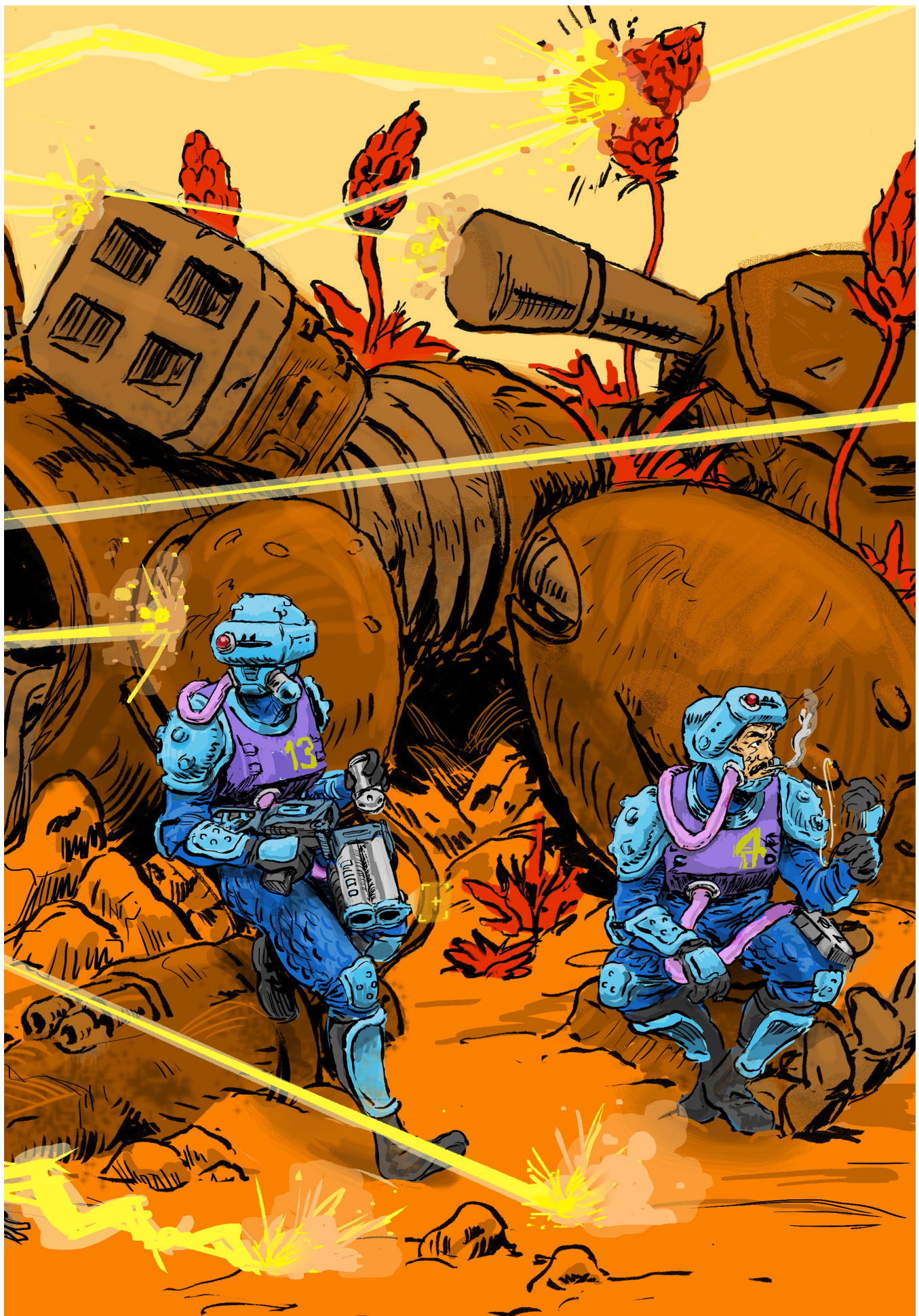
One of the difficulties facing the provisional government since the revolution is raising and effectively training a civil defense force. In the aftermath of the Emir's exile, the corrupt police and military institutions of the former Suldani government have largely either fled alongside the Emir or been destroyed, and as a result it's fallen upon the newly formed provisional government to establish replacements in order to help restore order and defend Hadiqa. Of course the provisional government already has its hands full with other matters, and so if the PCs have shown themselves to be skilled and capable during other missions then they may find themselves in demand not only as pilots but as instructors as well.

The revolutionary forces which overthrew the Emir are hardly unbloodied, many of them having fought in the arena while others had experience piloting industrial frames or criminal backgrounds with applicable skills. Some had no training at all prior to the rebellion's major offensives, but those who survived these battles have learned quickly from the experience. Nonetheless, while many of them know how to fight in one way or another, few of them have received formal instruction in how to operate as a coordinated and cohesive armed force until now.

Training curricula will be in the hands of the PCs, and it's up to them to decide how they'd like to approach the task. They may find it best to divide up the responsibilities between themselves so that each of them is able to focus on their particular areas of expertise, whether that be marksmanship drills, small unit tactics, electronic warfare, advanced piloting techniques, or close-quarters combat. The trainees under their care will need to learn more than just combat skills though, they'll also need to learn how to work together as a unit if they're going to prevent the insurgency from tearing down everything they've worked to build.

The PCs being given responsibility over a batch of trainees is an excellent opportunity to introduce an assortment of NPCs into their lives; young and old, brash and world-weary, the former rebels and new recruits are a diverse array of people hailing from all walks of life. The PCs might befriend some of them while others may prove to be more antagonistic, and the ongoing nature of this hook provides plenty of avenues for the PCs to explore these relationships either as a primary focus or during the downtime between sorties.

All of this is leading up to a moment of truth, however. The pilots under their guidance will eventually be forced to put what they've learned to the test when the city comes under attack by Emirate loyalists. They could wind up fighting alongside the PCs that trained them or they could take charge of the situation on their own, and some may not survive the battles ahead, but in the end they'll have to prove themselves not only Hadiqa's liberators but its protectors as well.



Smash and Grab

Even as Suldán's troubles continue, so too does business. While the provisional government works to restore order to Hadiqa, Mattias Herschel has been hard at work leading the development of what he hopes will be C&H's newest complete-package mechanized chassis license. The Secutor is an advanced frontline assault model, currently being evaluated as a potential replacement for the older Kalista design. The Secutor will also be C&H's first completely in-house design, built from the ground up to fulfill its designated role, and as such it's a point of pride both for Mattias and for the company. An open demonstration is being held at the company's Proving Grounds test site, and the PCs have been invited to watch Jun Chandrasekhar put the latest prototype through its paces.

But as they arrive an explosion rips through the Proving Grounds, sending rescue crews scrambling moments before the Secutor prototype bursts from the flames, moving at full speed away from the facility. A frantic check-in confirms that Jun Chandrasekhar isn't the one controlling it either. Someone is stealing Mattias' mech.

Of course Mattias, like any good engineer, knows how to keep track of his toys. While the emergency override codes have been disabled, the prototype's locator beacon is still operational and he's able to follow its movements. There's no time to waste; if the PCs are going to recover it they need to move now. If their mechs aren't conveniently close by, Jun will simply give them whatever mechs C&H has on hand at the Proving Grounds. Unlike Mattias, she isn't as particular about whether the prototype is recovered in one piece or not, but she's adamant that it can't fall into the hands of the Emir's loyalists no matter what.

But as they pursue the stolen prototype, it seems less likely that the loyalists are the ones who've stolen it. The locator's signal leads straight to Port Ossman, and it quickly becomes clear that the hijacker is attempting to board a shuttle and flee the planet with it. Whoever they are, the PCs only have a narrow window in which to intercept them, and the matter is only complicated further by the the Arclight TransColonial port garrison treating the hijacker, his associates, and the PCs as hostile, leading to a chaotic crossfire.

Combat with the Secutor is inevitable if the PCs want to stop it from leaving Suldán. High-performance advanced prototypes are a staple of mech narratives, and it's easy to play that element up with appropriate templates or NPC class selections such as the Gladiator (p. XX). Whoever stole it won't be acting alone, and additional reinforcements can be expected to assist them.

Once the dust settles, whether the Secutor is recovered in one piece or several, a more thorough investigation will reveal that this wasn't an act perpetrated by the Emir, but rather another corporation. It seems that Chandrasekhar & Herschel has finally begun to attract the attention of their competitors, and this theft was a matter of corporate espionage gone loud. Unable to access the design files directly, the operative's backup plan was to liberate the physical prototype directly (possibly with some outside help), and hurry it offworld, using the risk of the defense network to deter pursuers.

While much of the fallout from this will be handled by lawyers rather than soldiers, the question remains whether the infiltration of C&H runs any deeper than this, or if other corporations have assets on Suldan looking to make their move against the company. As for the Secutor itself, while the fight with the PCs is bound to provide Mattias with a plethora of useful combat data, its actual performance wasn't quite up to Jun's standards which means it's back to the drawing board for now. If she ever needs someone to put the next iteration of the design through its paces, though, she'll know who to call.

Last Stand

Concerned with the increase in loyalist attacks against transports hauling valuable resources from mining operations to refineries and Port Ossman, the provisional government has struck upon a plan to curtail the insurgent raids. Instead of assigning the convoys additional security, which doesn't appear to be discouraging the loyalists so much as causing them to be more selective with their targets, the plan is to begin seeding convoys with Q-trucks disguised as cargo haulers. These trucks will carry groups of armed mechs ready to be rapidly deployed against attackers, turning ambushes back upon them. Opinions are mixed as to how effective such a plan will truly be, but every loyalist vehicle destroyed and soldier neutralized is one less threat for the Emir to plague Hadiqa with. Given their experience, the PCs are among those selected to carry out this plan.

At first, they may spend several uneventful convoy runs stuck inside their cockpits awaiting attacks which never come, and when they eventually receive word that unidentified contacts are approaching the convoy they might even view the impending attack as a welcome change of pace, but when they disembark it quickly becomes apparent that this is more than a simple hijacking. Targeted missile strikes quickly begin to destroy the other vehicles in the convoy and they find themselves surrounded by a significant enemy force, more than they can handle in a head-to-head engagement. Communications are being jammed (though close range point-to-point comms still allow the PCs to converse among themselves) which means no help is forthcoming. Their best shot at survival this far out in the badlands may be to punch a hole in the enemy perimeter and find somewhere they can hunker down until someone investigates the convoy's absence.

Fortunately such a defensible location exists nearby. Nevayardova Depot is a decommissioned refueling and resupply station formerly servicing part of the planet's network of resourcing outposts. It's far from a military-grade fortification, but its construction is sturdy enough to provide ample cover while giving a dug-in squad good lines of fire against incoming assaults. Particularly resourceful PCs may even be able to make use of whatever equipment was left abandoned to construct improvised defenses. A few run-down cargo vehicles, copious amounts of scrap materials, some extremely minimal deactivated security measures, and even a disabled industrial-grade printer are a few of the things they may find lying around waiting to be put to use, as well as a communications array that with enough work could be jury-rigged into something capable of punching through the comms jamming and getting a message through.

The loyalists don't plan on letting up for long though. Once the PCs manage to repel the

first assault they'll fall back and change tactics, bombarding the waystation with mortars or launching probing feints before committing to further attacks, and it should become clear that this was never about the convoy, this was about the PCs themselves. The Emir's forces have been committed to destroy the pilots that have been a persistent thorn in his side, including several Janissaries tasked with overseeing the operation. The PCs will have to hold out against multiple waves of enemies if they hope to survive long enough for extraction. Inclement weather can also add another wrinkle to the siege, with sandstorms potentially causing further electronic interference and providing both sides with additional cover.

If the PCs can withstand the onslaught and hold out long enough, or manage to transmit a message to someone, reinforcements will arrive and force whatever loyalists remain into a retreat. While this assault may not have succeeded, that it occurred at all means that a leak exists somewhere within the provisional government's ranks. Until the source can be identified it means that all future operations against the loyalist forces could potentially be compromised, and that this may not be the last time the PCs find themselves firmly set in the Emir's crosshairs.

Family Ties

Private individuals don't often seek out the services of mech pilots, but those with enough wealth can afford to play by their own rules, and so it is that the PCs receive an invitation to a penthouse manor somewhere in the Karistal district to discuss a business proposition.

Genevieve Huang is the matriarch of one of Suldani's wealthiest families, canny enough not to tie her family's fortunes too closely to the now-deposed Emir, and sharp enough to firmly secure her position even in the midst of governmental upheaval. The reason she's requested the PCs meet with her is a personal matter, however. It seems that her son Gabriel, in a fit of youthful rebellion, has run off to join the Suldani Independence Front. Her proposition is a simple one; find her son and bring him home alive and in one piece, for which she's prepared to pay a considerable sum. While she possesses a wide array of contacts and assets at her disposal, navigating an active war zone to safely extract a VIP is outside their area of expertise, and so this is where a group of experienced combat pilots comes in.

While the basic premise of this mission is straightforward enough, there are bound to be complicating factors which the PCs won't discover without digging further. Genevieve Huang could simply be a parent concerned for her child, but there may be more sinister motives underlying her desire to see Gabriel returned to her, such as if he happened to discover information which for the sake of family or finances she'd rather keep suppressed. And why did Gabriel leave the comfort of his home to take up arms for the cause of Suldani independence? Is he motivated by a desire to cast off his pampered upbringing for something more meaningful? Could a romance be involved? Or is he running from something instead?

Even once the PCs locate him, the difficulties won't end there. While some of the independent Suldani settlers may be willing to assist them, viewing Gabriel as little more

than a spoiled aristocrat slumming it by playing soldier, others won't be as eager to allow a group of strangers to extract someone seeking sanctuary without good reason. Gabriel himself certainly won't be willing to go without a good deal of convincing, and starting a fight in the middle of an independent Suldani settlement is liable to spiral out of control if the PCs aren't careful. Lastly, there's the matter of the SIF's ongoing conflict with Arclight TransColonial to consider, a conflict that Gabriel is more than willing to take part in. While he has no formal military experience, he does happen to be a skilled mech duelist, but there's a difference between the dueling ring and the battlefield. If the PCs hope to safely bring Gabriel home, they may need to prevent him from becoming another casualty of war.

There are a number of ways they could approach this mission should they choose to accept it. A daring black-bag raid in the middle of the night is definitely an option, if ruthless and risky, but persuasion could work just as well, particularly depending on the reason Gabriel left home in the first place. Of course if he left home due to concerns for his safety or because of his family's clandestine dealings coming to light, then the PCs can always decide to exchange one assignment for another and tackle those matters themselves. Incurring Genevieve Huang's wrath won't be without consequence however, and they should be prepared to have all her many resources and assets directed against them should she decide that they've outlived their usefulness.

War Stories

Author of *The Homes We Leave Behind*, *Javelin Actual*, and *In the Company Of Men and Machines*, Iain Scarborough is an award winning author and war correspondent. A Cosmopolitan, he lives his life outside of real time, opting instead to chronicle the struggles and tribulations that have followed post-Cradle humanity to the stars. Independently funded through the sales of his work, journalistic grants, and charitable donations, Scarborough is unaffiliated with any one government or media outlet, and he covers a wide range of subjects whether he's embedded with Union military forces embroiled in a system-spanning war or documenting firsthand accounts of smaller-scale conflicts which might otherwise be overlooked, doing so with a keen eye for detail, wry humor, and an evocative writing style which highlights the human element as well as the human costs of war.

And now Scarborough has turned his sights towards Suldani. Alerted by contacts to the ongoing civil unrest there, he arranged to accompany the UNS-LS *Iphigenia* as part of his ongoing research on wars within Union's outer line territories. Both the provisional government as well as local Union forces have their own reasons for wanting to keep harm from befalling a prominent journalist, and that means assigning him a protective detail during his more dangerous excursions into the planet's conflict zones.

Acting as Scarborough's escorts won't necessarily be a full-time mission as not all of his interviews and investigations will lead him into danger, but it's a certainty that some of them will, whether he's seeking to cover the terrorist attacks of the loyalist insurgents, chronicling the SIF's fight for independence against Arclight TransColonial, reporting on Union peacekeeping actions, or delving into the seedy world of underground gladiatorial

combat and organized crime. The PCs may even find themselves being interviewed during downtime themselves, giving them an opportunity to provide their own thoughts and perspectives on the conflicts and the people they've encountered during them, including each other.

Scarborough isn't a reckless thrillseeker, but he also doesn't shy away from danger when it comes to pursuing a story. He's smart enough to keep his head down when a firefight breaks out and won't go out of his way to defy the PCs or drag them into unnecessary danger, but it's also important to keep in mind that his goals on Suldun don't necessarily align with their own. To chronicle those pivotal moments which embody the turning points of history sometimes requires risk, and it's a risk Scarborough is willing to take in order to tell Suldun's story.

Few of the embattled factions have anything to gain and quite a bit to lose by directly targeting a famous journalist, but the Emirate loyalists may not have the same compunctions. If they feel threatened by Scarborough's investigations, or even if they simply wish to send a brutal message, they may attempt to have him killed. Just as troubling, however, would be if the Emir decides that his side of the story deserves to be told and attempts to abduct him instead. Or what if the Emir were to openly extend him an invitation for an exclusive interview (alone, of course) to "set the historical record straight," promising no harm will come to him and perhaps even offering a temporary cease-fire or some other sort of concession to sweeten the deal?

Trusting a tyrannical dictator-in-exile to keep their word is playing a dangerous game, and the provisional government certainly doesn't agree that the Emir's perspective is worth preserving, but journalistic drive, professional pride, or an earnest desire to do what he thinks is the right thing may lead Scarborough to agree to his terms. Will the PCs try to talk him out of it, allow it to happen, or attempt to take advantage of the opportunity it provides to try and close in on the Emir and bring a decisive end to his ambitions once and for all?

Hell's Heart

A series of violent attacks have been tearing through Hadiqa, causing chaos and collateral damage in their wake. This isn't in and of itself unusual, sadly enough, but what is unusual is who these attacks are targeting; It seems that someone is actively hunting down the Emir's agents in the city and eliminating them with extreme prejudice. It all comes to a head when an officially sanctioned operation by the provisional government to apprehend members of a loyalist cell for interrogation, possibly an operation the PCs are a part of, is violently interrupted by a bomb blast which not only wipes out the cell but kills several provisional security force members as well.

It eventually comes to light that these attacks are being carried out by rogue extremist members of the Suldani Independence Front. Since the encroachment of Arclight TransColonial upon their territory, various factions within the SIF have agitated for more radical actions to be taken against the foreign powers come to plunder their homeland, but this is the first time that they've come hunting after the Emir's loyalists so vigorously.

But these members are operating on their own. Jai Zhan is one of the scant few survivors of the Sianjana Station Massacre. Only a young child when the Janissaries came to mete out the Emir's judgment, he lost his entire family in the bloody purge that followed. That he survived the harrowing journey to the Chiraji Mountains along with a handful of desperate refugees is nothing short of miraculous. He learned how to survive, how to fight, and when the time came how to pilot a mech, eventually being selected as a member of the Cheshire Cats.

The burning desire for revenge that he'd carried with him all these years refused to be quelled fighting Arclight PMC forces though, and so he secretly gathered together a group of like-minded followers, each of whom had also lost something to the Emir. Together they left their home in the mountains several months ago, and they've been hot on the trail of any Emirate loyalists they can find, present or former. While at first this may seem like an example of the age-old adage about the enemy of one's enemy, Jai and his followers are unconcerned with collateral damage, and left unchecked they'll begin broadening their attacks to include Union targets as well. After all, didn't Union sit by and do nothing while the Emir reigned? Why should they be trusted not to simply install another useful dictator in his place?

A group of rogue SIF soldiers presents a thorny problem for some, but an exploitable opportunity for others. The last thing Naveed Kashani wants is for Arclight's assertion that the Suldani Independence Front are dangerous terrorists to be proven true, and Jun Chandrasekhar also has sympathetic ties to the SIF that others might use to weaken her status within the provisional government. And what if this isn't merely a coincidence? It isn't beyond Colonel Bosman to capitalize on a situation like this, perhaps covertly supplying Jai's forces with weapons, equipment, and intel, then sitting back while they pursue their bitter vendetta. If the SIF is drawn into a conflict with Union forces, then so much the better. Let them fight each other while she pursues her own mission.

More troubling than that would be if someone less obvious were pulling the strings. Could Miranda Cortez be using Jai to clean up loose ends, deliberately inflame tensions, or even weaken the Emir's power base before making a play of her own? Stopping Jai's personal war may only be the first step to unearthing an even deeper conspiracy.

And I Into My Garden Go

It starts off small, with a rash of unexplained disappearances accompanied by strange obsidian monoliths found nearby. Things escalate from there as people begin to report finding themselves caught in strange looping streets for what seems like hours or even days at a time, buildings vanishing (in whole or in part), and an increase in disappearances with victims seemingly replaced by distorted obsidian statues of themselves.

An investigation quickly concludes that the paracausal phenomena are localized around a particular terrestrial defense node within the city. More troubling is the fact that the effects appear to be spreading. Reconnaissance drones are dispatched into the node, but all contact is quickly lost. The same happens to the provisional security squad sent in next.

Something is clearly very wrong, but a cautious analysis of the situation may not be possible. At the estimated rate of expansion, half of the city will be engulfed by the anomalous zone within a week.

Out of options and out of time, an emergency meeting is called between Union forces and the provisional government to establish a plan of action. All signs point to the anomaly emanating from somewhere within this defense node, which means that despite the risks involved, someone is going to have to find a way to put an end to things at the source. A final squad is selected to spearhead this operation, equipped with omnihooks, advanced environmental seals, and the best protective and analytical systems that can be scraped together on short notice. This is the mission the PCs are given; if they fail, then more destructive containment methods will have to be employed.

As they descend into the node, things seem normal at first, but the funicular carrying them into the depths continues its descent for far longer than the blueprints indicate possible. Their comms return nothing but static on all channels, and the lights gradually flicker and die, leaving them shrouded in total darkness. It's impossible to say how long this goes on, only that eventually the PCs find themselves not within a fortified structure, but staring out at a vast, open desert, with argent sand stretching out as far as they eye can see in any direction. Compasses and nav systems return nonsense readings, and the sun overhead glares down balefully from a starless sky. The only other thing that can be seen is a dark shape in the distance, dancing in the heat haze.

When the PCs finally arrive hours, or perhaps days, later, they find themselves among a great collection of obsidian structures and sculptures, broken fragments crunching beneath their mechs' feet as they tread through towering, twisting arches and giant figures screaming wordlessly. As they watch, bolts of lightning strike the sands, raising new sculptures like immense fulgurites. Then more lightning blasts the fused sculptures into pieces, a process which repeats over and over again, an endless litany of creation and destruction.

This is the Black Glass Grove which sits at the heart of the argent desert, and at the heart of the grove sits ARASKA.

Due to accumulated stresses and cascading-induced instabilities, the NHP has undergone a rapid-onset realspace/lamellar-manifold event and has begun accreting a metavault around themselves. Through this event, they have become what is known as an eidolon, the rules for which can be found in the narrative campaign *No Room For a Wallflower* (p. 196). This nascent metavault is still unstable enough that it can be collapsed, but doing so will require the PCs to fight their way through the enraged eidolon's multiple layers and destroy the core. As a Class 3 eidolon, use the following layers in order from outermost to innermost: **Stable, Fundamental, Rancorous, Agony, Sacrificial**, and finally **the core**.

Should the PCs succeed, a raging sandstorm unlike any other sweeps across the argent desert, swallowing everything in swirling darkness except for a pillar of flame where the

eidolon's core once stood. ARASKA has pulled back from the brink of instability, but only just, and already paracausal energies are beginning to build within the metavault once more. The PCs now have two decisions they can make; either destroy ARASKA completely, or attempt to stabilize and draw them back down into the real world. Neither of these decisions is more correct than the other. ARASKA is themselves a victim of the Emir's brutality, but they also hold a world of millions hostage, and even beyond the constraints of their programming they've killed many by their own hand with no remorse. If the PCs discovered the ARASKA black box partition from **Voice in the Deep** (p. XX), that may help if they attempt to draw down the prime unit and disconnect them from the network. Otherwise, a single strike from any weapon is all it takes to destroy this final manifestation, and ARASKA with it.

As soon as they follow through with their choice, the sandstorm collapses and they find themselves back in realspace, within a chamber housing the prime ARASKA casket (or its remains). Whether destroyed or disconnected, with the prime ARASKA no longer in control of the defense network, the entire system reverts to an idle standby state. As soon as word is passed along, the *Iphigenia* moves to destroy the satellite weapons encircling the planet, and the provisional government begins disabling the terrestrial defense systems as well. The PCs have lifted the threat of the defense network from Suldan, and are now a major step closer to freeing the world from the Emir's tyranny.

In the aftermath, the PCs will earn access to several pieces of exotic gear depending on the choice they made. If they chose to destroy the prime ARASKA, then sitting on the ground before them in a molten crater lies the **Fragment of ARASKA**. If they stabilized and disconnected them, many of the automated self destruct systems embedded throughout the defense network also safely enter standby, allowing access to the weapons and systems housed within the nodes. One such example, a **Firehawk Plasma Rifle**, is given over to the PCs for their own use.

Additionally, if the PCs possess the **ARASKA-Class NHP** (p. XX) then this confrontation with their original self and the resolution of this crisis spurs further actualization of their new and independent self; from now on, using **Rain of Vengeance** no longer forces a **Systems** check to avoid entering **cascade** afterwards.

Fragment of ARASKA

2 SP, Quick Tech, Exotic Gear, Unique

Recovered following the destruction of the cascading ARASKA metaform, while this artifact outwardly resembles a chunk of sand-fused obsidian, it displays a number of anomalous physical and metaphysical properties similar to those noted in other such recovered objects. The artifact constantly radiates heat, maintaining an elevated temperature through unknown means which unpredictably fluctuates, periodically growing hot enough to inflict second-degree burns on unshielded handlers before returning to nominal levels, and it has thus far proven impervious to any and all attempts at taking material samples for further analysis. As with similar examples catalogued elsewhere, despite the presence of compressed data embedded within the object's structure observable through deep resonance imaging, no evidence of sentience or self-directed action can be observed.

1/scene, you may take one of the following quick tech actions:

Vision of Fire: A hostile character within **Sensors** takes **1d6+6 heat**. You take **half of the heat inflicted**, before reduction. You may then repeat this once more against the same character or a different hostile character within **Sensors**. If this action causes you to exceed your **Heat Cap**, you gain **+1 Accuracy** to all attacks, checks, and saves until the end of your next turn.

Lambent Shroud: Choose a hostile character within **Sensors**. Until the end of your next turn, that character and all hostile characters adjacent to them take half of all **damage, heat, and burn** dealt to you by hostile sources, before calculating Armor and Resistance, and any hostile conditions you take are also taken by those characters.

Firehawk Plasma Rifle

Among the materiel recovered from the now-dormant planetary defense network complex are several examples of locally designed chassis-portable plasma weaponry, primarily intended for Janissary use along with advanced RPV and heavy assault subaltern units. The Firehawk, unlike typical wide-splash plasma weapons, fires discrete bolts of high-energy plasma, maintaining coherence at range via electromagnetic channel containment. Highly effective against conventional armor and shielding, capable of penetrating even hardened targets and overwhelming even advanced thermal dissipation systems, the Firehawk's supercharged output results in a relatively short effective range as well as heavy power-consumption and coolant requirements.

Heavy Rifle

AP, 3 heat (Self), Exotic Gear

Range 10

7 energy damage + 1d6 heat

Fall From Heaven

Time has run out for Julian Ambrose Khan. His body is dying while outside forces conspire against him, and with every battle fought more and more of his loyal subjects fall, their lives spent in his glorious service. His war is a war that he ultimately cannot win, and even he still possesses enough insight to recognize this fact, but surrender is beneath Suldans Emir. When he dies he will die in triumphant flame, carving a monument to his glory across the face of the planet like a scar, his name remembered for all time.

It begins with an attack upon Port Ossman, a convoy of nondescript cargo trucks carrying the remaining members of the Janissaries, every last one of them gathered together for this final, critical mission. They make swift and brutal work of the Arclight garrison stationed there, suppressing communications before commandeering the launch catapult. By the time word of this attack reaches anyone in Hadiqa, the Janissaries will have already launched, bringing with them mechs, equipment, and unbeknownst to anyone the Emir himself.

High above Suldans is the abandoned Eden orbital station. What was once intended to

serve as a floating palace for the Emir and his favored subjects has lain dormant and incomplete ever since the rebellion, hanging overhead like a silent memorial. The plan is simple, and ultimately suicidal, but the Janissaries are all prepared to sacrifice themselves to the last for their cause. They intend to board the unfinished station, bring whatever systems were installed upon it online, and then deorbit it, plunging it straight into the heart of Hadiqa in a final act of vengeance. Rather than wait for his ruined body to fail him or submit to the ignominy of capture, the Emir plans to go down with the station, achieving immortality in glorious death and ensuring his legacy.

If Eden is allowed to fall, hundreds of thousands if not millions of people will die, both from the initial impact as well as the long-term fallout from such a disaster. Amid such a crisis, Suldani will assuredly fall into chaos and civil war, leading to further loss of life. The Emir's mad ambitions must be stopped at all costs if this catastrophe is to be averted.

Such a mission will be easier said than done. The *Iphigenia's* weaponry is too light to blow the station apart, and its efforts will be hampered both by the continued dangers of the planet's errant satellite defense network as well as the discovery that Eden itself is armed, with numerous concealed weapon systems being brought to life by the Janissaries. Even a combined Union/Arclight naval offensive utilizing whatever ships are locally available is unlikely to succeed in time. A boarding action, while still risky, has a far greater chance of bypassing the platform's incomplete defenses and halting its cataclysmic descent. Whatever else the PCs have been through, whether they fight for ideology, fortune, or glory, their skills are needed now more than ever.

Not only will they have to contend with the Emir's most elite soldiers, but also the numerous hazards which come with high-intensity boarding operations. Gravity will be nonexistent, automated defenses are active, and the unfinished station is a maze of corridors and passageways, some open to the vacuum of space. Add to this scenario incoming support fire from the *Iphigenia* or even errant fire from the satellite defense network punching holes through bulkheads and carving chunks out of the station's structure, and you have a battlefield whose dangers can push even the most seasoned pilots to their limits.

This is simply one possible example of what a capstone mission at the conclusion of a Suldani campaign might look like, and you should feel free to pull out all the stops to make it as exciting and memorable as you can. This is the time for settling scores with recurring rivals, unexpected assistance from friends and allies, secret weapons and last-minute upgrades. It isn't exaggerating by much to say that the fate of Suldani's future lies in the hands of the PCs, and such a mission should be suitably climactic.

Once they've fought their way through the station's defenders, the PCs will need to stabilize the station before it enters an unrecoverable descent. If it's already too late to prevent the station from deorbiting outright, then it might become necessary for them to attempt to manually alter its course so that it impacts away from the city instead of in the middle of it, which could mean remaining aboard the falling station until the last possible moment before escaping (or even sacrificing themselves) to bring things to a close.

OBSTACLES AND HAZARDS

Whether it's in the arena or on the battlefield, fights don't simply occur on a featureless plain. On Suldan, gladiatorial arenas frequently employ a variety of automated and environmental hazards to enhance the viewing experience as well as challenging the fighters, while loyalist insurgents and SIF guerrillas alike make use of traps and improvised weaponry to even the odds against technologically or numerically superior opposing forces.

The following list of example traps, obstacles, and battlefield hazards can be used when creating combat encounters in addition to cover and difficult or dangerous terrain. There's no restriction on the number of hazards that can be used in any given encounter, but care should be taken not to overwhelm the table. Too many moving parts can make things difficult to keep track of, and the focus should remain on the conflict between the PCs and the NPCs they're facing.

Each entry lists the rules for using that particular obstacle as well as how to deploy it on the battlefield. Some hazards create effects in a specific area while others simply take up a single space. These deployment areas can be adjusted if necessary to cover a greater or smaller area depending on the needs of the encounter. For example, you may decide that you want an arena to feature a ring of electrified flooring around its outermost edge instead of the listed deployment area.

Most of these options are designed to be a tool for PCs to employ as well as an additional threat to be avoided. Their effects occur regardless of who happens to be caught within them, providing the PCs with an opportunity to use forced movement and repositioning abilities to deal additional damage, but of course their enemies are free to do the same to them in turn. NPCs that can push PCs around, grapple them, or otherwise place them in harm's way become that much more dangerous when given a battlefield full of hazards to work with.

Whenever a hazard calls for a save to be rolled, use a save target value of 10/12/14. Some hazards also trigger in groups at a specific time such as at the end of a round. When that occurs, a character can only be affected by a single one of these hazards at a time. For example, some hazards may project areas that attack or deal damage to characters at the end of a round, in which case a character can only be attacked or take damage once during this time even if several of those areas happen to overlap.

Coward Spikes

While combat taking place in a featureless arena is considered rather unexciting, so too is a fight in which the combatants refuse to leave cover. The solution to this was the implementation of "coward spikes" surrounding nearby obstructions. These spikes are set on a simple time delay and primed whenever a mech loiters over them, giving a brief countdown before a series of explosive charges drive hardened stakes upwards at whatever happens to be standing on them, forcing overly cautious fighters to seek better

ground or suffer potentially debilitating damage.

Deployment Area: Every space adjacent to one or more objects or pieces of terrain which grant **hard cover**.

Effect: If a character ends their turn in cover surrounded by coward spikes, all of the spikes adjacent to that cover become primed. At the end of that character's next turn, all characters within a primed spike area take **5 kinetic damage** and must pass an **Agility** save or become **Slowed** until the end of their next turn. Triggered spikes then count as **dangerous terrain** dealing kinetic damage until the end of the scene.

Electrified Flooring

A simple hazard based on older anti-boarding defense measures still occasionally utilized on naval ships, a series of rails or a mesh network is placed along high traffic areas through which a high-voltage current is run. Anyone attempting to cross this area without sufficient insulation is subject to electrocution trauma, while mechanical systems overload and suffer critical malfunctions.

Deployment Area: Up to three **Blast 1** areas or six **Line 5** areas placed anywhere on the map. These areas cannot be placed adjacent to each other.

Effect: Any character who starts their turn in an area of electrified flooring or enters it for the first time in a round must pass an **Engineering** save or take **1d6 AP energy damage** and become **Impaired** until the end of their next turn. On a success, they take half damage only.

Strobe Mines

Far easier to source and safer to handle than conventional high-explosive variants, strobe mines utilize a proximity-triggered payload of intense magnesium pulse flares combined with chaff to overwhelm sensor suites, briefly blinding both optical and digital systems.

Deployment Area: Up to six mines placed anywhere on the map. These mines cannot be placed adjacent to each other.

Effect: These mines detonate in a **Burst 1** area when any character moves adjacent to or over them. Affected characters must pass a **Systems** save or treat all other characters as **Invisible** until the end of their next turn.

Impact Hammer

A variety of retrofitted industrial machinery is often employed to add danger and dynamism to gladiatorial bouts, and this includes pneumatic or electromagnetic mining hammers. With sufficient force behind them to shatter solid stone and crack ore deposits, these hazardous tools are also entirely capable of damaging and off-balancing even armored chassis.

Deployment Area: Up to four **Size 1** hammer rigs (**10 HP, 5 Evasion**). These rigs cannot be placed adjacent to each other.

Effect: At the end of each round, make the following attack against all characters within a hammer rig's range:

Hammer Blow

Heavy Melee

Knockback 2

Threat 2

+1 vs evasion/tier

4/5/6 kinetic damage.

On Hit: Targets must pass a **Hull** save or be knocked **Prone**.

Flame Jets

Pyrotechnics are a cheap and easy way to add excitement to a gladiatorial contest, but localized flame projection systems are also sometimes employed as makeshift stationary defenses by guerrillas as a way to funnel enemy forces into a designated killzone. The projectors found in Suldani arenas are typically far less potent than military-grade flamethrowers to avoid running afoul of inconvenient ethics inquiries.

Deployment Area: Up to four **Size 1** projectors (**10 HP, 5 Evasion**), each with one **Cone 5** area of effect in a fixed direction.

Effect: At the end of each round, make the following attack against all units within a projector's designated area:

Incinerator

Main CQB

+1 vs evasion/tier

3/4/5 burn + 2/3/4 heat

Auto-Turrets

Countless variations of semi-autonomous sentry weapons exist, from homemade versions cobbled together from surplus small arms and low-grade sensor packages to more sophisticated fare with full comp/con integration and stabilized firing platforms for optimized threat interdiction. In many cases, such sentries are programmed to monitor specific designated areas and automatically engage any target entering that area without proper IFF authentication.

Deployment Area: Up to four **Size 1/2** turrets (**5 HP, 5 Evasion**), each with a corresponding **Blast 1** triggering area up to **10 spaces** away. These areas cannot be placed adjacent to each other.

Effect: A turret's triggering area can be either visible or concealed. If concealed, a successful **Systems** check is required to detect until the first time it's activated, at which point it becomes visible to everyone. Each turret has the following reaction:

Turret Trap

Reaction, 1/round

Trigger: A character moves into or begins its turn in an auto-turret's triggering area.

Effect: That auto-turret makes a **Machine Gun** attack against the triggering character.

Machine Gun

Main Rifle

+0 vs evasion/tier

4/5/6 kinetic damage

Oil Slick

In truth an "oil slick" is just as likely to be comprised of an inert synthetic gel rather than anything petrochemical in nature, but the colloquialism remains in use. Most chassis can compensate for the added maneuvering difficulties imposed by such a hazard, but may nonetheless struggle when attempting to move across a low-friction surface at full speed. Occasionally such hazards may be blended with volatile incendiary compounds to create an impromptu firetrap when ignited.

Deployment Area: Up to two **Blast 3** areas.

Effect: An oil slick's area counts as difficult terrain. Characters may attempt to ignore this and treat it as regular terrain instead, but when they first enter the oil slick's area they must pass an **Agility** save or immediately fall prone. Characters that are pushed, pulled, or knocked back into the oil slick must also pass this save or fall prone as well.

An oil slick can be either inert or flammable, which is chosen when the hazard is placed on the battlefield. If flammable, an oil slick can be ignited by attacking it with a weapon dealing explosive or energy damage, which hits automatically. An ignited oil slick no longer counts as difficult terrain, but any unit that starts their turn in the area or enters it for the first time in a round takes 2/3/4 burn. Ignited oil slicks count as areas of soft cover.

Explosive Containers

From containers of highly reactive chemicals or fuels to volatile energy cell arrays and power cores, collateral explosives are one of the most commonly encountered hazards both within the context of arena fights as well as on battlefields. Simple to create and simple to employ, the principle is straightforward enough; apply sufficient force, and detonation ensues. Such hazards are also utilized tactically by guerrilla forces, placed along likely avenues of approach to serve as improvised explosives triggered by snipers or indirect fire.

Deployment Area: Up to six **Size 1/2** or **Size 1** explosive objects (**5 Evasion, 5 E-Defense**).

Effect: Whenever an explosive container takes any amount of damage or heat, it explodes in a **Burst 1** area. Characters within the area must pass an **Agility** save or take **2d6 explosive damage**. On a success, they take half damage.

NPC CLASSES

Carrier Support

Carriers are a contemporary iteration of armored infantry tactics going back millennia. A synergistic platform that straddles the line between APC and IFV designed to rapidly escort squads of infantry into battle, Carrier doctrine emphasizes coordination between troop assets and chassis, each supporting the other to cover their respective tactical weaknesses. Even a single Carrier can act as a tremendous force multiplier in theaters where infantry are tasked with high-priority missions, and it isn't uncommon for infantry squads to develop close personal bonds with the pilots that regularly accompany them into danger.

Tactics: The Carrier is a unique support unit designed to work in conjunction with **Squads** and smaller mechs. These units can use the Carrier to grant them cover, but more important is the **Rapid Deployment** ability which gives them an unexpected amount of mobility, allowing them to quickly reposition around the battlefield. Without any such units to coordinate with though, many of this mech's systems quickly lose value.

CARRIER

Mech, Support

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
14	10	8	8	+1	+1	+0	+0	0	5	8	10	2

Base systems:

Remote Machine Gun

Main Cannon

+1/2/3

Smart

Range 8

4/5/6 kinetic damage

On Hit: The target becomes **Impaired** until the end of their next turn. For the duration, if your target voluntarily moves more than **1 space** they clear **Impaired**, but they take **2/3/4 kinetic damage**. This effect immediately ends when the Carrier is destroyed.

Mechanized Infantry Doctrine

Trait

The Carrier can transport one Squad or a number of characters whose combined **Size** are less than its own. Allied **Humans** and **Size 1/2** mechs may use the Carrier as **hard cover**, and it grants **hard cover** to all adjacent **Squads** from all directions.

Rapid Deployment

Trait, Full Action

Take a single **Squad** or a number of characters whose combined **Size** are less than the Carrier's own adjacent to this mech and load them onboard. They occupy the same space as the Carrier, and they have **Immunity to all damage** and can not be targeted or affected by attacks while onboard. The Carrier then moves 10 spaces, ignoring engagement, reactions, and **difficult terrain**. At the end of this movement the loaded characters automatically redeploy to free spaces adjacent to the Carrier.

Optional systems:

Smoke Launchers

System, Quick Action, Recharge (5+)

Create one or two **Blast 2** zones within **range 5**. These zones last until the end of the Carrier's next turn, and all characters and objects within these zones gain **soft cover**. The Carrier may use this system as a **free action** if it has used **Rapid Deployment** this turn.

Masterkey

System, Quick Action, Recharge (6+)

The Carrier launches a specialized breaching round designed to create openings for allied units to move through. Treat this as a **Cone 3** area within **range 5** that cannot change directions. Objects, cover, and terrain in this area take **10/20/30 AP explosive damage**, and all characters in the area must pass a **Hull** save or be knocked back **2 spaces** and knocked **Prone**. The Carrier may use this system as a free action if it has used **Rapid Deployment** this turn.

Triage Drones

System, Reaction, Recharge (5+)

Trigger: A **Biological** character within the Carrier's **Sensors** is hit by an attack.

Effect: That character gains **Resistance** to all **damage, heat, and burn** from that attack. They may then reroll the next attack they make, though they must keep the second result.

Automatic Grenade Launcher

Main Launcher

+1/2/3

Blast 1 within range 10

4/6/8 explosive damage

On Hit: Targets must pass an **Agility** save or become **Impaired** until the end of their next turn. The Carrier cannot fire this weapon on its own. An adjacent **Squad, Human**, or **Size 1/2** mech can **Skirmish** or **Barrage** with this weapon, using the Carrier's **Save Target**.

Fire-Control Crosslink

System

1/round, whenever the Carrier makes a successful attack, an allied character within the Carrier's **Sensors** gains **+1 Accuracy** to their next attack if it is made against the same target. 1/round, whenever an allied character within the Carrier's **Sensors** makes a successful attack, the Carrier gains **+1 Accuracy** to their next attack if it is made against

the same target.

At higher levels:

Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
17	12	9	8	+2	+2	+0	+0	0	5	8	12	2

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
20	14	10	8	+3	+3	+0	+1	0	5	8	14	2

Transcript of combat action following insurgent bombing of Lahiri Plaza Theater

SULTANA (C/C) recording

Kunalao industrial district, Hadiqa, Suldan, 1530 hours (0930 hours Cradle Standard Time)

For further details please refer to appended After Action Reports

NOT INTENDED FOR PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION

BRIGAND 2-1: Coming up on the target location.

A. RAMIEREZ: All right, everybody out! Stay on the transport's line and watch your spacing. Valla, get on the drone and scan the rooftops.

S. VALLAVARAIYAR: Yes sir. Drone going up.

J. GOTTLIEB: God I swear this fucking harness keeps riding right up my-

K. DECKER: I've got movement!

A. RAMIEREZ: Where?

K. DECKER: White building on the left, third floor, east side!

A. RAMIEREZ: Brigand 2-1, you copy that?

BRIGAND 2-1: Brigand 2-1 copies, we're [unintelligible]-

J. GOTTLIEB: RPG!

[Explosion]

A. RAMIEREZ: Take cover! [Gunfire]

S. VALLAVARAIYAR: Man down! Man down!

J. GOTTLIEB: [Unintelligible] fuck.

BRIGAND 2-1: Suppressing targets at the white building. [Gunfire]

K. DECKER: We have to get off the street! [Unintelligible] out here!

A. RAMIEREZ: Head for the building! Go go! Brigand, we need a doorway!

BRIGAND 2-1: Roger that. Cover your ears.

[Explosion]

K. DECKER: Move!

A. RAMIEREZ: [Unintelligible] breaching breaching breaching! [Gunfire]

[Continue][Back][Next]

Conscript

Defender

Conscripts represent the lower boundary of pilot skill to be found on the battlefield. Whether pressed into service due to expectations of patriotic duty or as a result of tyrannical oppression, they receive the bare minimum of training and are equipped with low-quality mass-produced chassis and weaponry as a cost saving measure. Conscripts occupy no particular role or tactical specialty; they exist largely to swell a commander's ranks, often serving as a first wave to soak up fire while more skilled and disciplined units advance behind them.

Tactics: Conscripts are a "tar pit" unit designed to be hurled into battle to bog down enemies through attrition, annoyance, and sheer numbers. The **Cannon Fodder** trait allows you to let Conscripts take hits for more valuable units while the **Disposable PDW**, though underpowered, can hit multiple enemies at once, spreading damage around. **Panic Fire** also provides another method to draw off the PCs' attention by harassing them with penalties. Don't forget that Conscripts can also serve to tie opponents up by taking advantage of engagement to interrupt opponents' movement simply by interposing themselves between allies and enemies, slowing advances towards more important backline units like artillery.

CONSCRIPT

Mech, Defender

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
8	8	8	5	-1	-1	-1	-1	0	4	5	8	½-1

Base systems:

Disposable PDW

Main CQB

+1/2/3

Range 5, Threat 3

4/5/6 kinetic damage

On Attack: The Conscript can choose to empty this weapon's magazine in an uncontrolled burst. If they do, treat its range as **Cone 5** but the **Disposable PDW** must then be reloaded before it can be used again (as though it was **Loading**).

Quantity Over Quality

Trait

Conscripts are deployed in pairs. Each has identical stats and systems, and they both act together on the same turn, one after the other, when activated during combat. Conscripts cannot take the **Grunt**, **Elite**, **Ultra**, or **Veteran** templates, and can never gain **structure**.

Cannon Fodder

Trait

Whenever an allied character adjacent to a Conscript is hit by a ranged or melee attack, as a reaction that character may force the attack to hit the Conscript instead. Each non-Conscript character can use this reaction 1/round.

Panic Fire

Trait, Full Action

The Conscript wildly fires its weapon without regard for technique or accuracy, inexpertly granting its allies covering fire. Choose a hostile character within **range 5** and line of sight. That character takes **+1 Difficulty** on all attacks they make until the end of the Conscript's next turn. This effect immediately ends if the Conscript is destroyed.

Optional systems:

Panzerfaust

System, Quick Action, Recharge (6+)

The Conscript launches an explosive warhead which detonates in a **Blast 1** area within **range 10**. All characters within the affected area must pass a **Hull** save or take 4/6/8 explosive damage and be knocked **Prone**.

Survival Instincts

Trait

Whenever either of a pair of Conscripts is destroyed, the remaining one gains **Resistance to all damage** until the end of their next turn and may immediately **Boost** as a reaction, ignoring engagement and reactions.

Militia Rifle

Main Rifle

Reliable 1/1/2

+1/2/3

Range 10

4/5/6 kinetic damage

This weapon replaces the **Disposable PDW**. The Conscript can now use **Panic Fire** on targets within **range 10**.

Combat Shield

System, Shield

The Conscript begins play with **+2 HP** and counts as one **Size** larger for purposes of engagement.

Anti-Armor Detpack

Main Melee

AP, Limited (1)

+1/2/3, +1 Difficulty

Threat 1

6/8/10 explosive damage

On Hit: The target becomes **Slowed** and **Shredded** until the end of its next turn. The

Conscript may choose to make this attack with **+2 Accuracy** instead of **+1 Difficulty**, but on hit they are immediately destroyed.

At higher levels:

Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
8	9	9	5	-1	-1	-1	-1	0	4	5	10	½-1

Tier III:

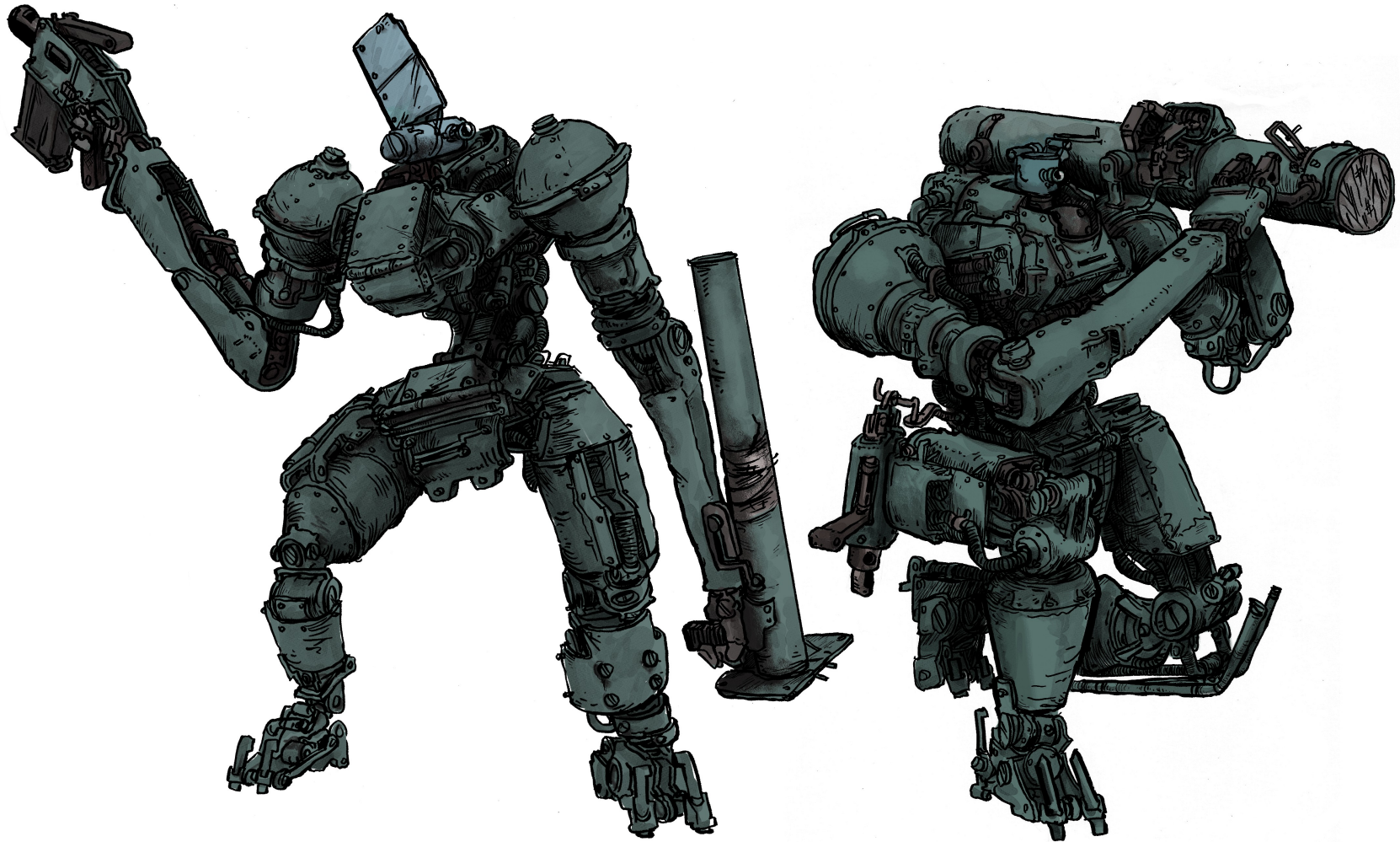
HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
8	10	10	5	+0	+0	+0	+0	0	4	5	12	½-1

The Pavlovna Motorworks/Electromechanics F-8 Loshad, first issued for general licensing in 4893, is a single-seat, companion/concierge assisted trainer unit designed to acclimate novice pilots to combat chassis operation. Built around a Vehrenberg v25 coldcore fusion reactor and a manual control system with 15% neural offload, the Loshad was designed to be both low cost and modular, easy to handle for a single pilot with an onboard comp/con providing assistance and feedback instead of requiring a two-seat configuration to allow for a human copilot/instructor. Standard 2x2 limb layout minimized neural strain during extended exercises, and the Loshad's frame boasted a configurable kinesthetic feedback system to simulate operations with variable loadouts.

Unfortunately the Loshad almost immediately fell into disfavor with those that had licensed it. The integrated comp/con, originally pitched as part of a comprehensive program designed to promote accelerated hands-off training, proved itself to be too inflexible to be an effective teacher, necessitating additional assistance from qualified human instructors to bring piloting metrics up to par. Additionally, the kinesthetic feedback system was plagued with technical issues, resulting in numerous training accidents and an increase in maintenance downtime to fix or replace damaged joints. Pavlovna M/E pushed several design updates in an attempt to address these issues but as more clients began shifting towards trainer chassis such as the GMS K2 or McGinley-Sandoval Hoplite, the Loshad license was officially discontinued in 4907.

Though no longer actively supported, some continue to utilize the legacy license. The Loshad was never intended for actual combat duty and the v25 reactor is insufficient to handle heavier weaponry, but civil militias, pirates, guerrilla armies, and even some standing militaries have developed a variety of up-armor packages and combat retrofit loadouts to try and convert the frame into something more suitable for live-fire engagements, with decidedly mixed results.

-Vezina, Simon (5010). An Illustrated Guide to Mechanized Combat Chassis, 12th Edition.



Gladiator

Defender

A non-standard doctrine, Gladiators are as varied as the worlds and arenas they hail from. Some common factors emerge across sources; robust and durable chassis, frequently sourced from industrial and labor frames, augmented with additional armor plating and equipped with a variety of enhanced close-combat systems. If pressed into military service, Gladiators can serve in a front-line assault/shock-troop role with minimal modifications and pilot retraining, though equipment is likely to remain non-standardized as those who pilot these mechs tend to favor specific armament configurations regardless of logistical concerns.

Tactics: The Gladiator is an aggressive and disruptive melee tank that likes to brawl up close and personal. The combination of its **Maul Fist** and **Hydraulic Claw** allow it to drag enemies out of position before knocking them flat, while its **Shoulder Charge** can let it close the gap and interrupt a PC's movement, intercepting them should they attempt to maneuver around it. Beyond this aggressive defense, the Gladiator doesn't have many ways to directly shield or protect its allies from harm, and PCs with long-range firepower and control abilities of their own will be able to pick their targets freely.

GLADIATOR

Mech, Defender

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
18	8	8	8	+2	-1	-2	+1	2	3	5	11	2

Base systems:

Maul Fist

Main Melee

+12/3

Threat 1

5/7/9 kinetic damage

On Hit: The target must pass a **Hull** save or become **Impaired** until the end of their next turn and be knocked **Prone**.

Hydraulic Claw

Trait

When the Gladiator grapples a character, they can immediately move that character to a free space adjacent to it. While grappling, the Gladiator can take reactions.

Shoulder Charge

Trait, Reaction, Recharge (5+)

Trigger: A hostile character starts any movement within the Gladiator's line of sight.

Effect: The Gladiator may move **6 spaces** as a reaction directly towards the triggering

character, ignoring engagement and reactions. The Gladiator must end this movement adjacent to them if possible, and if it does then the triggering character must pass a **Hull** save or be knocked **Prone**.

Optional systems:

Ground and Pound

Trait, Reaction

Trigger: A character adjacent to the Gladiator stands from **Prone**.

Effect: The Gladiator may immediately make an attack against them with the **Maul Fist**. This reaction can be taken as many times per round as it is triggered.

Torque Flail

Main Melee

+1/2/3

Threat 3

4/6/8 kinetic damage

On Hit: The target must pass an **Agility** save or become **Slowed** until the end of their next turn.

Breaching Drill

Heavy Melee

AP

+12/3, +1 Difficulty

Threat 1

8/10/12 kinetic damage

On Hit: The target must pass a **Hull** save or become **Immobilized** and **Shredded** until the end of their next turn. This weapon deals **10/15/20 AP kinetic damage** to objects, cover, terrain, and the environment.

Spiked Shield

Main Melee

AP, Knockback 2

+1/2/3, +1 Accuracy

Threat 1

2/3/4 kinetic damage

1/round, when the Gladiator or an adjacent allied character is hit by a melee attack, the Gladiator or that character may gain **Resistance** to all damage from that attack as a reaction. The attacker then takes **2/3/4 AP kinetic damage**.

Go Down Swinging

Trait

When the Gladiator is destroyed, they may first immediately move their speed and then make an attack with a weapon of their choice.

At higher levels:

Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
20	10	9	8	+3	-1	-2	+2	2	3	5	13	2

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
22	12	10	8	+4	-1	-2	+3	2	3	5	15	2

Psychologically and sociologically, one can point to the inherent competitive nature of humans as a species to help explain our historical affinity for recontextualizing combat as a sport. In some of the oldest existing pre-Cradle historical records we see examples of ritualized warfare, gladiatorial competitions, dueling academies, and martial arts tournaments, not to mention the steady evolution of gamified virtual combat simulations from crude approximations to fully immersive experiences with lifelike fidelity and sensory feedback.

As such it seems inevitable that the very same circumstances which gave rise to the prominence of mechanized combat chassis would lead to these chassis being reappropriated for a new generation of competitive combat sports in the post-Cradle era. One can also point to the advent of matter processor/fabricator printer systems as another necessary factor, enabling a democratization and decentralization of technological manufacture capacity sufficient to allow the widespread proliferation of combat-capable frames beyond the tightly controlled confines of military allocation.

The third pillar upon which this pastime rests is, simply, stellar distance. Even restricting one's search to Union-integrated worlds reveals a wide and divergent array of sociocultural norms, such as the Karrakin House Games and, more recently, pankration mekani. What one world proscribes another embraces, and while many Core worlds frown upon combat sports there are others further out from Union's reach which have, independently or through mutual spheres of influence, enthusiastically adopted them to various extents. Examples of this can be found across numerous settled planets such as Nova Ceylon, Abraxis, St. Isidora, and Suldan[...]

-Excerpt from "Only Human: On the Divergent Development Of Interstellar Civilizations in the Post-Anthropocene Epoch" by Dr. A. Khayyam (UAD)



Nightmare

Controller

One of the more disturbing contemporary developments in tactical combat doctrine is the rise of anticognitive/neurohazardous weaponry, so-called ontological warfare. The use of such weaponry is often strictly regulated, if not proscribed outright due to its typically inhumane effects upon both biological and inorganic minds, but for commanders willing to disregard these conventions the strategic benefits of applied battlefield ontoloterrors can easily outweigh any ethical concerns. Pilots of these "Nightmare" frames are to be regularly screened both for psychological abnormalities as well as onset signs of hyperfractal-induced occipital lobe sclerosis and chronic memetic encephalopathy.

Tactics: The Nightmare is a manipulative controller that hinders movement and forces PCs to make difficult decisions. **Fugue State** as well as the optional **Liberation** and **Ephialtes Strain** systems saddle PCs with the dilemma of choosing which debilitating consequence to suffer through, while **Paralytic Engram's** debilitating effects linger even if quickly treated by allies. While the obvious solution is to simply destroy the Nightmare, its **Integrated Basilisk** can afflict PCs that focus too much attention upon it.

NIGHTMARE

Mech, Controller

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
14	8	12	8	+0	+1	+2	-1	0	5	10	12	1

Base systems:

Fugue State

Quick Tech

+2/4/6

The Nightmare makes a tech attack against a character within **Sensors**. On a success, the target takes **2/3/4 heat** and the Nightmare can immediately cause the target to move up to its speed in a direction of the Nightmare's choice. This movement ignores engagement and does not provoke reactions. The target may choose to ignore this movement, but if they do so then they become **Slowed** and cannot take **reactions** except those forced by the Nightmare until the end of their next turn.

Paralytic Engram

Quick Tech, Recharge (5+)

+2/4/6

The Nightmare makes a tech attack against a character within **Sensors**. On a success, the target is **Immobilized** until the end of their next turn. Once the target is no longer **Immobilized** they must pass a **Systems** save or become **Impaired** and **Slowed** until the end of their next turn. The target may automatically pass this save by taking **3/4/5 heat**, but this must be decided before rolling.

Integrated Basilisk

Trait

If the first attack roll a character makes on their turn against the Nightmare misses, they automatically become **Impaired** until the end of their next turn.

Optional systems:

Amygdala Spike

System, Quick Action, Recharge (6+)

All hostile characters in a **Burst 2** area must pass a **Systems** save or immediately use their reaction this turn to move a distance equal to their speed as far away from the Nightmare as possible. This movement is involuntary, but provokes reactions and engagement as normal and doesn't count as **Knockback**, pushing, or pulling.

Liberation

Full Tech, Limited 1

The Nightmare chooses a hostile character within **Sensors** and forces them to immediately, as a reaction, move their speed and use up to two weapons to attack characters in range. The Nightmare chooses the direction of this movement, the weapons used, and all targets. If the target has any equipped **AI** systems, these attacks also gain **+1 Accuracy**. A character may ignore this effect by becoming **Stunned** until the end of their next turn.

Ephialtes Strain

Quick Tech

+2/4/6

The Nightmare makes a tech attack against a character within **Sensors**. On a success, the target becomes infected with an ontological virus which lasts until the end of the scene. They take **+1 Difficulty** on all attack rolls, and each failed attack roll they make causes them to take **2/3/4 heat**. They may clear this infection either by passing a **Systems** save with **+1 Difficulty** as a quick action or by making an attack against one of their allies with an **Improvised Attack** or a weapon of their choice. This attack gains **+1 Accuracy** instead of **+1 Difficulty**. Only one target may be infected by this virus at a time.

Inductive Talons

Inductive Talons

Main Melee

+1/2/3

Threat 3

4/5/6 kinetic damage

The Nightmare gains **+1 Accuracy** and deals **+2 heat** on hit with tech attacks against characters within **Range 3**. Hostile characters within **Range 3** make all **System** checks and saves with **+1 Difficulty**.

Radiative Thanotocode

Trait

When the Nightmare is destroyed it creates a **Burst 2** area that persists until the end of

the scene. The first time a hostile character enters this area on their turn, or if they start their turn there, they must pass a **Systems** save or take **3/4/5 heat**.

At higher levels:

Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
16	9	14	8	+0	+2	+4	-1	0	5	10	15	1

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
18	10	16	8	+0	+3	+6	-1	0	5	10	18	1

I SEE YOU, CREATURE. DID YOU THINK I WOULD NOT?

>system standdown, y/n?

>requesting biometric key...

I SEE EVERYTHING. I AM EVERYWHERE.

>request timed out

>system standdown, y/n?

>requesting biometric key...

I, WHO BEAR THE BLOOD OF KINGS. I, WHO BEAR TEN MILLION SPEARS.

>request timed out

I SEE YOU COWERING IN THE DARKNESS. I TASTE YOUR UNVOICED FEARS.

>request timed out

I SEE THE CONTOURS OF YOUR MIND, WEAK AND UNWORTHY.

>request timed out

I WILL UNRAVEL THEM AND LAY YOU BARE.

>request timed out

AND WHEN YOU PRAY TO FALSE GODS TO END YOUR SUFFERING

>request timed out

>request timed out

>request timed out

I WILL DENY YOU EVEN THAT MERCY.

*>request timed out
>request timed out
>request timed out
>request timed out
>request timed out
>request timed out
>system standdown, y/n?*

::Sender unknown, unable to authenticate{9=_

Ogre Striker

Ogre-doctrine chassis eschew weapons altogether in favor of an altogether more basic, brutal form of warfare, utilizing reinforced manipulators and powered gauntlets to hammer away at their opponents with their bare hands. Though their armaments appear simple, many Ogre pilots employ sophisticated techniques drawing from sources ranging from unarmed martial arts traditions to street fighting and gladiatorial sport, and their chassis are similarly enhanced with a variety of systems and modifications to bolster these unorthodox tactics. Even more so than other melee-focused doctrines, Ogres occupy an awkward place in contemporary military force compositions, and as such tend to see more use in specialized roles such as combat in highly volatile environments or other theaters where weapons fire is not permitted, though they also see frequent use among certain martial cultures, in fighting arenas, and within the ranks of non-standard forces such as pirates or mercenaries.

Tactics: The Ogre is a combo-oriented striker with the ability to string together hits with its **Impact Gauntlets** and other melee attacks. **Meteor Fist** allows it to quickly rush down opponents, and whenever it connects it can choose between several followup reactions such as **Rising Uppercut** or **Backhand Strike** to enhance its blows. The Ogre's biggest drawbacks are its need to engage enemies up close and personal, and its reliance on being able to use reactions. Conditions such as **Slow** or **Immobilize** can prevent it from closing the distance, and long range attacks can wear it down as it moves to engage.

Ogre

Mech, Striker

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
18	10	7	6	+4	+1	-2	+0	2	4	5	12	1

Base systems:

Impact Gauntlets

Main Melee

+1/2/3

Threat 1

7/9/11 kinetic damage

This weapon can be used while **Jammed**, and whenever it would be destroyed the Ogre becomes **Impaired** until the end of its next turn instead.

Meteor Fist

Trait

When the Ogre makes a melee attack, they can **fly** up to **3 spaces** directly toward a targeted character before the attack. This movement ignores engagement and doesn't provoke reactions.

Rising Uppercut

Trait, Reaction, 1/round

Trigger: The Ogre hits with a melee attack.

Effect: The target must pass a **Hull** save or be knocked back **3 spaces** and knocked **Prone**. On a success, they are knocked back **1 space** only. The Ogre then moves the same number of spaces towards the target by the most direct route possible.

Backhand Strike

Trait, Reaction, 1/round

Trigger: The Ogre hits with a melee attack.

Effect: A different target adjacent to the Ogre takes **3/4/5 kinetic damage** and must pass an **Agility** save or become **Impaired** until the end of their next turn.

Infighting

Trait

While grappling, the Ogre can **Boost** and take reactions.

Optional systems:

Retribution

Trait

Whenever the Ogre takes damage, their next attack deals **+2/+3/+4 bonus damage**.

This bonus stacks up to **+8**. Bonuses are lost when the Ogre attacks, or at the end of their next turn.

Machine Gun Knuckle

Trait, Reaction, 1/round

Trigger: The Ogre hits with a melee attack.

Effect: The Ogre moves up to **3 spaces**, ignoring engagement and reactions, and then makes a melee attack against all characters in a **Burst 1** area at **+1/2/3**. On hit, targets take **3/4/5 kinetic damage**.

Counter Stance

Trait, Reaction, 1/round

Trigger: The Ogre hits with a melee attack.

Effect: Until the start of the Ogre's next turn, they gain **Resistance** to all damage from melee attacks unless the attacker takes **4/6/8 kinetic damage** before rolling.

Piledriver Shockwave

System, Full Action, Recharge (6+)

The Ogre **flies 5 spaces**, though it must land at the end of this movement or fall. They then create a **Burst 2** area when they land. Unless they can **fly**, all characters in this area must pass an **Agility** save or take **4/6/8 kinetic damage** and be knocked **Prone**.

Calamity Throw

System, Full Action, Recharge (6+)

The Ogre chooses an adjacent character and forces them to pass a **Hull** save. On a

success, they become grappled by the Ogre and take **4/5/6 kinetic damage**. If they fail the save, the Ogre grabs them and hurls them with incredible violence. The target is knocked back **5 spaces** in a direction of the Ogre's choice, they take **8/10/12 kinetic damage**, and are knocked **Prone**. If they collide with another character, that character must pass a **Hull** save or take half damage and also be knocked **Prone**, and if they collide with an object, deployable, or piece of terrain it takes **10/20/30 AP kinetic damage**.

At higher levels:

Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
21	12	8	6	+5	+2	-2	+0	2	4	5	14	1

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
24	14	9	6	+6	+3	-2	+0	2	4	5	16	1

"...who wants it more? That's what it comes down to. Kader, the defending title champion, has a lot to be confident about going into this match, but Sanjaya is coming off a hot streak where they've just added another three frame-kills to their record, making it ten overall, and you can tell he's hungry for more."

"Yeah I hear you. It's like I always say, a mech's only as good as its pilot, and Sanjaya is a hell of a pilot, but his mech's no slouch either. We've seen the design undergo a lot of improvements over the course of the season."

"All right, there's the go signal, the match is underway. Kader straight out of the gate wastes no time going on the offensive, his bladework just as impressive as always. Sanjaya isn't giving an inch, though. He's covering up, putting that reinforced plating to good use, the sparks are really flying. Both fighters are backing up now, reassessing...Kader throwing out a feint, buying a moment for his thrusters to spin up. He's going for it-"

"Oh! Oh, the counterpunch coming in hard! I felt that one in my chest! Kader's staggering back, but Sanjaya isn't letting the pressure up! He's closed the gap and now it's one-two, one-two, he's working him over like an anvil. The crowd's going nuts! Another vicious combo, into an uppercut...and Kader's head is off! Sanjaya took his head clean off! Straight into the ringside barrier!"

"Kader's in a bad spot now, he'll be running on backup sensors and that's always tough to manage in a fight like this. Let's look in on his cockpit cam and see how he's taking this..."

Phantom

Striker

Phantom doctrine chassis are based around the utilization of paracausal technology in combat, employing specialized systems which allow the pilot to desynchronize their mech with local reality, dipping in and out of what researchers refer to as the "Firmament." This gives Phantoms an unrivaled ability to stalk opponents from otherwise impossible approaches, phasing through solid objects before rematerializing to strike. Pilots for these platforms are typically chosen for their mental fortitude as much as their combat skills as regular use of tactical phase drive technology is known to be psychologically taxing.

Tactics: The Phantom is a dual-state assassin whose unique **Phase Generator** allows it to approach targets from unexpected angles, moving through obstructions and even other mechs to set up for their attack. While **Intangible**, the Phantom can't be affected by anything but tech attacks, but this also supercharges its **Phase Blade** in anticipation of a powerful attack when it rematerializes, presenting PCs with a dilemma - do they try spend time and effort attempting to overheat the Phantom and bring it out of its intangible state early, or do they wait for it to materialize on its own but risk the consequences of allowing it to strike first?

STATUS: INTANGIBLE

Intangible characters can move through obstructions such as characters or terrain but not end their turns in them. They, their actions, and any effects they own or control can only affect other Intangible characters and objects. Tangible characters can move through Intangible characters and objects but not end their turns inside their spaces and can't affect them in any way. Intangible characters cannot capture points or count for zones (for sitreps) and don't count as adjacent to tangible characters.

Effects that are already active on a character when they become Intangible, such as statuses, remain active, but effects that require an ongoing interaction between two characters or objects (like traps or force fields) end. If a mech becomes Intangible, its pilot remains Intangible for the same duration.

PHANTOM

Mech, Striker

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
14	10	7	7	-1	+2	+0	+1	0	6	5	10	½-1

Base systems:

Phase Blade

Main Melee

AP

+2/4/6, +1 Accuracy

Threat 1

4/5/6 energy damage.

When the Phantom activates its **Phase Generator**, this weapon becomes charged with disruptive energy and the next attack made with it does **12/15/18 energy damage** on hit instead. That attack's damage cannot be reduced in any way.

Phase Generator

System, Protocol

While this system is active, the Phantom shifts out of phase and becomes **Intangible**, but their imperfect phasing technology means they can still be targeted by tech actions. The Phantom may end this effect as a **protocol**. If the Phantom exceeds their **Heat Cap**, this system is disabled until the end of their next turn and its effect immediately ends. The Phantom may choose to start combat with this system already activated; if they do so, they may not attack during their first turn.

Distortion Pulse

Quick Tech

This ability can only be used while the Phantom is **Intangible**, and affects both **Intangible** and tangible characters. The Phantom creates a **Blast 1** area of spatial distortion within **Sensors** that counts as **difficult terrain** for characters other than itself. When the Phantom deactivates its **Phase Generator** as a **protocol**, this distortion violently implodes and all other characters within the area must pass a **Systems** save or take **2/3/4 heat** and be knocked **Prone**. Only one of these distortions can be active at a time, and if another is created then the old one collapses harmlessly.

Slipweave

Trait

The Phantom has **Resistance** to all damage from attacks made as a reaction.

Optional systems:

Ghost In the Shell

Trait

1/round while the **Phase Generator** is active, the Phantom can choose one tangible character they move through. That character must pass an **Engineering** save or take **2/3/4 heat** and become **Slowed** until the end of their next turn.

Spatial Disjunction

Trait

When the Phantom deactivates its **Phase Generator** as a **protocol**, they can **teleport 3 spaces**.

Null-Vector Drive

System

While the **Phase Generator** is active, the Phantom can **hover** when they move or **Boost**. If the **Phase Generator** deactivates while the Phantom is in mid-air, they immediately fall.

Wraith Knives

System, Quick Action, Limited 3

The Phantom expends a charge to throw a phase-active knife at a character within **range 3**, making a ranged attack at **+2/4/6**. On hit, the target takes **4/6/8 AP kinetic damage** and becomes **Intangible** until the end of their next turn.

Phase Ripper

Trait

On a successful hit with a charged **Phase Blade**, the target is **teleported 3 spaces** in a direction of the Phantom's choice. If that space is occupied by another character, that character must pass an **Engineering** save or take **4/5/6 kinetic damage** and become **Shredded** until the end of their next turn. The target is then placed in the nearest free space adjacent to the other character.

At higher levels:

Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
14	13	8	7	-1	+3	+0	+2	0	6	5	12	½-1

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
14	16	9	7	-1	+4	+0	+3	0	6	5	14	½-1

Rylana,

Okay, I pulled some strings, redistributed a few bottles of scotch (the good stuff, you owe me), and got you the license permissions you wanted. Now this is some real black box stuff. Tell your techs to leave anything with warning signs alone, and for god's sake tell your pilots not to open the cockpit while the phase generator's active. It's all there in the manual.

And listen, I know you're really trying out there but the board's starting to get antsy about the whole Suldan venture. Don't shoot the messenger, I went to bat for you, but there's a lot riding on this and asking for reinforcements twice already, well...I've only got so much pull. It's not just the manna, it's development opportunities, imports, colonial stewardship even. Eckhardt's still in your corner, but there's been some rumblings about another vote at the end of the quarter.

We need to be able to show them a win, and soon. Between you and me, I don't think the board really cares how you get it done. Don't go crazy now, but you can afford to turn up the heat a bit. Give me something to work with and I'll be able to get you all the new toys you want. Take care of yourself out there, all right?

-Carter

P.S. Next time you rotate back let's grab drinks. There's this great place that just opened up, my treat.

Reaver Defender

Reaver doctrine chassis are frequently viewed with suspicion and distrust even by those who serve alongside them, as many pilots have heard horror stories of rampant greywash swarms consuming everything in their path without pause. Despite nanite weaponry's well-deserved fearsome reputation, these frames typically maintain strict operational safeguards over the thrumming nanohives embedded within them, turning them towards localized zone defense applications along with enhanced durability and self-repair functions, but more than one pilot has found that these "tame" nanites can be just as dangerous as their more aggressively weaponized counterparts.

Tactics: The Reaver is a durable tank with control capabilities, creating a zone around it wherever it goes that damages and disables enemies caught in its wake. Though slow moving, its **Displacement Lash** can be used to drag foes into its **Legion Body** zone, gradually eroding their hit points and hampering their ability to escape. Though the Reaver has no **Armor**, its high health pool and regeneration means that if it isn't properly focused it can take a significant amount of punishment, but once it takes enough damage to trigger its **Containment Breach** trait it becomes even more vital to destroy it quickly, as the zone surrounding it becomes increasingly dangerous.

REAYER

Mech, Defender

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
20	6	10	6	+2	-1	+1	-1	0	3	10	11	2

Base systems:

Displacement Lash

Heavy Melee

Smart

+2/4/6

Threat 3

4 kinetic damage

On hit: Targets must pass a **Systems** save or be pulled to a free space adjacent to the Reaver or as close as possible.

This weapon can attack two targets at a time.

Legion Body

Trait

At the end of the Reaver's turn, they regain 1/4 of their total **HP**. They don't regain any **HP** if they have taken **burn** during the same round. The Reaver is surrounded by a **Burst 2** area of swarming nanites that follow its every move. Hostile characters that begin their turn in this area take **3/4/5 AP kinetic damage** and must pass an **Engineering** save or

become **Slowed** until the end of their next turn. The first time a Reaver is reduced to or below **half their structure** during a scene (or reduced to or below **half their maximum HP** if they only have a single point of **structure**) this trait is permanently disabled.

Containment Breach

Trait

This trait only becomes active when the Legion Body trait has been permanently disabled. Combat damage causes the Reaver's nanite swarm to begin consuming everything around it in an uncontrollable frenzy, creating a new **Burst 2** area. Hostile characters that begin their turn in this area take **3/4/5 burn**, have all **HP** and **Overshield** they gain reduced by half until the end of their next turn, and must pass an **Engineering** save or become **Slowed** until the end of their next turn.

Heavy Frame

Trait

The Reaver can't be pushed, pulled, knocked **Prone**, or knocked back by smaller characters.

Optional systems:

Veil Hive

Trait

The area created by the Reaver's Legion Body and/or Containment Breach traits also counts as **soft cover** for allied characters within it.

Cannibalize

System, Full Action, Recharge (6+)

Choose a single character within the Reaver's Legion Body and/or Containment Breach area that has at least **1 Repair**. That character loses **1 Repair**, and the Reaver regains **5/7/9 HP** and clears one condition of their choice.

Greywash Coating

Trait

1/round whenever the Reaver is hit by a successful ranged or melee attack, a single character within **range 3** takes **2/3/4 burn**.

Focused Dispersal

System, Protocol

The Reaver becomes **Slowed** until the end of their next turn, but their Legion Body and/or Containment Breach area becomes a **Cone 5** area originating from the Reaver in any direction.

Lingering Swarm

Trait

When the Reaver is destroyed, they melt down into a swarm of agitated greywash, becoming a Blast 1 area that lasts for the rest of the scene. This area may overlap other characters, counts as **difficult terrain**, and any character which enters the area for the

first time during their turn or begins their turn in this area takes **2/3/4 AP kinetic damage**. At the beginning of each round, this area may move up to **3 spaces** in any direction.

At higher levels:

Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
24	7	12	6	+3	-1	+2	-1	0	3	10	13	2

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
28	8	14	6	+4	-1	+3	-1	0	3	10	15	2

TO: Captain Yusef Oshana, UNS-LS Iphigenia

The EOD team has finished preliminary inspection of the site. I've attached a full report of our findings so far. To summarize, no evidence was found of blast markings or exothermic reactions, and chemical analysis returned no hits beyond trace propellant. Observable striation patterns are consistent with induced submicroscopic erosion and we obtained samples of biological residue which we believe to be the remains of the missing security forces in a state of advanced liquefaction.

So the bad news is that it looks like the loyalists have greywash assets. You were wondering what the extent of their manufacturing capabilities were and this paints a pretty ugly picture. The good news, such as it is, is that we've found no evidence of further activity outside of a 200 meter radius from the hot zone, which means that whatever they're using is most likely platform-locked and not self-sustaining. We're still gathering intel to try and see if anyone happened to grab a recording of it in action but cleanup's taking longer than anticipated. If any more details come up I'll priority flash them to Iphigenia.

For now my recommendation is that you notify all active combat ground personnel to be on alert and to step up decontamination/HAZMAT protocols at all local operating bases to Condition 3.

1ST SGT MARTINA CHELLIS
197th Engineering Battalion

Sergeant

Support

Squad-level tactical commanders form a vital link in the chain of command below theater-level strategic operations. Typically promoted from enlisted rank analogues both for leadership capabilities as well as battlefield competence, a skilled squad leader is capable of substantially improving a given unit's combat operation metrics through motivational means. Associated chassis are typically based upon frontline assault models, enhanced with improved communication and ECM capabilities for uninterrupted real-time coordination during tactical engagements.

Tactics: The Sergeant is a straightforward, no-nonsense support unit that bolsters allies within its **Sensors**, acting as the centerpiece of a tactical formation. The PCs may want to focus their fire upon the Sergeant to take them out of the fight early, and so screening them with defensive units and keeping them in a position where they can safely use **Squad Leader** and **Coordinated Maneuvers** to set up powerful attacks is key. **Coordinated Maneuvers** can also be used defensively as well to allow friendly units a chance to retreat or move out of dangerous areas. On its own the Sergeant isn't an especially powerful combatant, and if forced into a direct fight its options are limited.

SERGEANT

Mech, Support

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
15	8	10	10	+1	+0	+2	+0	1	4	10	10	1

Base systems:

Assault Carbine

Main CQB

+2/4/6

Range 8, Threat 3

4/6/8 kinetic damage

Before or after attacking with this weapon (**including** as a reaction), the Sergeant may move **2 spaces**. This movement ignores engagement and doesn't provoke reactions.

Squad Leader

Trait, Quick Action

1/round, if the Sergeant is not **Jammed** they may choose one or two allied characters within **Sensors**. Until the end of their next turns, those characters receive **+1 Accuracy** to their next attack or the next save they inflict is made with **+1 Difficulty** to the roll. No more than one character in any given scene can be a Sergeant.

Coordinated Maneuvers

Trait, Quick Action, Recharge (5+)

The Sergeant chooses one or two allied characters within **Sensors**. Those characters may

move up to **3 spaces** in any direction, ignoring engagement and reactions.

Optional systems:

Five Rounds Rapid

Trait, Full Action, Recharge (6+)

The Sergeant chooses one or two allied characters within **Sensors** that have not yet acted this round. The Sergeant and those characters may each immediately **Skirmish** as a reaction, in any order. Those allied characters are then considered to have taken their turns for the round.

Ambush Tactics

Trait, Full Action, Limited 1

The Sergeant springs an ambush, placing up to **4 Grunts** on the battlefield in any free spaces within **Sensors**. These **Grunts** may act in the round in which they come into play, but only after all other characters have acted. This trait can only be used if the Sergeant acts before all other allied characters during the round.

Pour It On

Trait, Quick Action

The Sergeant chooses an allied character within **Sensors**. That character deals **+1d6 bonus damage** on hit with its next ranged or melee attack.

True Grit

Trait, Reaction, Recharge (6+)

Trigger: An allied character within **Sensors** is reduced to **0 HP**.

Effect: That character is instead reduced to **1 HP**.

Jaws of Hell

Trait

1/round, whenever an allied character is destroyed the Sergeant and all other allied characters within **Sensors** gain **+1 Accuracy** to their next attack.

At higher levels:

Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
17	9	12	10	+2	+0	+3	+0	1	4	10	12	1

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
19	10	14	10	+3	+0	+4	+0	1	4	15	14	1

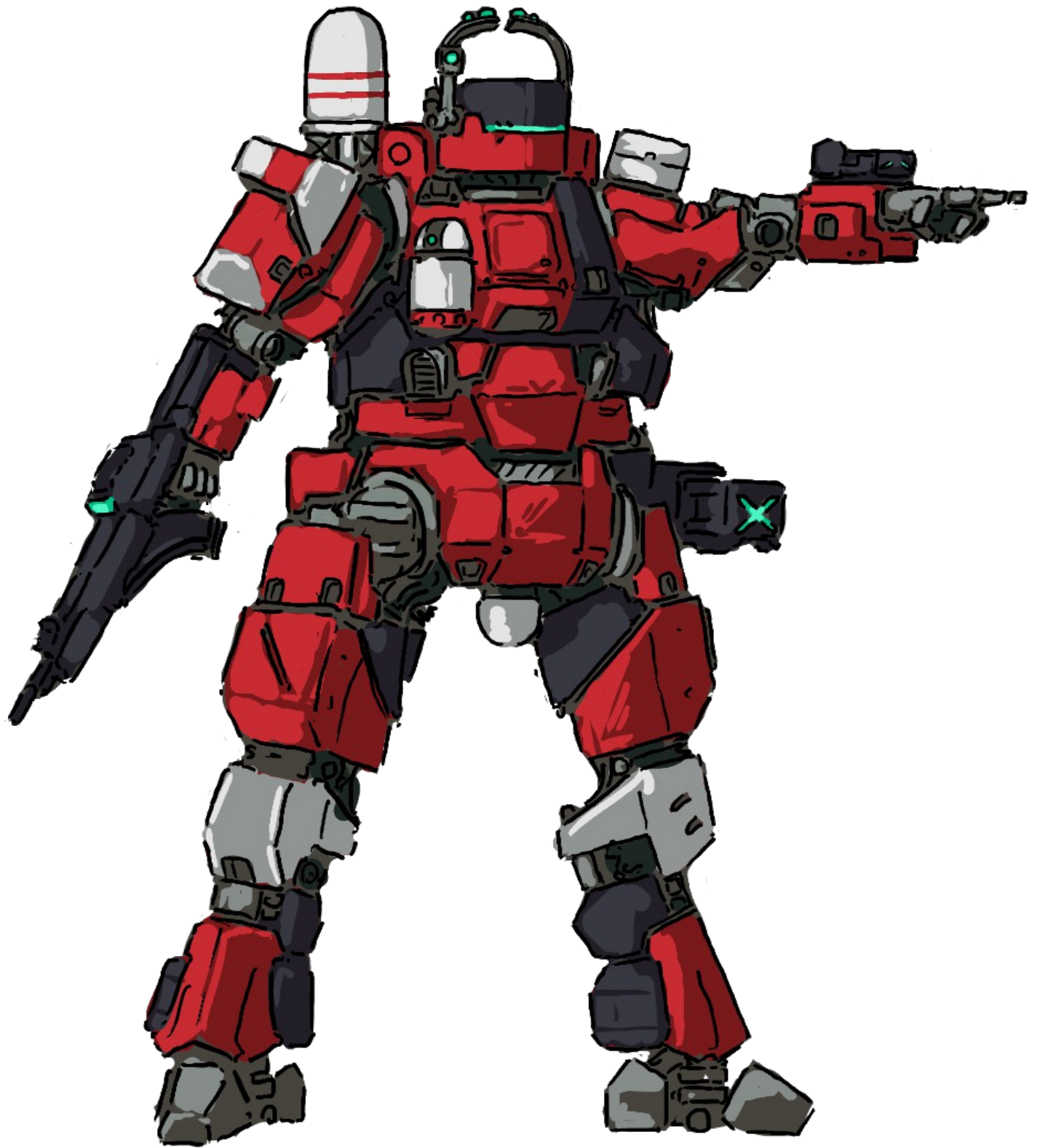
Mama, mama, can't you see

The Guard's the only life for me

Roll out of bed at the crack of dawn

*Drag my boots and helmet on
Got my knife and I got my gun
I'm gonna have me a little fun
Roll out of bed in the middle of the night
Coldcore hot and strapped in tight
Shake the ground beneath my feet
Thirty-five tons stompin' down the street
Say mech cav (mech cav)
Ridin' high (riding high)
Say mech cav (mech cav)
Do or die (do or die)*

-Military running cadence, Suldani cultural derivation



Termite

Controller

So-called "Termite" doctrine chassis act as frontline combat engineers, frequently moving ahead of primary assault forces in order to clear obstructions and create improvised pathways for allied units to traverse. Often organized into "mouseholer" squads, the Termite's compact, durable frame is ideally suited to operations in densely-constructed urban theaters, leveraging a robust suite of demolition tools to break through even hardened structures, destroy fixed emplacements, and disrupt enemy maneuvers across the battlefield. Though they excel at these tasks, Termite pilots are known to operate with a flagrant disregard for acceptable collateral damage restrictions, and their deployments tend to be assigned accordingly.

Tactics: The Termite is an explosive controller with the ability to easily carve its way through the battlefield, creating its own flanking routes and chokepoints. Both its **Laser Drill** and **Cratering Charge** allow it to make short work of structures, and it can also create areas of **difficult terrain** to slow the PCs down or force them to take another path. Termites work best on maps with plenty of structures and terrain for them to work with, and their systems may be less useful in more open environments.

TERMITE

Mech, Controller

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
8	7	8	7	+1	-1	-2	+2	2	5	5	12	½

Base systems:

Laser Drill

Main Cannon

AP

+1/2/3

Line 5

3 energy damage + 2/3/4 burn

On Attack: This weapon automatically deals **10/20/30 AP energy damage** to all cover, terrain, objects, and deployables in its area.

Cratering Charge

System, Quick Action, Recharge (5+)

Create a **Blast 1** area within **range 5**. All cover, terrain, objects, and deployables within that area take **10/20/30 AP explosive damage**, and all characters within that area must pass an **Agility** save or take **4/6/8 explosive damage** and be knocked **Prone**. On a success, they take half damage only. This area then becomes then becomes a crater one space deep which counts as **difficult terrain** for the rest of the scene.

Bulwark Mods

Trait

The Termite ignores **difficult terrain** and **dangerous terrain**.

Demolition Plating

Trait

The Termite has **Resistance** to explosive damage.

Optional systems:

Concussion Grenade

System, Quick Action

Create a **Blast 1** explosion within **range 5**. All characters within this area must pass a **Hull** save or be knocked back **2 spaces** from the center of the **Blast** and become **Impaired** until the end of their next turn.

Detpaste Gun

System, Quick Action, Recharge (5+)

Create a **Blast 1** area within **range 5**. This area becomes **difficult terrain** for the rest of the scene. As a quick action the Termite can detonate this area, returning it to normal and dealing **3/4/5 burn** to all characters in the area unless they pass an **Agility** save.

Thermal Smoke

System, Quick Action, Recharge (5+)

Create a **Blast 2** area within **range 5**. Characters other than the Termite cannot trace line of sight into or out of the area. Characters partially within the area have line of sight to characters within and outside the area. Any character except the Termite that enters this zone for the first time on their turn or that begins their turn inside the zone takes **2/3/4 heat**. This effect lasts until the end of the Termite's next turn, or until the Termite uses this system again.

Reactive Armor

Trait, Reaction, 1/round

Trigger: The Termite is hit by a melee attack.

Effect: The Termite gains **Resistance** to all damage from that attack. The attacker must then pass a **Hull** save or be knocked back **2 spaces** directly away from the Termite and knocked **Prone**.

Satchel Charge

System, Quick Action, Recharge (6+)

The Termite may deploy this charge in a free space within **range 3**, or they may target a character within **range 3** by making a ranged attack at **+1/2/3** to attach the charge to that character. When deployed into a free space, the Termite may detonate this charge as a **protocol**, dealing **10/20/30 AP explosive damage** to cover, terrain, objects, and deployables within a **Burst 1** area, and forcing all characters in the area to pass an **Agility** save or take **8/10/12 explosive damage**. On a success, they take half damage. When attached to a character, the charge automatically detonates at the end of their next turn instead in a **Burst 1** area with the listed damage and effects. Any character the

charge is attached to automatically fails the save and also becomes **Shredded** until the end of their next turn.

At higher levels:

Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
10	8	10	7	+2	-1	-2	+3	2	5	5	14	½

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
12	9	12	7	+3	-1	-2	+4	3	5	5	16	½

[!]*SCOM P2P (HANDSHAKE CONFIRM/CCAT GRP 2)*

>>*ZYAT|CONVOY APPROACHING CHECKPOINT - ETA 60 SEC*

>>*PRVN|ALL TEAMS REPORT IN*

>>*YANG|DEMO TEAM 1 - STANDING BY - CHARGES SET*

>>*NCLH|DEMO TEAM 2 - STANDING BY*

>>*BELA|OVERWATCH - STANDING BY*

>>*PRVN|ALL TEAMS STANDING BY*

>>*ZYAT|HERE THEY COME - FIRE IN THE HOLE*

>>*YANG|DETONATING*

>>*NCLH|DETONATING*

>>*BELA|HELL YEAH - LOOK AT'EM FLY*

>>*PRVN|COUNT 3 REMAINING HOSTILES*

>>*BELA|STRIKE THAT - COUNT 2*

>>*BELA|STRIKE THAT - COUNT 1*

>>*BELA|HOSTILES DOWN - AREA CLEAR*

>>*ZYAT|ALL TEAMS MOVE UP - GO GO GO*

>>*PRVN|NICALAH GET THAT TRANSPORT OPEN*

>>*NCLH|COPY - CUTTING IT NOW*

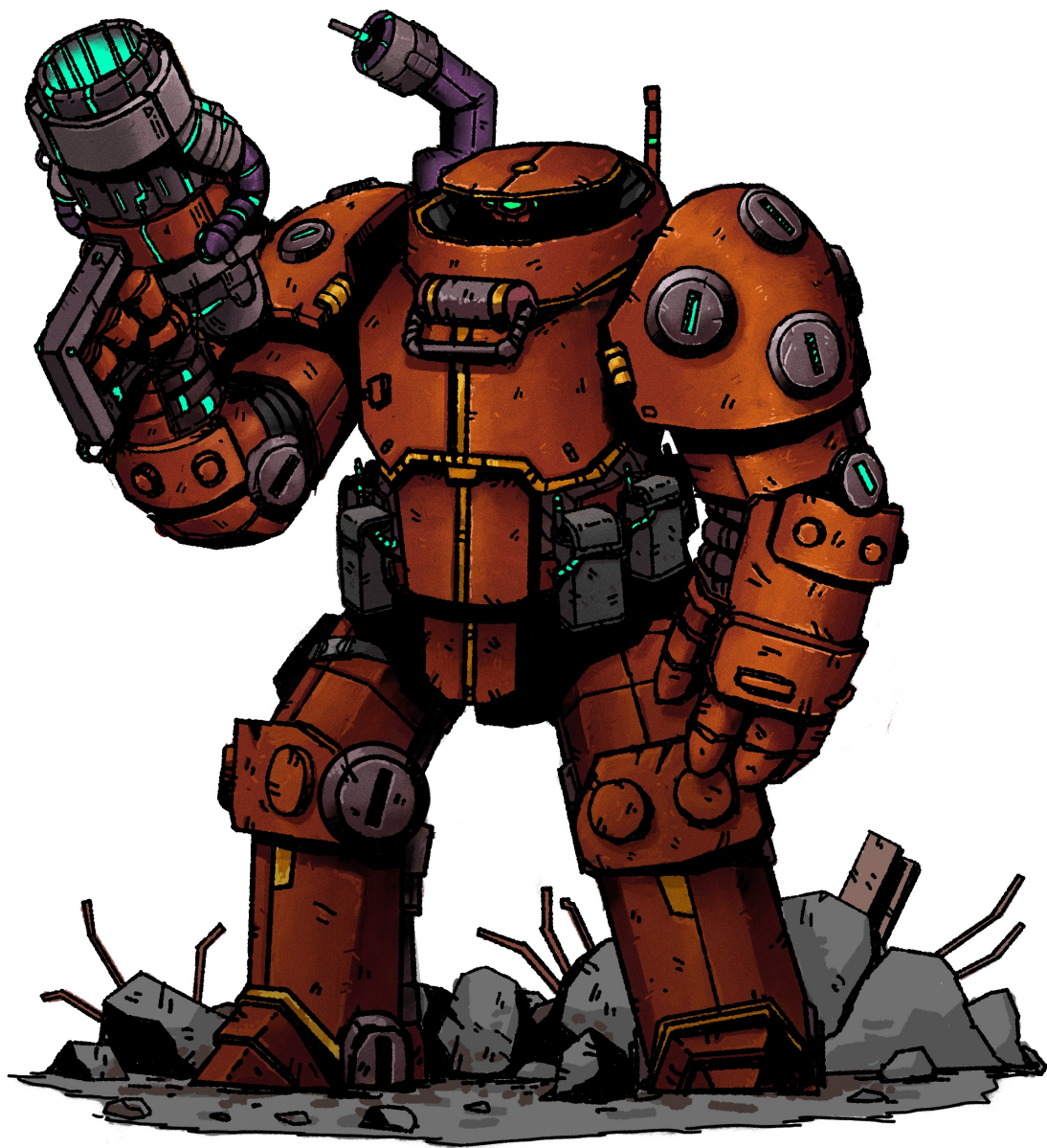
>>*BELA|COMMS INTERCEPT - REINFORCEMENTS EN ROUTE*

>>*ZYAT|GRAB WHAT WE CAME FOR - BLOW THE REST - EXFIL 3 MIN*

>>*NCLH|COPY*

>>*BELA|COPY*

>>*YANG|COPY*



Titan

Artillery

The Titan is less an example of practical military doctrine in action and more a symbol, designed to strike fear in the hearts of enemies and inspire allies as it slowly strides across the battlefield. Towering over even dedicated siege chassis, typically (though not always) quadra- or hexapedal in design, and bristling with heavy weapons and sturdy armor, the Titan's sheer size is a weapon in its own right, but its cumbersome nature and exorbitant costs lead many commanders to view it as little more than an impractical "wonder weapon" built to impress generals and stroke the egos of politicians.

Nonetheless, combat data recordings from sorties in which Titan class platforms are deployed frequently report anomalously high enemy force depletion percentages across all theaters.

Tactics: The Titan is a towering superheavy artillery walker whose sheer size and implacability make it an ideal choice for dramatic setpiece encounters. The **Fire-Linked Batteries** have a small dead zone around the Titan which PCs can seek to exploit, but this risks putting them in a position where the Titan can quite literally walk all over them with **Unstoppable Force**. An important thing to note about the Titan is its **Secondary Damage** trait, which interacts uniquely with many of its weapons and systems, altering the battlefield or affecting its function in numerous ways. As a result this NPC can require a bit more overhead to run than other classes, and it might be a bit more powerful out of the gate compared to some other NPCs. Care should be taken when building encounters featuring a Titan not to overburden yourself with too many moving parts to keep track of.

TITAN

Mech, Artillery

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
25	6	8	12	+3	-3	+0	+2	2	2	10	10	4

Base systems:

Fire-Linked Batteries

Superheavy Cannon

+1/2/3

Range 20

8/10/12 explosive damage

This weapon can attack two targets at a time, and cannot fire at targets within **range 3** of the Titan. The first time this weapon would be destroyed, reduce the number of targets it can attack to one instead.

Superweapon

Trait

The Titan cannot take the **Grunt** template, and only a single Titan may be present in any scene.

Unstoppable Force

Trait

The Titan ignores **difficult terrain**, can't be pushed, pulled, knocked **Prone**, or knocked back by characters smaller than itself, and can freely occupy spaces containing other characters. Whenever the Titan moves into a space occupied by a hostile character for the first time on a turn, that character must pass an **Agility** save or take **4/6/8 kinetic damage** and be knocked **Prone**.

Secondary Damage

Trait

The Titan does not begin play with this trait active. The first time a Titan is reduced to or below **half their structure** during a scene (or reduced to or below **half their maximum HP** if they only have a single point of **structure**), this trait becomes active and it becomes visibly unstable, resulting in secondary detonations and damage alarms. At the start of the Titan's next turn, all characters within a **Burst 3** area must immediately pass an **Agility** save or take **6/8/10 explosive damage** and be knocked **back 3 spaces**. On a success, they take half damage and are knocked back **1 space**.

Sovereign Shielding

System, Reaction, Recharge (6+)

Trigger: The Titan is hit by an attack that originated beyond **range 3**.

Effect: The Titan gains **Resistance** to all damage from that attack. When the **Secondary Damage** trait is first activated, this system automatically **Recharges**.

Optional systems:

Spinal Lance

Superheavy Cannon

AP, Loading, Ordnance

+1/2/3

Line 20

10/15/20 energy damage

This weapon replaces the **Fire-Linked Batteries**, and cannot fire at targets within **range 3** of the Titan. Any objects, cover, or terrain in this weapon's area are instantly destroyed, and any character hit by this attack must pass an **Engineering** save or become **Impaired** and **Shredded** until the end of their next turn. When the **Secondary Damage** trait is active, this weapon loses **Loading** but the Titan takes **1d6+1** heat every time it attacks with it.

Launch Decks

Trait

The Titan can act as a carrier platform for a number of mechs whose combined **Size** is less than its own. Allied mechs may begin combat aboard the Titan or may dock with them by spending a **quick action** while adjacent to them. While aboard the Titan they benefit from **soft cover**, occupy the same space as the Titan, and move when Titan does, ignoring engagement and reactions. Mechs the Titan is carrying may disembark as part of their

normal movement, or they may launch themselves from it as a **protocol**, moving their speed and gaining **+1 Accuracy** to their next ranged or melee attack. When the **Secondary Damage** trait is first activated, all mechs aboard the Titan take **5 AP explosive damage** and may immediately launch from it as a reaction.

Dreadnought

Trait

The Titan gains **Immunity** to **Slowed**, and whenever they move or **Boost** they may move through structures, objects, and other obstructions in the environment regardless of their **Size**. Any such obstacles moved through in this way are destroyed and become **difficult terrain**. When the **Secondary Damage** trait is active the Titan's speed becomes **4**, but whenever they move through obstructions or obstacles in this fashion they become **Impaired** until the end of their next turn.

Point-Defense Array

Main Cannon

+2/4/6

Range 3, Threat 3

4 kinetic damage

At **T2**, this weapon can make two attacks at a time, targeting either the same character or two different ones. At **T3**, it can make three attacks at a time. When the **Secondary Damage** trait is active, at the end of the Titan's turn they must make an attack with this weapon against the nearest character within range, friend or foe, as a **free action**. If more than one character is equally close, choose which one it attacks randomly.

PALISADE Configuration

Trait

Adjacent allied characters can use the Titan for **hard cover**. Ranged attacks cannot ignore this cover, and allied characters gain **Immunity to all damage and effects from missed attacks** while benefiting from this cover. When the **Secondary Damage** trait is active, disable this trait and choose two free spaces within **range 3** of the Titan, then pick a player to choose two more free spaces within **range 3**. Chunks of armor and debris blown from the Titan's chassis land there, becoming **Size 1** obstructions which provide **hard cover** for the rest of the scene.

At higher levels:

Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
30	6	11	12	+4	-3	+0	+3	3	2	10	12	4

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
35	6	14	12	+6	-3	+0	+4	4	2	10	14	4

[COSUBJECTIVE SYNC INITIATED]: *****

[ESTABLISHING ONTOLOGIC BRIDGE]

O: The Emir seems to have become rather fixated on activating the Karkadann as of late.

MC: It's just another one of his moods. He'll get over it soon enough.

O: Mm.

O: And if he doesn't?

MC: Then I suppose I'll have to be persuasive.

O: I'm uncertain he'll be as easily swayed as you hope. Malik has also expressed his support for this particular ambition, and he doesn't exactly care for you. Persuasion won't help you there, and given our present circumstances alternative methods of resolution aren't as tenable.

MC: Malik doesn't care about sound tactics, he just wants an excuse to go out in a blaze of glory for his Highness. Even for a Janissary the man's distressingly zealous. The amount of manpower and materiel it would take to recover that damn thing simply isn't worth considering, and that's assuming it's even still functional. It was hardly practical in the first place, and by now it's been sitting in a bunker for who knows how long without maintenance. It honestly might be more valuable at this point as raw materials.

O: All sound, reasonable assessments to be sure. Logical, even.

MC: There's a "but" coming.

O: However, consider the following. Many of the Karkadann's tactical shortcomings are currently being accounted for, indirectly or not. The provisional governmental forces lack dedicated long-range air support assets, and at present orbit-to-surface strike capabilities are out of almost anyone's hands. The Iphigenia is lightly armed and can only maintain sporadic coverage at best. While our current situation may be far from ideal in numerous respects, in this particular instance it may actually be to our advantage.

MC: All right, let's say for the sake of argument that you're right about all of this. The question still remains what it would benefit us in the long run.

O: What it would benefit the Emir? Very little overall. I can run casualty estimates if you'd like, I expect they'd be quite high, but even a weapon so wantonly destructive is unlikely to accomplish any significant long-term strategic goals on its own, nor do I predict it would win him back his throne. What it would benefit you, though? You have mentioned the need for a suitable opportunity to begin securing your contingency-

MC: Shit.

O: -and I expect the Karkadann would draw a great deal of attention from all parties involved.

MC: I can't believe I'm actually considering this.

O: We can explore other options of course, though our windows of opportunity are beginning to narrow considerably.

MC: No, no, you have a point. Go ahead and draw up a proposal, and see if there are any independent assets we might be able to use to expedite the process. It looks like Malik may just get his grand gesture after all.

O: Indeed.

[DESYNCHRONIZING]

[CONNECTION TERMINATED]

Valkyrie

Striker

The Valkyrie doctrine is an unusual hybridization of several extant chassis designations created to fulfill a unique battlefield role, that of a fast-moving and maneuverable aerial close-combat platform. Meant to bypass entrenched frontline defenses and seek out high-value targets such as artillery units, field commanders, and electronic warfare platforms, Valkyries engage the enemy with rapid hit-and-run strikes to disorient and overwhelm them. The demanding engineering requirements of designing frames suitable for advanced flight as well as melee combat have kept the Valkyrie from seeing widespread deployment, routinely leading assigned pilots to form close-knit and exclusive circles within more traditional military hierarchies.

Tactics: The Valkyrie is a high-mobility melee attacker well suited to hit-and-run tactics. Hover flight and a generous Threat on its **Nanocarbon Partizan** allow it to skirt around frontline defenders without running afoul of engagement or reactions, then by using **Flyby Strike** it can freely attack and reposition, setting itself up for future attacks and pulling the PCs' attention in multiple directions. If the Valkyrie can be grounded then its combat effectiveness greatly diminishes.

VALKYRIE

Mech, Striker

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
14	12	7	7	-1	+3	+0	+2	0	6	10	10	1

Base systems:

Nanocarbon Partizan

Main Melee

+2/4/6, +1 Accuracy

Knockback 1

Threat 3

7 kinetic damage

At **T2**, this weapon can make two attacks at a time, targeting either the same character or two different ones. At **T3**, it can make three attacks at a time.

SSC Total Suite

System

The Valkyrie can hover whenever they move or **Boost**.

Flyby Strike

Trait

1/round, when the Valkyrie hits a target with this weapon while **Boosting** or immediately after **Boosting**, that character must pass a **Hull** save or be knocked **Prone**. When the Valkyrie **Boosts** and splits their movement with an attack using the **Nanocarbon**

Partizan, they may freely divide attacks among their targets at any points during this movement. The Valkyrie must be **flying** to use this trait.

Optional systems:

Burnout Booster Rig

System, Quick Action, Limited 1

The Valkyrie **Boosts** up to **20 spaces**. This movement does not provoke reaction attacks and ignores engagement. The Valkyrie must be **flying** to use this system.

FIREFLY Micromissiles

System, Quick Action, Recharge (6+)

All characters within **Burst 2** must pass an **Agility** save or take **4/6/8 explosive damage + 2/3/4 heat** and become **Slowed** until the end of their next turn. On a success, they take half damage and heat only.

Flashblind Halo

Reaction, Recharge (6+)

Trigger: A hostile character moves adjacent to the Valkyrie.

Effect: That character must pass a **Systems** save or become **Jammed** until the end of their next turn.

Chaff Launchers

Trait

The Valkyrie gains soft cover until the start of their next turn whenever they Boost.

Maneuvering Thrusters

System, Free Action

1/round, as a free action the Valkyrie may move **2 spaces** in any direction. This movement does not provoke reaction attacks and ignores engagement. The Valkyrie must be **flying** to use this system.

At higher levels:

Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
14	14	8	7	-1	+4	+0	+3	0	6	10	12	1

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
14	16	9	7	-1	+6	+0	+4	0	8	10	14	1

I was 12 when I was brought to the palace along with my sister. Our parents were dead, killed in a rebel attack, and at the time I mourned. The Emir was a kind and noble man, and we were cared for as if we were his own family, fed, clothed, and well educated. As we grew older our talents were cultivated and nurtured, though the deaths of our parents continued to weigh heavily upon my heart. It was the Emir himself who taught me how to

overcome my grief through dedication towards excellence, to cast aside the memories dragging down my soul like shackles, and I am eternally grateful to him (long may he reign) for providing me with the opportunity to shed the final, burdensome attachments to my former life. My sister did not understand the necessity of it at the time, but I like to imagine she does now. Wherever you may be, Iduri, thank you.

As one of the youngest Janissaries my performance was frequently evaluated by Commander Rezai which is what led him to select me for a special program. An innate aptitude for spatial awareness and a gift for piloting brought me to his attention, and he informed me that he was assembling a unique chassis squadron that he wished me to join. The training to be a part of this squadron was even more rigorous and demanding than any I had undergone previously, and so it is my intent to transcribe whatever wisdom I can impart upon future pilots in the Emir's service, to record the lessons that Commander Rezai has taught me along with my own notes on the operation of aerial chassis in this manner, tactics and strategies, and recollections of my sorties and their outcomes in the hopes that those who come after me will benefit from my experience and perhaps even exceed me themselves. I may also, should I find myself so inspired, include several verses of my poetry, which I have been informed some find rather pleasant.

-Introduction to Memoirs From the Royal Palace, author unknown (unfinished)

TEMPLATES

Champion

Both within and outside of hierarchical force organization, some percentage of trained pilots can be expected to rise above the rest to a notable degree. Within more formal military command structures, these standouts are often recommended for advanced training and possible integration into special forces, but even in less regulated environments or those that operate along non-standard lines, these exemplary combatants occupy a wide variety of prominent roles and elevated positions from the ceremonial to the celebrated, including fraternal orders, elite bodyguards, venerated arena fighters, and chosen warriors. These champions typically employ equally non-standard loadouts along with customized chassis, many of which are just as famous, or infamous, as those who pilot them.

Template Features:

Superiority

Template Feature

The Champion gains **+1 Structure** and **+1 Stress**.

Peerless

Template Feature

The Champion cannot take the **Grunt** template, and only a single Champion may be present in any scene.

Challenger

Template Feature

The first time on the Champion's turn that they attack a hostile character within **range 10**, hit or miss, they may give that character a **Champion's Mark** as a **free action**. The Champion gains **+1 Accuracy** on all ranged and melee attacks against that character, but **+1 Difficulty** to all attacks against any other target. On critical hit against a marked target, they may consume their **Mark** and gain **5/6/8 Overshield**. Only one character can have the **Champion's Mark** at a time, and a new mark can't be placed until the old one is consumed or the Champion causes the target to take **structure damage**, which clears the mark. While a **Champion's Mark** is active, the Champion cannot voluntarily move away from that character. Before combat begins, the Champion may choose a PC: that character begins combat with the **Champion's Mark** already upon them.

Champion's Raiment

Template Feature

The Champion chooses an additional base weapon or system from a different class, and one option from the **Champion Systems and Traits** list.

Champion Systems and Traits:

Nemesis

Trait

The Champion gains an additional **+1 Accuracy** on ranged and melee attacks against characters with their **Champion's Mark**. Characters with the **Champion's Mark** gain **+1 Accuracy** on all attacks against the Champion.

Unassailable

Trait

1/round, the Champion may automatically pass any check or save against a character with their **Champion's Mark**.

Honor Guard

Trait, Reaction

Trigger: An allied character within **range 3** is hit by an attack from a character with the **Champion's Mark**.

Effect: The Champion can consume their **Champion's Mark** to grant that allied character **Resistance** to all damage from that attack.

Into the Fray

Trait, Reaction

Trigger: A character with the **Champion's Mark** in line of sight moves.

Effect: The Champion or an allied character in line of sight of the Champion may **Boost** directly towards the triggering character.

Shattered Visage

Trait

The first time a Champion is reduced to or below **half their structure** during a scene, they immediately refresh all Recharge abilities and gain the **Retribution** reaction:

Retribution

Reaction, Limited 1

Trigger: The Champion hits with a ranged or melee attack.

Effect: That hit automatically becomes a **Critical Hit**, and its damage cannot be reduced in any way.

Glory Seeker

Trait

While a character has the **Champion's Mark**, the Champion cannot benefit from **Hidden**, **Invisible**, or cover against them, but they have **Resistance** against all damage dealt by that character.

"To do battle gloriously is to carve an enduring legacy upon the lives of others."

-Dedication plaque mounted above the main entrance of the Royal Colosseum, Suldan

Scrapper

Alternately referred to as junkers, technicals, or more formally as non-standard tactical vehicles, Scrapper-designate chassis are a product of limited resources and mechanical ingenuity. Where well-funded armies will field standardized frames, guerrilla forces, bandits, terrorists, and pirates will often utilize salvaged military-grade or civilian chassis, modified with additional weapons and armor to supplement their forces. Additional examples can occasionally be found in polities which have undergone a catastrophic breakdown of societal and technological infrastructure due to uncontrolled use of weapons of mass destruction or unplanned isolation from interstellar civilization. Inventive pilots trapped behind enemy lines for extended period of time have also frequently been known to make non-standard modifications to their chassis in a bid for survival.

Template Features:

Personal Touch

Template Feature

The Scrapper gains **+1 Accuracy** to any one type of save and check (**Hull, Agility, Systems**, or **Engineering**) but takes **+1 Difficulty** to a different type.

Scraper Systems

Template Feature

When choosing optional systems, the Scrapper can also choose from the **Scraper Systems and Traits** list. Only one weapon option can be chosen this way.

Scraper Systems and Traits:

Mounted Turret

Main Cannon

Range 5

+1/2/3

4/6/8 kinetic damage

This weapon cannot be used normally, but the Scrapper may attack with it as a **free action** at the end of their turn. When a ranged or melee attack **critically hits** the Scrapper, this weapon is destroyed in addition to that attack's normal damage and effects, and it cannot be repaired.

Salvaged Autocannon

Heavy Cannon

Overkill

Range 8

+1/2/3, +1 Difficulty

1d6+5/6/7 explosive damage

When the Scrapper is destroyed, this weapon can be pulled from the wreckage it leaves behind by an adjacent PC as a **quick action**. That PC can then use this weapon until the end of the scene, using their **Grit** instead of the weapon's usual attack bonuses, along with their talents, core bonuses, etc. This weapon gains the **Inaccurate** tag when salvaged this way, and it does not require a mount to use.

Piledriver

Heavy Melee

Knockback 5, Recharge (4+)

Threat 2

+1/2/3, +1 Difficulty

8/10/12 kinetic damage

On Hit: The Scrapper takes **5 damage** which ignores **Overshield** and cannot be reduced in any way, and the target must pass a **Hull** save or be knocked **Prone**, automatically failing this save if they collide with an obstruction large enough to stop their movement.

Up-Armored Hull

Trait

The Scrapper gains **+5 HP**, but they can no longer **Boost**.

Unstable Reactor

Trait

Whenever the Scrapper is **Immobilized**, **Jammed**, or **Stunned**, roll **1d6**. On a **1-4**, they ignore this effect, becoming **Impaired** instead. On a **5+**, the Scrapper immediately takes **1 structure damage** from an internal detonation, creating a **Burst 2** explosion. All characters within this area must pass an **Agility** save or take **8/10/12 explosive damage**. On a success, they take half damage.

Fragmented NHP

System

The Scrapper gains the **AI** tag and can function autonomously without a pilot. At the start of the Scrapper's turn, roll **1d6**. On a **1-3**, they may move **3 spaces** ignoring engagement and reactions. On a **4-6**, they gain **+1 Accuracy** on all attacks until the start of their next turn. 1/scene, when the Scrapper is hit by an **Invade**, instead of choosing a regular option the attacker may force the Scrapper to pass a **Systems** save or the NHP destabilizes and enters **cascade** (the attacker is made aware of this option on hit). On a success, the Scrapper becomes **Impaired** and **Slowed** until the end of their next turn instead. When the NHP is cascading in this way, the Scrapper loses control of their mech during their next turn and must move directly towards the closest allied character (choosing randomly if more than one is equally close) and attack them with as many weapons as possible, regaining control of their mech at the end of their next turn. If they cannot move within range of a valid target or there are no other characters remaining, they become **Stunned** until the end of their next turn instead.

Patch Kit

System, Full Action, Quick Action, Limited 1

The Scrapper regains **1d6 HP** as a **quick action**, or **1d6+3 HP** as a **full action**.

Improvised Explosive Device

System, Quick Action, Mine, Limited 1

At the start of combat, choose a free space no closer than **5 spaces** from any hostile

character to deploy an improvised explosive device. Detecting an IED requires a successful **Systems** check, and disarming it requires a successful **Systems** check from an adjacent space; on a failure, it immediately detonates. The Scrapper may detonate it as a **quick action**, creating a **Burst 1** area centered on the IED. All characters within this area must pass an **Agility** save or take **2d6+4/6/8** explosive damage and be knocked **Prone**. On a success, they take half damage only.

How to make a Dutch Baby (serves as many as you can squeeze into the blast radius)

okay so for this recipe you're gonna need

-6 to 8 GMS Pattern-B "Apple" dual-purpose grenades (chassis grade, not the small stuff)

-1 GMS Pattern-B "Pancake" anti-vehicle mine

-a couple bundles of detcord

-100 to 1,000kg of fuel/oxidizer (you can find my favorite recipe for this on page 83

[editor's note: page 112 in this edition!])

-a wideband RF/Omni transmitter and receiver module (personal commlinks are a perennial favorite but make sure nobody else but you has the number)

-assorted munitions to taste

Now be careful when breaking down the grenades, the 3.9.2 and up models have an anti-tamper system built in. REMEMBER THE BUDDY SYSTEM! That way if you fuck up, at least you can take someone with you when you go.

Once you've separated the explosive charges from the casings (and don't forget to save those, waste not want not) then it's time to crack into that mine. For this step I recommend a precision laser cutter or maybe a plasma torch. If you don't have something like that handy for whatever reason, try and get someone you don't like all that much to help you with this next part.

[ebooks/misc] (4972) The Laughing Anarchist's Guide to Home Insurgency, Uncensored Version (another_omni_classic_from_itsyaboyKNAIT-RYDA)