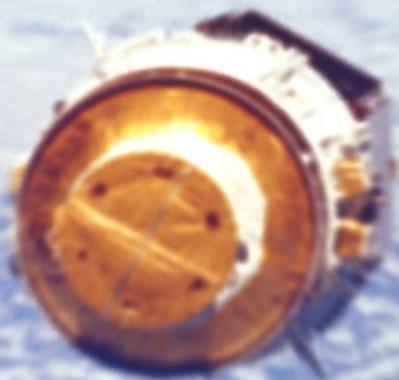


Garden Station 4



Garden Station 4

GDC3

Shifting Forest Storyworks

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Thanks to all our playtesters!

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General Information

What is a LARP?

A larp is an activity involving several people in which the participants act out a story. Like a play or traditional improvisational theater, each participant generally acts out one character in real time. Unlike a play, the events and ending of the story are not predetermined. Unlike traditional improvisation, the starting situation and nature of the characters is predetermined.

All but one of the participants (the Players) depict characters in the story. They choose their own interpretation of whatever details are unspecified about the personality and background of the character, and use this to decide on the dialog and actions of their character. They are responsible for the strategic and thematically significant decisions of the character and thinking of the ideas that the character is likely to think of. Some value playing a character for the strategic challenge of trying to achieve the character's goals. Others value the vicarious experience of drama and emotion.

The last participant (the Director) is responsible for managing the larp and performing the many necessary tasks other than depicting main characters. These include general organization, playing minor characters, keeping track of the results of actions and the consequences of hidden aspects of the situation, sometimes introducing new elements or information to manage the plot, and adjudicating rules. The Director does not have the authority to dictate actions of other participants' characters.

Rules exist to represent skill differences between characters that do not exist between players and to resolve actions that cannot be directly acted out, either because they are unsafe (like fighting), or simply impractical/impossible (like magic).

Looking for more explanation? Just check out the detailed guide available on our website, www.shiftingforest.com.

DEFINITIONS:

Player: A participant whose sole role is the depiction of one important character.

Director: The participant managing the larp who performs the other tasks described above. Traditionally called the Game Master.

PC: A character depicted by a player.

NPC: A character depicted by the Director.

In Character (IC): Descriptive of actions, dialog, events or decisions actually made by the character and taking place in the fictional world.

Out of Character (OOC): Descriptive of actions, dialog, events or decisions involving the participants in the real world.

Roleplaying: The act of thinking as a character and deciding and depicting their actions, using the character's own decision making process. An action that is "roleplayed" is carried out by acting rather than abstracted within the rules.

Game: A specific time a larp is played.

THE FIRST RULE OF LARPING:

Always keep IC and OOC knowledge/motivations separate.

What is a Parlor Larp?

FORMAT AND MISSION:

Parlor Larps are designed to provide maximally accessible, artistically satisfying larp experiences to a relatively small group of 4- 8 players and 1 Director. All require little or no preparation, a normal sized living room, and take 4-5 hours.

THE ART FORM:

Parlor Larps are intended as something more than "just a game." While they are certainly a leisure activity, they are meant to be thought of as exercises in art as well as entertainment, and in that sense are more like theater games than board games, or even many traditional larps.

Like a play or novel, they are designed to provide an experience, provoke an emotional response or make the participants think. While elements of entertainment, fun and challenge will certainly be present frequently, many of the Parlor Larps are not, and are not intended to be, entirely pleasant experiences. (A successful portrayal of a frightening atmosphere is rewarding even though everyone is feeling frightened.) These larps will be much more successful and enjoyable if all participants keep this goal in mind.

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT:

Unlike many other single-session larps, Parlor Larps ask players to fill in many details of their character before beginning to play. This personalization process is guided by a set of questions at the end of each character sheet. It helps turn the characters from a collection of goals and background information into real, fully-fleshed people, and also allows each player to identify better with his/her character.

All characters can be played by either gender, though each game has one preferred male and one preferred female character.

DON'T CONFLATE PLAYER AND CHARACTER SUCCESS!

While each character has his own goals, and many characters have directly opposing goals, it is critical to remember that the players are not competing with each other. The goal of each player is to effectively simulate and portray his character and work with the other participants to build a rewarding story. This is true for most larps, and is vital to the spirit of Parlor Larps.

Remember: If you produce a dramatic and compelling story, everybody wins.

How to use this Book

GENERAL INFORMATION:

All participants should read this section the first time they play a Parlor Larp, (except the Guide To Directing, which need only be read by the Director.)

DIRECTORS' SECTION:

Directors, and only Directors, should read this entire section ahead of time. This section contains secret story information and advice necessary to direct the larp, as well as Director copies of information given out to players.

Directors should read the Public Background Overview, and then Larp-Specific Rules & Announcements to players at the start of game.

Public Background Overview: Relevant background info that all the PCs know.

Secret Background Overview: Relevant background info that not all PCs know.

Player Character Overview: A quick summary of PCs and their roles in the larp.

Game Overview: A guide to the plot and progress of the game itself.

Larp-Specific Rules: Rule changes or additions for this particular larp.

Announcements: Useful OOC reminders and other info for the players.

Character Summary Chart: A quick summary of major relevant info for all PCs.

Character Sheets: The Director's copy of each character sheet.

PLAYER MATERIALS:

This section contains perforated pages that the Director can tear out of the booklet and hand to players as appropriate. Keep in mind that by default, players should not see other players' Character Sheets or Game Materials.

Rules Summary: A shortened version of the Parlor Larp Rules for reference.

Public Background Overview: A copy of the publicly known background info.

Rules and Announcements: A copy of the larp-specific rules and announcements.

Character Sheets: 8 character sheets to be given out, one per player.

Game Materials: Some larps have additional materials. See Setup Advice.

IC/OOC:

Agree on a symbol (e.g. crossed fingers) to indicate when speaking OOC.

INTERPRETING CHARACTER SHEETS:

Names: [Male option / Female option] Lastname. Or, Firstname Lastname.

Character Style (see next page): Found in upper left corner.

Age: Found in upper right corner. (Certain larps don't include ages.)

Apparent Identity: General idea of what type of person the character appears to be.

Real Identity: General idea of what type of person the character really is.

Goals: A character's goals at the beginning of the larp. Not set in stone; can change through new events and roleplaying. Given in roughly decreasing priority.

Abilities / Resists: See Rules

Inventory: A list of nonobvious items the PC has at the time

Questions: These questions refer to aspects of the character that were not previously specified, that the player should develop at start of game. Make sure to answer questions in accordance with the spirit of the specified parts of the character sheet. Potentially controversial answers should be checked with the Director first.

A NOTE ON GENDER:

All PCs can be played as either male or female, though each larp has one character that is preferentially male and one preferentially female. However, for the sake of saving space and standardization, all PCs (and some background characters of unfixed gender, such as "John/Jane Smith's spouse") will be referred to by default as "he".

PRIORITY OF CHARACTERS:

While 8 characters are always provided, each larp can run with as few as 4.

In the Character Overview and in the ordering of character sheets, PCs will always be listed in order of priority. This means that the first 4 should always be included, and each subsequent character should be added with each subsequent player. Using this order is critical to the balance of the game -- don't change it.

CHARACTER STYLES:

Each character has a 3-letter code representing its Character Style. This code is meant to describe what it's like to play the character to help players pick characters.

G/E: Goal or Emotion oriented. Gs are more rewarding to play when focusing on pursuing goals, and Es are more rewarding when focusing on depicting emotions.

L/D: Light or Dark personality. How depressing/disturbing the PC is.

S/C: Simple/Complex personality. Complexity of the PC's personality/motivations.

Each larp has one character of each style. All letters are given relative to the other characters in the larp (so in a Dark 5 larp, the Ls will be darker than in a Dark 1).

In general, all Ls can be darkened and all Ss can be made more complex if the player desires, but the converse is not true.

QUICK-DESCRIPTION CLASSIFICATION FOR PARLOR LARPS

(SEE UPPER RIGHT OF BACK COVER):

The classification system is designed to describe the emphases of each larp in order to give an idea of what it would be like to run and play.

PRIORITIES: The opening letters of the classification represent which of five major elements are present as priorities in the larp, in decreasing order of importance.

A: Atmosphere. A particular mood or feel to the larp

D: Discovery. The existence of IC unknowns and the need to find out about them

M: Morality. Moral dilemmas and complicated moral decisions

R: Relationships. Complicated or changing relationship dynamics

S: Strategy. A need to make strategic decisions in pursuit of goals

SCALES: A number from 0-5. 0 = barely present. 3 = average. 5 = maximal.

Dark: The prevalence of depressing or disturbing elements

DIR: The amount of Director plot intervention required, difficulty of Director role

NPC: The amount of time and effort the Director must expend playing an NPC(s)

CONTENT ADVISORIES:

NC: Normal content. Teenagers and older should be comfortable playing.

AC: Adult content. Contains themes/elements that may not be suitable for teens.

DC: Disturbing content. Contains themes/elements that some adults may not be comfortable with. Consider comfort level of everyone in group before playing.

A Guide to Directing

THE BASICS

WHAT DOES THE DIRECTOR DO?

The Director is the person who manages and simulates the universe of the story so that the players can focus on roleplaying their characters. He knows everything about what is really going on, and observes all aspects of the plot as it unfolds. He manages the game, gives descriptions, answers questions about the environment/situation, propagates effects of PCs' actions on the environment and on NPCs' actions, mediates Ability use, and sometimes mediates Conflicts.

The Director also filters information so that each player only knows what he needs to know in order to successfully play his character. Most players find that having a lot of significant knowledge OOC but not IC can get distracting or confusing.

NPCs:

In some larps the Director also physically roleplays an NPC at the same time as his other duties. When doing so, it's fine to move in and out of character as long as it's clear which is which. However, he should take both roleplaying and directing responsibilities into consideration when determining the NPC's actions and timing.

THE DIRECTOR'S OBJECTIVES:

The primary objective of the Director is to produce a satisfying experience for all participants. There are two parts of this: making sure each player is satisfied with his PC's involvement, and making sure that the flow of the collective story is satisfactory.

The first involves making sure that each PC cares about what's going on, always has something to do and is capable of seriously affecting events that matter to him.

The second involves keeping the flow of events roughly within the intended progress, guiding the story to rising action, climax, and an ending that feels conclusive, as well as timing events to be as interesting and dramatic as reasonably possible.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO DIRECTING A PARLOR LARP

Make sure you are familiar with all the General Information.

Read all the Game-Specific Info, ideally at least an hour before playing. Make sure you know all of it, including character sheets. Important details may only be stated once.

Set up the room according to Advice on Setup.

Gather your players and explain the gist of the game.

Go through PCs. Describe them by name, style, age, and Apparent Identity.

Distribute character sheets, but don't let the players read them in detail yet.

If the players don't know the rules, go over them.

Read aloud Public Background Overview.

Let the players read and answer the questions on their sheets in private. When they are done, quickly go over the character with them--you don't need to know the answer to every question, but get an idea of each character. Give out props at this time.

Have players of PCs with significant relationships (e.g. married couples) go over their PCs' personalities and relationship together before start of game..

Gather everyone together and read the Game-Specific Rules and Announcements.

Run the game!

Afterwards, players tend to enjoy a wrapup to discuss what was going on.

ADVICE ON DIRECTING

PHYSICAL BEHAVIOR:

Maintaining atmosphere and keeping everyone in character as much as possible are critical to a successful larp. Thus the Director's involvement must be very unobtrusive when not playing an NPC: Stay in an unused corner. Don't interact with any props (even chairs). Ask and answer questions as discreetly and quietly as possible. Avoid interrupting important moments. Don't referee conflicts that the players can manage themselves. The Director is invisible IC, and therefore shouldn't be a social presence.

However, you should still move around and query players every once in a while so as to keep track of what is going on with everyone. You will also occasionally have to give expositions of events or people to all parties present-- at these times, interrupt clearly and briefly. Make sure everybody hears you the first time.

UNDERSTANDING PLAYERS AND CHARACTERS:

The more you understand each PC's priorities and way of thinking, the more easily you can guide events in directions that will seriously matter to the characters. The story is about them-- it should evoke ideas, themes, and interactions they care about.

PACING AND ACTION:

Timing makes the difference between a story and a three-hour sequence of events. Time background events and NPC actions so that they contribute to rather than detract from the flow of the plot. Each conflict/situation should be thoroughly addressed: Don't interrupt situations that have not been thoroughly explored with new problems. Don't introduce an event until a few PCs are in a position to properly address it. Don't add lesser plot points to a major plot point in such a way that they will draw attention away from what really matters. Keep in mind that even things like responses from background characters (like servants on errands) will contribute new material.

Be aware that at many times nothing will appear to be happening from the Director's point of view, but the same may not be true of the players'. Do not be afraid of twenty minute lulls. On the other hand, do check with players in a lull to see if they feel involved. If they're not, don't be afraid to give advice or, in more extreme cases, tweak events to make sure things get rolling again. A half hour lull is a problem.

Parlor Larps are written to take approximately three to three and a half hours-- the game will be most rewarding if you pace it to last about that long.

MAKING UP ANSWERS:

You will frequently have to answer questions about a given situation. When doing so, answer based on what is consistent with booklet information and previous answers, generally logical, appropriate to atmosphere and genre, compatible with pacing, interesting for the plot, unlikely to upset or derail the plot, feels fair to the players, and will leave you ample room later to guide the game in a variety of directions.

EXERCISING INITIATIVE AND MAKING EXCEPTIONS:

Parlor Larps are written to save the Director from having to spontaneously take major guesses or make up important plot. However, every Director will run into situations where it seems most beneficial to the game to depart from or override aspects of the scenario. The following is advice to keep in mind when doing so:

Understand the scenario so that you will be able to understand the consequences of your changes. Be selfish: always leave yourself as much room to maneuver as you can, and commit to as little future improvisation as you can. Remember that the bigger the change, the more likely it is to get out of hand. Pay careful attention to how your change draws the PCs' focus, and watch out for pacing.

Most importantly, identify and play to your own strengths. Make it so that any additional work you have to do is work that you understand and comes naturally to you.

Parlor Larp General Rules

RULES IN LARPING:

In a larp, most normal activity is simply acted out, with roleplaying and common sense determining the effectiveness of social interactions. The rules exist as a means to simulate characters' actions and capabilities that cannot be safely or effectively acted out.

FUNCTION LEVELS:

Each character, by default, starts at Function Level 5. A character's FL represents the condition the character is in and their ability to act, both physically and psychologically, and can increase or decrease over the course of the larp as a result of harm or recovery.

In general, a character at FL 5 is essentially unharmed and in good shape, at FL 4 is in an unpleasant but not particularly disabling state, at FL 3 is somewhat disabled, at FL 2 cannot perform most activities, and at FL 1 can do little other than speak. If a character is ever reduced to FL 0, s/he is out of the game and completely unable to affect the plot thereafter. It is impossible to go higher than FL 5 or lower than FL 0.

DAMAGE AND RECOVERY:

Decrease of FL is called Damage, but represents any long term harm to effectiveness, not just physical injury. Increase of FL is called Recovery and represents either fixing or making up for previous harm to the character. Change in general is abbreviated DR.

DR is mostly done to a character through Abilities. Each Ability causes DR in a slightly different way, so it is important that each player keep track of what specific injuries/recoveries his character's DR represents, as well as what FL the character is at.

In most cases, DR is explicitly called for by the rules, but if a player decides that his character would be seriously affected either way by what has happened, he can change his character's FL accordingly, subject to Director approval.

REMOVAL FROM THE GAME:

A character that is taken to FL 0 is removed from the game. Specifically, he is removed by the type of damage dealt in that last blow. All previous damage is simply interpreted as making it easier to deal the last blow. Thus, if a character is removed by being punched, he is probably unconscious, but if he is removed by being intimidated, he is probably hiding in a corner unable to do anything.

ABILITIES:

Abilities are actions that a character can take with success determined by rules rather than roleplaying. Abilities are divided into Conflict Abilities and Non-Conflict Abilities. Non-Conflict Abilities always work; Conflict Abilities start Conflicts in which other characters can use other abilities to oppose them.

Abilities are given in the following format:

NAME x [# of uses] (RANGE OF FLs) [bonus]: DESCRIPTION OF EFFECT (amt DR) (resist type)

Examples:

Intimidate x3 (4-5) 1: Make someone back down (-FL3) (S)

Flatter x1 (3-5): Make someone feel unduly proud of themselves (+1) (E)

Spark (1-3): Briefly create a tiny flame by magic

of uses = the number of times that ability may be used during the Larp. If none is listed, the ability may be used as many times as the opportunity arises.

Range of FLs = the range of the user's FLs at which the ability may be used. If a character's FL is outside the range, he may not use that ability.

Bonus = a number from -3 to 3 that represents the character's effectiveness at using that ability against opposition. +/-1 = significant, +/- 2 = extraordinary, +/-3 = world class. (Conflict abilities only.)

Amt DR= DR caused by the ability, if applicable. -/+ FL# indicates that it takes the target down/up to that FL, respectively. -/+ # indicates that the target loses/gains that number of FLs.

Type = type of Resist required to block the ability. P = Physical, S = Social, E = Emotional, NR = Not Resistable, P/S = Physical or Social, whichever is higher. Other letters for other Resists. (Conflict abilities only.)

Special exceptions to abilities are given in the Special section of the character sheet

CONFLICTS:

A conflict occurs when two or more people use opposing abilities. Conflicts need not be physical; two people attempting to intimidate each other also counts.

Whenever anybody uses an ability listed under Conflict Abilities, everybody able to participate in the conflict is invited to do so simultaneously. To participate is not necessary to be directly involved in the action that starts the conflict—one simply has to be taking an action in reaction to other actions taking place.

If a player thinks that his/her character would be too surprised to immediately respond, he should wait until after the conflict to respond, though he still Resists.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

DECLARING ACTIONS:

Conflict resolution works as follows: First, participants state their intended actions. Others are invited to participate, stop participating, or change their own intended actions in light of the intended actions of others. (In the rare case that this causes an endless circle, everybody should choose actions simultaneously in secret.)

A participant can declare his/her intended action as contingent on the success or failure of another action (e.g. only running away if his partner dies.). He can also declare that he is not acting, and simply focusing on Resisting as a primary action.

RESISTING:

Every participant in a conflict is always by default Resisting, even if he is performing another action at the same time. This means that the character is trying not to be affected by hostile actions of others. There are three default types of Resists: Physical, Social, and Emotional. Certain larps may change types of Resists. A character always uses all Resists he has at the same time.

Each type of Resist behaves like an ability with a bonus of the Resist number (see bottom left of character sheet) whose effect is to prevent all undesired actions corresponding to that type of Resist from affecting the user.

Note that most actions don't need to be resisted. By default, especially in small conflicts, a player can choose to just permit an action targeting his PC for simplicity, or because he wants it to succeed.

An ability that takes a <type> Resist is called a <type> ability.

BIDDING:

After all intended actions are established, all participants then simultaneously Bid Damage. Bidding means secretly choosing an amount of damage (in FLs) the player is willing for his/her character to risk getting in order to increase the character's action's chance of success.

This is not to say that the character explicitly decides to get damaged in order to succeed-- whether and how much to bid is an OOC decision that is based on the player's judgment of how likely the character is to seriously push for his intended result despite chance of physical or psychological trauma.

No matter how dedicated the character is, however, bid sizes are also limited by the amount of damage the character can plausibly get in the conflict, and each participant is responsible for determining a plausible IC reason to take the amount of damage he bid.. For example, in most cases it is implausible to take more than 1 damage in a petty argument, but any amount of damage is possible in a gun fight. Keep in mind that losing an FL is important, and by default players should not bid.

Bids only apply to a character's primary action. This means that if a character is doing a normal action, the bid does not increase his chances of Resisting. If, however, he is only Resisting, then the bid will increase the chance of all Resists succeeding. Damage that was bid only actually occurs if the action is in any way successful.

When all bids are decided, all participants hold out 0-5 fingers behind their backs corresponding to the size of their bids, then show them at the same time.

RANKING:

Participants then calculate totals by adding their ability bonus and bid. (We recommend then holding out fingers for totals, for efficiency.) If a character is primarily Resisting, any bid he made is added to all his Resist totals.

At this point, participants sort out which attempted actions execute by ranking all participants by their totals, from highest to lowest, with ties broken randomly (such as with rock-paper-scissors).

Actions take place in order, starting from the highest. If a previous action causes a character to have too low an FL to perform his intended action, or simply prevents that action from occurring (e.g. a Resist), that action is cancelled. In essence, a Resist cancels all lower-ranked effects of the relevant Resist type on that character.

If any part of an action succeeded, then the bid goes into effect immediately after the action executes.

It's important to note that when an intended action gets cancelled because of effects of earlier actions, any limited-use abilities spent to attempt the action are still used up, but any damage bid does not occur.

ARTIFACTS

Artifacts are items that make it easier for a character to cause DR, often as a conflict action. The most common type of artifacts are weapons, which obviously cause damage. However, artifacts like drugs may cause recovery.

Certain characters may have abilities that make them good at using an artifact, but by default, characters simply use artifacts with their General Physical ability. If an artifact use action succeeds, then the target is DRed an amount according to the DR amount of the artifact (exactly the same as using an ability that normally causes DR on its own).

In certain cases, artifact use abilities override DR amounts on an artifact, either by the description, or by being themselves fixed DR (i.e. -/+ FL#). Artifact use abilities that are themselves unfixed DR (i.e. -/+ #) stack with the artifact's own DR amount.

By default, knives are (-1) and guns are (-2).

AFTER RESOLUTION:

After the above process is complete, characters may elect to use more abilities in response to the results. This opens a new round of the conflict in which anybody involved can use abilities and the rules for resolution are the same. This process repeats until a round happens in which nobody uses an ability. Then roleplaying can resume.

After a block of conflict is resolved, we recommend playing out as much of the determined actions as possible (without really hurting anybody, of course). This is especially helpful when a conflict ability used corresponded to IC dialog—it is useful for future dialog to know exactly what the characters said.

The Tale of Bob the Surgeon: A Few Examples of Conflict Resolution

Bob the Surgeon is strolling through a park, enjoying the flowers. His wife, Meg the Engineer uses her "Get Bob to Come Home" ability. (She chooses to do this because she has the ability—if she didn't, she could still simply try to talk him into going home through roleplaying.)

Bob does not want to go home, and chooses to Resist (in this case, only his "Social Resist" matters, since the only power being used against him is social). Bob's player thinks that Bob finds this is important enough that he should bid 1 to Resist, which he defines to represent damage from the frustration. Meg's player decides Meg doesn't consider the matter important enough to bid. Bob has a bonus of 0 to "Social Resist" and Meg has a bonus of 1 to "Get Bob to Come Home." Consequently, both of them have totals of 1.

The tie is resolved by rock-paper-scissors. Bob wins—his Social Resist is ranked higher, and therefore executes first, blocking any Social powers used against him for the rest of the round. Since he has bid 1 to use it, he is reduced to FL 4 as soon as he resists. When they play it out, Meg still acts out trying to talk him into going home, but he is prepared to say no, although he gets frustrated at her. Meg's ability is used up, so she cannot try again.

Bob has a non-conflict ability called "Independence" which allows him to recover 1 FL of damage whenever he successfully resists his wife. Since he's just resisted Meg, he can use it, and he is restored to FL 5. Since it's a non-conflict ability, it doesn't create a conflict and Meg can't prevent it.

After this has occurred, Meg does not drop the conflict, but starts a new one by immediately trying a more desperate tactic. She uses her "Guilt Trip" ability, an emotional attack which does actual damage. Bob decides to flee the park; since he doesn't have a specific ability that lets him do this, it counts as a "General Physical." Zagrabas the Restaurateur, who is also walking by, uses his social ability "Tease" on Bob to embarrass him into staying and standing up to his wife.

Bob has a "General Physical" of 0, and again bids 1. Meg has a "Guilt Trip" of 1, and doesn't bid. Zagrabas has a "Tease" of 0, but a special ability that gives him a bonus of 1 to social abilities immediately after taking a refreshing walk. In addition, Zagrabas cares so much about encouraging Bob to stand up for himself that his player decides that he bids 1 FL of damage, representing the social awkwardness of forcefully intruding on a private argument. This gives Zagrabas a total of 2, while Bob and Meg both have totals of 1.

Zagrabas goes first, beating Bob's social resist of -1, and forces Bob to stay; right after his action executes, his bid executes, reducing him to FL 4. Bob's action contradicts this and would have executed after, so it gets cancelled. Since his action didn't happen, his bid gets cancelled as well. Meg can still do her action, and she beats Bob's emotional resist of 0. Her power immediately takes the target to FL 3, and since Bob's current FL is greater than that, he is reduced to FL 3.

They pause to act out the actions of the round. Bob turns to leave, but Zagrabas starts mocking Bob for caving into his wife, whom he describes in unflattering terms. Bob turns back to confront her as she starts making him feel guilty.

Because Zagrabas succeeded during the previous round, Bob stands up for himself, using his "Complain" ability to do damage to Meg. Meg, meanwhile, tries to get revenge at Zagrabas for what he said about her, using her "General Physical" ability and

her unusual, extra-heavy purse (which does the same damage as a knife). Zagrabas gets angry at Meg, and uses "Embarrass" (an emotional attack) to humiliate her for 1 FL of damage, hoping she will then leave. A passerby uses "Instantly Summon Police." When Meg learns this, she decides that she only wants to attack Zagrabas if the police haven't arrived yet. At the same time, an unnamed shady character wishes to slip out before the police arrive, using a "General Physical." Unk the Lawyer, in the escalating argument, tries to use his "Threaten to Sue" ability on Zagrabas because he hates restaurateurs.

Meanwhile, Unk's pet platypus Eggy and Zagrabas' pet echidna Etch each fight to help their masters. Eggy declares that he wants to use his "Speedy Attack" ability to do physical injury to Zagrabas. Hearing this, Etch decides to attack Eggy in his master's defense. Eggy declares that if he is being attacked, he would rather fight his attacker instead of Zagrabas, and Etch decides that he still wants to attack Eggy anyway to demonstrate his loyalty. So Eggy instead uses his ability to attack Etch, while Etch uses his General Physical to poke Eggy with his spines, even though he can't actually cause damage using general physical without an artifact. Thus the fight between the two pets becomes a completely separate conflict happening at the same time.

Bob's bonus is -2, and he is so drained by Meg's guilt trip that he has nothing extra to throw into it, so he doesn't bid. Meg has a bonus of 0, and bids 1 because she's gotten angry and reckless. Zagrabas has a bonus of 2, but all of his Resists are 1. He would like to bid to increase his Resists, but because he is performing an action besides Resisting, his bid could only apply to the action, so he doesn't bid. The passerby has a bonus of 1, the shady character has a bonus of 3, and Unk has a bonus of 2. Finally, the pets both have attacks of -2 and all Resists at -1 (being only pets). None of these people are invested enough to bid.

The shady character goes first at 3, and leaves. Since nobody's action is contradicted by this, everyone else's actions still have the possibility of happening normally.

Unk and Zagrabas are tied at 2. Unk beats Zagrabas' Resist, but the order matters since Zagrabas can only use Embarrass at FL 3 or higher, is currently at FL4, and Unk's lawsuit always does 2 damage. Zagrabas has a single use non-conflict ability that lets him win a tie due to being extremely lucky. He uses it, and humiliates Meg before Unk threatens him. Then he is reduced to FL2.

Now Meg and the passerby both have totals of 1, and Zagrabas has a physical resist of 1. Meg won't attack Zagrabas if the police are there, and has to beat Zagrabas' Resist, so all three throw rock-paper-scissors together (even though it doesn't matter whether Zagrabas or the passerby goes first, as long as one of them beats Meg). Meg wins, and hits Zagrabas with her purse, since she won't react to something that hasn't happened yet. Her purse always does 1 FL of damage, so Zagrabas is reduced to FL 1. Then the passerby summons the police, who see everything that happens, but are too surprised to react until this set of actions have resolved.

Now, at -2, Bob complains to Meg and both animals attack each other. None of these activities contradict each other, so the order doesn't matter, but all the actions lose to the corresponding Resist.

Now that the police are here, Meg's player gets Director approval to take 1 FL of voluntary damage to represent her fear of getting in trouble for caught disturbing the peace by hitting people in a public park, bringing her down to FL3.

Since the police are present, people have to be careful about what they do. Unk uses a social ability, "Slander," to make Zagrabas out to be a violent criminal. Bob decides to try to make Meg feel better using his "Shelter" ability, which recovers someone 1 FL by offering to protect them from danger. Meg is so surprised at this that she fails to take any action, but she decides that the way Bob is helping her is too demeaning, and Resists it. Since the police don't care about the pets, Eggy and Etch attack each other again, and this time each bid 2 because, with Zagrabas so injured, they're both willing to risk serious physical injury to try to hurt the other. No one else bids.

Unk has a bonus of 2, which overcomes Zagrabas' Resist of 1. It does 1 FL of

damage, reducing Zgrabas to FL 0. Zgrabas is so reviled as a criminal that he can no longer affect the game, and is removed from play. His previous damage contributes to this—for instance the bruise from the purse makes him look less respectable—but it is the final ability which determines why he is removed. Bob has a bonus of 0, while Meg's Resist is 1, so Bob is unable to heal her. Finally, Eggy and Etch have totals of 0, so Eggy does 1 FL of damage to Etch while Etch (who used a "General Physical") succeeds in poking Eggy with his spines, but does no damage to him. Finally, they act out the results, with Unk openly accusing Zgrabas of being a criminal and Bob trying to comfort Meg and she rebuffs him, while the pets fight dedicatedly in the background.

Game-Specific Information for Director

Public Background Overview

Cerian Contingent

GENERAL HISTORY:

Humans have lived among the stars for thousands of years, to the point where Earth is legend, rather than history. There are many nations across the galaxy. There has, thus far, been no evidence of alien intelligence.

Technology is standard soft science fiction technology—sick bays, laser pistols, etc. People live to between 150-200 years old and are healthy for virtually all of that time. However, the speed of light is an absolute limit. No message, and certainly no object can exceed it. If a star system is 5 light years away, it takes a minimum of 5 years to get there, to get a message there, or to even see something that happened there with a sensor. Inter-system travel is accomplished without terrible boredom or wasted lifetimes by cryogenically freezing passengers and crew while in interstellar space.

The Union of Planets and Cerian Empire are two of the largest nations in the galaxy, sharing one long border. They have been ideologically clashing and trying to convert each other for a long time, to no avail. At this point they are at a tense standoff, ready to go to war at any moment.

The Cerian Empire organizes their society around creating maximum happiness for the masses and is largely free of crime and unrest. This organization is accomplished by means of strict regulations and the use of the drug Ink to ensure happy compliance. Ink produces a blissful contented state and a desire to obey all orders and avoid controversy. The considerable majority of people are on it and they do exactly what they are supposed to do. Only the most trusted leaders, thinkers and agents are allowed freedom of thought. While Cerian policy does rely heavily on utilitarian cost-benefit analysis, euthanasia and state child-rearing are not common.

The Union of Planets is a democracy with civil rights, independent corporations, crime, corruption, social problems and general normalcy. Vicious rumors say that citizens are afraid to leave their houses for fear of being shot by criminals, that the mentally ill are often killed instead of cured, and that police protection is a service that the rich buy and the poor do without.

How You Got Here:

You are a government-sponsored research vessel that headed out toward this remote, unexplored section of the galaxy because of rumors of signs of alien life. The closest civilized planet was Ogi Station, a small independent country at the fringe. You stopped there to resupply. When you were most of the way done resupplying, a UP ship, docked at the station, left in the direction you were headed in.

Afraid that they would get there first, you hurried to finish and race them to your destination. As you were leaving, you saw a third ship leave the station and hurry after you, obviously with the same intention, but you did not manage to catch what type of ship it was or where it was from.

You managed to put a few hours between yourself and the third ship, and to catch up with the UP ship. However, because you left in such a hurry, you did not finish resupplying, and did not realize until halfway through the two-week trip that you were short on the chemicals necessary to synthesize Ink. Consequently, highly Ink-dependent crew members such as P. Green4 Rockton are in withdrawal.

You and the UP ship arrived in the system at the same time, and were delighted to see a planet with technological installations in orbit. However, as you approached it, one of the space stations shot your ship down with a powerful laser. Before your ship blew up, a few of you managed to beam onto the space station and escape.

Public Background Overview

Union of Planets Contingent

GENERAL HISTORY:

Humans have lived among the stars for thousands of years, to the point where Earth is legend rather than history. There are many nations across the galaxy. There has, thus far, been no evidence of alien intelligence.

Technology is standard soft science fiction technology—sick bays, laser pistols, etc. People live to between 150-200 years old and are healthy for virtually all of that time. However, the speed of light is an absolute limit. No message and certainly no object can exceed it. If a star system is 5 light years away, it takes a minimum of 5 years to get there, to get a message there, or to even see something that happened there with a sensor. Inter-system travel is accomplished without terrible boredom and waste of lifetimes by cryogenically freezing passengers and crew while in interstellar space.

The Union of Planets and Cerian Empire are two of the largest nations in the galaxy, sharing one long border. They have been ideologically clashing and trying to convert each other for a long time, to no avail. At this point they are at a tense standoff, ready to go to war at any moment.

The Cerians organize their society around creating maximum happiness for the masses and are largely free of crime and unrest. This organization is accomplished by means of strict regulations and drugs to ensure happy compliance. Only the most trusted leaders, thinkers and agents are allowed freedom of thought. The most vicious rumors circulating about the Cerians are that they kill people who become too old to work, that the Cerian government takes all children at birth to be raised by the state, and that they're all kept on mind-control drugs to make them accept this.

The Union of Planets is a democracy with civil rights, independent corporations, crime, corruption, social problems and general normalcy. While it has the usual problems that plague any democracy, it is not particularly corrupt. Many of the problems present in modern society remain true, including that richer neighborhoods are generally safer and that some neighborhoods are quite dangerous. However these are not more pronounced than they are today: most citizens go about their lives without much fear of crime, and police protection is still available to everyone. The Union of Planets does have the death penalty, and does sometimes apply it to the mentally ill.

How You Got Here:

You are a university-sponsored research vessel that headed out toward this remote, unexplored section of the galaxy because of rumors of signs of alien life. The closest civilized planet was Ogi Station, a small independent country at the fringe. You stopped there to resupply.

As you were leaving, you saw a second, and then a third ship leave the station and hurry after you. Afraid that they were pursuing the same lead and would get there ahead of you, you went as fast as you could. The second ship, a Cerian vessel, caught up shortly before you arrived. The third ship should be about two or three hours behind, but you couldn't catch where it was from.

You and the Cerian ship arrived in the system at the same time, and were delighted to see a planet with technological installations in orbit. However, as you approached it, one of the space stations shot your ship down with a powerful laser. Before your ship blew up, a few of you managed to beam onto the space station and escape.

Secret Background Overview

Long ago a mysterious alien species evolved on the planet now known as Garden. In time, for reasons known only to them, they left their homeworld behind. But they did not leave it unprotected. The planet was left full of technological artifacts designed to protect and sustain the complicated ecosystem that explorers find today. Among these artifacts is Garden Station 4, a huge space based Laser facility designed to vaporize asteroids that threaten to crash into the planet.

On board are control facilities and life support designed for humanlike life. The aliens could not conceive of another intelligent species; the security features of the facility are merely against rebels and criminals. The ship's computer is intelligent and is designed to take initiative in protecting the planet, but it cannot override the controls. Its main recourse is to reprogram the brains of those whom it heals with the medical robot to venerate the planet. It has already done so to Sandy Applebaum, the explorer who has been trapped here for years. He totally serves the computer and the planet.

Be sure to read both public backgrounds overviews. Both sides believe a number of rumors about the other, some of which are true, and some of which aren't.

Character Overview

(Listed in order of decreasing necessity for smaller-group games.)

SANDY CARTER: GDC. Sandy has been trapped alone on the space station for five years, and has consequently gone quite insane. During that time, the medical robots have gradually chemically brainwashed him to believe that the safety of the planet and its ecosystem is the greatest priority in the universe.

B. RED3 STANVILLE: GLS. B. is the leader of the Cerian ship, a scientist who loves his society and firmly believes that Ink is a wonderful thing. He is not on Ink because he needs free thought to pursue science, but looks forward to taking it when he retires.

J. TANTORIAN: GDS. J. is a reporter from the Union of Planets. He is fanatically pro-UP, believing firmly that the UP should go to war with, and wipe out the Cerians, and expresses this strongly in his reporting. He works for a corrupt news corporation that makes news in order to report on it.

Y. FELS: EDC. Y. is the computer specialist for the UP. He grew up in the slums of the UP and thinks that the Cerian ideal of unity and protection is far more valuable than the UP ideal of freedom, which only encourages people to hurt each other. He has consequently been giving scientific secrets to the Cerians in hopes that they will conquer the UP. However, he is still attached to his friends in the UP and doesn't want them to know he's a traitor.

P. GREEN4 ROCKTON: EDS. P. is the computer specialist for the Cerians. He was on a heavy dose of Ink and, due to the unexpected shortage, is in severe withdrawal. This causes him to be edgy, confrontational, and rebellious to everyone.

N. MITTERSON: ELS. N. is the leader of the UP expedition. He is a scientist, and while not very patriotic, sufficiently a citizen of the UP that he believes in freedom and is disturbed by the Cerian way of life. He does not want war. He is mostly interested in learning about and preserving the station.

J. GREY5 ELLISVILLE: ELC. J. is a Cerian guard who is on a medium dose of Ink—low enough that he can disobey people enough to oppose them if they are a threat, but high enough that doing so is painful. It is, however, also low enough that he is capable of wanting freedom. He is consequently constantly torn about whom to listen to, and whether to listen to anyone.

G. NIKLICON: GLC. G. is a medic from the UP ship who is not a particularly dedicated UP citizen. He strongly values life, learning and scientific progress and will try to help everyone and prevent war. He has a strong ideology, which he has few qualms about trying to enforce on others.

Game Overview

SUMMARY:

The characters arrive simultaneously on the space station to find Sandy there alone. The third ship will be arriving in about two and a half hours, but will be shot down as soon as it gets there, so they need to turn off automatic defenses.

When they look up the laser, they find that it is in fact capable of destroying any planet in the galaxy from a control console in the station. At that point, the implication for the looming war is obvious, and conflict begins. Soon after, war breaks out between the UP and the Cerian Empire, making the role of the Laser even more critical.

GARDEN STATION 4:

TERMINALS:

There are five computer terminals scattered about the station.

The terminals don't function because the power was cut, but all the normal systems still work. Fels has a 3-hour emergency battery on him that he can use to turn on the terminals.

Once they boot up, they display some text in a bizarre language. As people talk, a progress bar with an unrecognizable label will start making progress. It will stop when the room falls silent. Once people have talked for about 10 minutes, the bar will reach full and all commands will miraculously translate into English.

WHAT THE TERMINALS DO:

- A) Engineering. Change around power, manage the escape pod.
- B) Weapon Control. Turn on/off automatic firing, fire on something.
- C) Life Support. Change oxygen, temperature, etc. Manage medical robot.
- D) Communication. Send message to anywhere in galaxy at light speed.
- E) Security. Lock/unlock other consoles from being used, cancel shields.

See Terminal Function Summary for more detail on these.

THE MEDICAL ROBOT:

The medical robot will automatically leave its bay and try to heal anyone who has taken physical damage. It is capable of healing even dead people, as long as their bodies are intact. A person thus brought back from the dead will return slightly crazy, disoriented, and otherwise strange.

Whenever the robot works on someone, it also takes steps to chemically brainwash that person into feeling the need to obsessively protect the planet and its ecosystem. At 2 cumulative FLs of damage healed the person just thinks the planet is remarkably beautiful. At 3 FLs, he becomes emotionally attached to it. At 4 FLs he is compelled to protect it. At 5 or more total FLs, protecting it becomes his first priority, far above all other loyalties, values or considerations. It's the total number of levels the robot has ever healed a person that counts, not the number of levels in one healing session.

The brainwashing factor cannot be discovered or affected from the consoles.

It only takes one physical attack with a weapon to destroy the robot, regardless of damage.

OTHER FEATURES:

There is an escape pod on the station with room for two people. It will take people to the surface of the planet where they will be able to survive.

There is a food generator which can produce any substance in the form of a homogeneous gruel. For instance, it can produce water, Ink, peanut butter, a nutrient solution, gasoline, or several of these mixed together, but not scrambled eggs or a steak. By default, it is set to a fairly tasteless but nutritionally complete solution. A dose of Ink heals one function level; none of the characters know the formula of any other medicine which can heal in the timespan of the game.

OTHER STATIONS:

There are several other orbital and ground installations which can be communicated with from the station. They include the central relay, various weather and ecological controls, and other functions designed to preserve the state of a planet. All facilities will obey information requests from each other, but all orders have to be routed through the central relay.

The central relay has the most powerful AI of any of the facilities. It has a full human intelligence and vastly more processing power. Its main job is to coordinate all the stations to maintain the planet as it is for a very long time. The central relay will relay any orders that it is convinced are a good idea. While it trusts GS4, it believes that it has better judgement than GS4. It does not believe that there is intelligent life in the universe other than its creators, much less that they've taken over GS4. If this fact becomes particularly obvious or is directly conveyed to it, it will become extremely paranoid and attempt to destroy them by immediately disabling the weapon and self-destructing the station in 1 hour. These orders cannot be overridden.

WAR:

At some point during the game, war will start between the Cerian Empire and the UP. The characters will be immediately notified of this when the Communications computer raises an alert saying that large explosions were detected in various locations that mark the border of the UP and the Cerian Empire. More explosions will crop up soon after, in such a pattern as to obviously indicate war.

It may make the game substantially more interesting if one side or the other started the war. If this is so, you can make it clear by making the first explosion obviously in the opposing side's territory. By default, though, keep it ambiguous. Its necessary to point out that because of the speed of light limit, the first explosions seen may not be the first explosions to occur.

THE THIRD SHIP:

The third ship will arrive two and a half hours after the game starts. Its nationality will not be known until about half an hour before it arrives. At that point, make the nationality whatever is most interesting for the plot. Remember that the ship does not have to be UP or Cerian—it can be a neutral party or an ally of either. (The Cerian Empire is large enough that different local planetary governments could easily have sent multiple ships without realizing they had overlapped.)

Advice on Setup

- Ideally, use a room that has multiple tables and chairs and miscellaneous furniture objects that can serve as barricades to maneuver around and hindrances to fast movement.
- There are 5 computer terminals. Ideally set these up as far from each other as possible (such as in an X formation) so that controlling an area of the room does not guarantee control of the space station.
- The terminals should be physically easy to get in and out of, and should require as little miming as possible to represent—a lot of roleplaying will happen when people are sitting at the terminals, and people may initiate conflicts when they see each other typing.
- Designate one area as the medical bay. A closet or cabinet is good for this, so that people can open it and see the robot and food supplies.
- Set up a large section of wall as the view screen that displays the planet. Tape up newspapers or sheets of paper together to represent the screen.
- Have as few miscellaneous small objects around as possible.
- If you can, make 5 copies of the Terminal Functions Summary. Put one at each console once the computers turn on and give the Player Materials one to Sandy. If you can't, just let Sandy read it, and then read it aloud or pass it around once the computers are turned on.
- Place some kind of indicator at each station to mark its current status (active/inactive and with or without a password). It may also be helpful to have some physical indication of what state various controls are in, so that players can check the status of things without needing Director assistance.

Advice on Casting & Running

ADVICE ON CASTING:

- Try to have someone who can be very verbal and assertive play Tantorian.
- Try to have someone who can be confrontational and chaotic play Rockton.
- N. Mitterson is the most research oriented character. Make sure that this goes to someone who will be interested in that aspect of the game. Feel free to mention this to the players when choosing characters.
- Give G. Niklicon to someone who can come up with an interesting value system and apply it aggressively of their own initiative. Encourage them to develop the system; the character is a C, not an S, and is more interesting if played that way.

ADVICE ON RUNNING:

- Do not let the characters seriously entertain the possibility that war is not really happening when it starts. Inform them that, from the patterns of explosions, there is no other reasonable conclusion.
- Make sure everyone always thinks that their side is going to lose the war if nothing changes in order to drive them to action.
- When people get brainwashed, take them aside in secret.
- Don't let Fels turn on the terminals secretly without some effort. The terminals activating should be a point of drama. On the other hand, don't let the game go too long without the terminals getting activated.
- There is a high chance that the station will self-destruct in the end, either because the central relay realizes there is intelligent life on the station or because one of the characters sets it. Make sure it's clear that the options for escape are limited: there are two spaces on the escape pod, which only goes to the planet, and the ship may belong to the other side.
- This larp has been known to end early with a small number of people. Don't fight too hard if this seems inevitable.
- Ink and the medical robot provide ample sources of healing, but both have a cost.

Larp-Specific Rules and Beginning Announcements

(Read this to your players at start of game)

LARP-SPECIFIC RULES:

- This game does not have Preferred Male/Female roles.
- Everyone has a Maneuvering ability, which represents ability to change positions. With the computer terminals, this should come up a lot.
- Succeeding in executing one command on a terminal when someone is trying to physically stop you requires General Physical.
- Succeeding in executing one command on a terminal when someone is trying to stop you through computer use, or when someone previously set up computer security to stop you, is a Hacking conflict. The conflict is a normal one between the two people, except that the person who previously set up security can not bid unless they are actively defending their security at the time.

BEGINNING ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- This is very soft science fiction, so expect it to follow genre conventions. Everyone speaks the same language. Technology can do unreasonable things. It is not at all strange that the station's life support, while designed for aliens, should work perfectly well for humans.
- Remember that as you arrive, everyone else on your ship has just been blown up. This is pretty traumatic.
- Remember that, last you knew, the UP and the Cerian Empire were in a state of extreme tension. It's not just a pair of large rivals who don't like each other—it's like the Cold War was, where the smallest misstep could set off a large-scale war.
- Remember that you guys are civilians, not government representatives.

Character Summary Chart

Name	Codes	Identity	Goals
Sandy Carter	GDC	Old Explorer Station Servant	Get Rescued Protect Garden Protect Station
Boris2/Beatrice2 Red3 Stanville	GLS	Cerian Researcher	Research Convert people Win the war
Jansor/Janspeth Tantorian	GDS	UP Journalist	Start and win war Make news Cover news
Yassy/Yurla Fels	EDC	UP Computer Guy Spy for Cerians	Spy for Cerians Join them Spare your friends
Pete1/Pat1 Green4 Rockton	EDS	Cerian Technician Addict	Get drugs Be disobedient Get revenge
Nicron/Nicra Mitterson	ELS	UP Team Leader	Research Protect UP Decide what to do
John17/ Jane17 Grey5 Ellisville	ELC	Cerian Guard	Be obedient Get Stanville's approval
Gordon/Greta Niklicon	GLC	UP Medic	Prevent bloodshed Learn things Do what's best

Terminal Function Summary

(Descriptions of the commands available at each terminal)

Terminal Commands fall under either Hacking or General Physical. Marked actions require hacking.

ALL TERMINALS

Info Request: Ask for any general knowledge about the station or about science.

Password Lock: Set a password to use this terminal. Entering the password is a free action.

Break Password: Get in without a password. (Requires Hacking)

Prevent Lockout: Prevent Terminal from being disabled for this and next 2 conflicts. (Requires Hacking)

Big Red Button: Puts up shields that prevent all movement in or out of the seats next to all terminals. No physical actions or abilities can cross the shields. However sound, light and air can. Social and emotional abilities still cross. The alien tech laser can destroy one of the shields in one weapons use.

Cancel Big Red Button: Cancels the effect of one's own Big Red Button

A: ENGINEERING TERMINAL

Power down room: Cuts room lights to emergency level and causes the shields to stop functioning. This does not affect power to terminals because this is from the emergency power supply.

Power down weapon: Prevents the weapon from being used.

Power down medical robot: Prevents medical robot from functioning.

Power down communications: Prevents communications.

Power up any of the above: Undo the affects of one of the above.

Self-destruct: Cause the ship to destroy itself in 1 hour.

Cancel Self-destruct: Reverses process of self-destruct if done within 30 minutes of initiation of self-destruction.

Open/Close Escape pod: Grants or denies access to the escape pod.

B: WEAPON CONTROL

Turn Autofire on/off: Turn on or off the weapon's automatic destruction of anything that approaches the planet.

Destroy target: Destroy any one target, of up to planet size. If not stopped, the laser can fire 10 times per minute. There are 44 planets in the UP, 37 in the Cerian empire and 358 total human inhabited planets.

C: LIFE SUPPORT

Mess with life support: Do a fixed amount of physical damage to everybody.

Deny/Give Medical Attention: Cause the medical robot to ignore somebody or attend to somebody.

Add things to food: Add any substance to the generated food, such as deadly poison, vitamin supplements or Ink.

D: COMMUNICATION

Send Message: Send a short text voice and/or video message to another facility's computer or to another star system. The latter is subject to time delay of years.

E: SECURITY

Lock out Terminal: Prevent one of the other terminals from being used.

Master alarm cancel: Cancel all Big Red Button uses and prevent their further use.

Master alarm enable: Allow Big Red Buttons to be used again.

Garden Station 4

Age
58

Sandy Applebaum

APPARENT IDENTITY: Old independent explorer who has been stuck in this base for 5 years.

REAL IDENTITY: Human whose brain has been partially reprogrammed to do the will of the station computer.

BACKGROUND: Five years ago, your ship arrived in this system searching for signs of intelligent life. Signs of intelligent life found you first. Your ship was destroyed by a powerful space-based laser, and you (and only you) managed to beam onto the station that fired it. The life support systems of the station have kept you alive, but without company you've gone quite mad.

In the many times the station's medical robots have had to fix you after you hurt yourself doing stupid things out of boredom, the station's computer has been changing you without your knowledge. You have been made aware that the native life on the planet below is the most beautiful, valuable and important thing in existence, and that it is your true purpose in life to protect it at all costs.

GOALS:

Protect the native ecosystem on Garden from any possible threats, at all costs. AT ALL COSTS!
Ideally, escape this place, if you can.

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

General Physical (3-5) -1: Physical actions, not otherwise covered (P)
Struggle (2-5) 0: Fight off somebody trying to restrain you (-FL4) (P)
Weapons combat (2-5) 1: Shoot somebody with a weapon (P)
Maneuvering (3-5) 0: Any attempt to change position with resistance (NR)
Take Cover (1-5) 1: Take a position where you are safe from weapons (NR)
Familiarity x3 (1-5) 2: Use a feature of room to your advantage (variable)
Hacking (2-5) 3: One action at station console (Resist with Hacking)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

Nature Poetry x3 (2-5): Compose poetry that makes people care about nature

RESISTS

Physical -1
Social -1
Emotional -1

SPECIALS

Immune to abilities
that convince by
means of reason

INVENTORY

Standard Laser (-2)
Alien Tech Laser (-3)
Scanner: Determines
properties of objects and
health of people.

KNOWLEDGE ABOUT GS4: The makers of this and the other many installations on or around the planet Garden have left this planet. The machines exist to defend it and keep it in its present state. Garden Station 4 is an asteroid defense laser base. The laser has the power to destroy a planet anywhere in the galaxy, with proper targeting information. It can be manually overridden to target anything by people inside the base with enough computer skill. To prevent this destruction, you damaged the controls long ago, before you were taken over by the computer. Since then, the computer has guided you in mostly repairing them, not wanting the station controls damaged when its creators return.

You know what the terminals do (See Terminals Function Summary).

KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HUMANITY: Humans have lived among the stars for thousands of years, to the point where Earth is legend rather than history. There are many nations across the galaxy. One of these is the Cerian Empire, a centrally organized expansionistic dictatorship rumored to ensure total obedience with drugs. The Union of Planets is a loose democracy rumored to be corrupt. These two border each other and have always hated each other.

Technology is standard soft science fiction technology—sick bays, laser pistols, etc. People live to between 150-200 years old and are healthy for virtually all of that time. However, the speed of light is an absolute limit. No message and certainly no object can exceed it. If a star system is 5 light years away, it takes a minimum of 5 years to get there, to get a message there, or to even see something that happened there with a sensor. Inter-system travel is accomplished without terrible boredom and waste of lifetimes by cryogenically freezing passengers and crew while in interstellar space.

QUESTIONS:

How has your insanity corrupted your understanding of your mission for the computer?

Do you consider the existence of humanity a threat to Garden? If so, what kept you from trying to destroy it so far? If not, what could change your mind?

What remains in you from your life before?

Garden Station 4

S L G	[Boris2 / Beatrice2] Red3 Stanville	Age 71
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APPARENT IDENTITY: Cerian Researcher

REAL IDENTITY: Cerian fanatic

BACKGROUND: You come from the Cerian Empire, where everyone is happy. The benevolent government sees to everybody's needs and medically fixes all unhappiness and discontent. The miracle drug, Ink, is the right and privilege of every citizen. It unites their will with the common good in blissful obedience. You wish this peace on everybody.

You are one of the dedicated citizens who forgo such peace for the scientific progress only the pain of free thought can provide. You long for your retirement when you can share in your people's happiness.

NAME MEANING: Names in the Cerian Empire are uniquely descriptive. Red refers to the scientific caste; Red3 means the head of a research team. Stanville is your dome of residence. Boris/Beatrice is your given name and you are the 2nd oldest Red3 of that name from Stanville.

GOALS:

Your mission is to research the intelligent life in this star system.
 Your principle is the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people.
 Your values are harmony, order, obedience and contentment.
 Your ideology is that of the Cerian Empire.
 Your desire is to see as many people as possible under its benevolent sway.

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

General Physical (4-5) -1: Physical actions, not otherwise covered (P)
 Weapons combat (3-5) 0: Shoot somebody with a weapon (P)
 Maneuvering (4-5) 0: Any attempt to change position with resistance (NR)
 Take Cover (1-5) 0: Take a position where you are safe from weapons (NR)
 Hacking (4-5) 1: One action at station console (Resist with Hacking)
 Command x3 (5) 1: Pressure somebody into doing what you say (S)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

Decisive Action x2: Take one normally conflict provoking action before others can react. Cannot cause damage or be used in mid conflict.

RESISTS	SPECIALS	INVENTORY
Physical -1 Social -1 Emotional -1	None	Scanner: Determines properties of objects and health of people. Stun Laser (-FL2) 3 doses of Ink (+1)

KNOWLEDGE: The Planet below teems with life and is dotted by various, obviously technological, installations. This orbital station is one of many orbital stations as well. There is no sign of settlements or present intelligent habitation on the planet. The station looks long abandoned.

The Union of Planets is far more powerful than the Cerians. They would likely win any war without some advantage for the Cerians.

QUESTIONS:

Are non-Cerians better off alive or dead?

Is it worth trying to convert individuals or is it better to focus on conquering entire cultures?

What are the circumstances under which the ends do not justify the means?

What if anything ever makes you doubt your values?

How do you reconcile scientific openness with your culture's closed-mindedness?

What are you afraid of?

Garden Station 4

S D G	[Jansor / Janspeth] Tantorian	Age 87
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APPARENT IDENTITY: Union of Planets journalist

REAL IDENTITY: Warmonger

BACKGROUND: You are part of a corrupt media company that creates its own news by starting newsworthy crises and then is uniquely prepared to be the first to cover them. You are assigned to the UP science mission to cover any discoveries that they might make, or at least cause an interesting disaster for people to read about.

Lately, you've been worried about more than just doing your job and getting paid. Above and beyond the call of duty, you've been stirring up fear about the Cerian Empire. You want a war. You want to destroy them, leaving no stone unturned. What you see of their empire makes you have nightmares. They're all on so much Ink, they're not even people. They're monsters. They're better off dead and the universe is better off without them. You are doing your best to make it so.

GOALS:

- Start a war with the Cerian Empire and win it. Destroy them.
- Cover all relevant news and send back the story.
- Make the news more dramatic and scandalous than it is by encouraging dramatic and scandalous things to happen.

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- General Physical (3-5) 0: Physical actions, not otherwise covered (P)
- Weapons combat (2-5) -1: Shoot somebody with a weapon (P)
- Maneuvering (3-5) -1: Any attempt to change position with resistance (P)
- Sabotage (2-5) 0: Destroy a piece of equipment (NR)
- Ridicule (4-5) 3: Make fun of somebody already embarrassed (-1) (E)
- Interview (3-5) 2: Get somebody to answer your question (S)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- Start Rumor (1-5): Tell somebody something so that they forget it was you

RESISTS	SPECIALS	INVENTORY
Physical 0 Social 1 Emotional 1	None	Recording Equipment (concealed and activated by thought alone) Standard Laser (-2)

KNOWLEDGE: The Planet below teems with life and is dotted by various, obviously technological, installations. This orbital station is one of many orbital stations as well. There is no sign of settlements or present intelligent habitation on the planet. The station looks long abandoned.

The Union of Planets could maybe win a war with the Cerians.

QUESTIONS:

Explain the extremity of your hatred for the Cerians.

What are your ethical limits in creating news?

Do you care about your fellow crew members? Which ones?

Why did you choose to cover a long mission to find intelligent life when your long-hoped-for war seems imminent?

What were you planning to do to the mission if it got too boring?

What is your greatest social weakness?

Garden Station 4

Age
59

C
D
E

[Yassy / Yurla] Fels

APPARENT IDENTITY: Union of Planets research team computer specialist.

REAL IDENTITY: Spy for the Cerian Empire.

BACKGROUND: You grew up in the rough streets of a backward frontier planet of the UP. As far as you're concerned most of the people you know use their precious freedom to pick on each other. They call the Cerian way of life slavery, but it looks awfully like a utopia to you. You've never been rich enough to leave and join the Cerians and you'd hate to leave your friends and family behind. So you've been content to dream of a day that the Cerians conquer the UP.

As war became more likely, you decided to help this dream along. You've been giving away scientific secrets to the Cerians in the hope of their victory. You only hope it can be done without great bloodshed. You want everybody to live to see a better world.

You are close to the others on your research team and don't wish to see them hurt or for them to see you as a traitor.

In order to get the transporter that beamed you onto the station to work you had to activate the 3 hour emergency power pack you carry.

GOALS:

Make the Cerian Empire win the war.

Make sure not too many people die in the process.

Try to leave with the Cerians and join them.

Try to get your friends to do so as well.

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

General Physical (3-5) 0: Physical actions, not otherwise covered (P)

Weapons combat (2-5) 1 Shoot somebody with a weapon (P)

Maneuvering (3-5) 1: Any attempt to change position with resistance (P)

Take Cover (1-5) 2: Take position where you are safe from weapons (NR)

Hacking (2-5) 2: One action at station console (Resist with Hacking)

Deception (1-5) 1: Convince somebody you're telling the truth (E)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

Depressing Rant about Humanity x1: Effects all who hear it. (-1) (E)

RESISTS

Physical 1
Social 0
Emotional 0

SPECIALS

None

INVENTORY

Standard Laser (-2)
Emergency Power Pack

KNOWLEDGE: The Planet below teems with life and is dotted by various obviously technological installations. This orbital station is one of many orbital stations as well. There is no sign of settlements or present intelligent habitation on the planet. The station looks long abandoned.

You don't know who would win a war between the Cerians and the UP.

Your Emergency Power Pack provides 3 hours of continuous power. It cannot be turned off once turned on, except by destroying it. You turned it on immediately before beaming on to the station.

QUESTIONS:

What happened that finally made you decide to work for the Cerians?

What sorts of people do you resent?

Do you feel that you are doing the right thing or just the easy thing? How sure are you either way?

What wrong things have you done with your freedom?

What are you most scared to lose?

Where do you draw the line for things you will never consider doing?

Garden Station 4

S D E	[Pete1 / Pat1] Green4 Rockton	Age 43
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APPARENT IDENTITY: Cerian Technician

REAL IDENTITY: Crazy Ink Addict in withdrawal

BACKGROUND: Your life thus far consists of three things: obedience, the accompanying joy of the approval of authorities and the drug Ink, which makes it possible. Ink is the drug of blissful obedience. As a technician you have no need for truly independent thought. You are trained to apply technology, not invent it. Thus, your dose has been kept high all your life.

The Ink shortage on your ship has been a serious problem for your emotional health. You are in withdrawal. Ink makes you happy and obedient. Its withdrawal makes you restless, tense, discontented, rebellious, angry and confrontational. You hate the authorities you once loved to serve and desire freedom, revenge, non-conformity and release.

On the other hand, you want your Ink back. Now.

NAME MEANING: Names in the Cerian Empire are uniquely descriptive. Green refers to the technical worker caste; Green4 refers to your class of technician. Rockton is your dome of residence. Pete/Pat is your given name and you are the oldest Green4 of that name from Rockton.

GOALS:

Get Ink.

Rebel and get revenge against every authority and the whole world.

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

General Physical (3-5) 0: Physical actions, not otherwise covered (P)

Struggle (3-5) 1: Fight off somebody trying to restrain you (-FL4) (P)

Weapons combat (4-5) 0: Shoot somebody with a weapon (P)

Maneuvering (3-5) 1: Any attempt to change position with resistance (P)

Hacking (2-5) 1: One action at station console (Resist with Hacking)

Desperate Action x3 (1-5) 3: Any above action when desperate (variable)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

Painful defiance (1-4): Automatically resist a social ability but get very upset by having to. (-2 to self)

RESISTS	SPECIALS	INVENTORY
Physical -2 Social 2 Emotional -2	None	Scanner: Determines properties of objects and health of people.

KNOWLEDGE: The Planet below teems with life and is dotted by various, obviously technological, installations. This orbital station is one of many orbital stations as well. There is no sign of settlements or present intelligent habitation on the planet. The station looks long abandoned.

QUESTIONS:

What independent desires have emerged in the absence of Ink?

What style of rebellion is most satisfying?

What would you like to do to your commanding officer ?

What loyalties do you still retain?

Garden Station 4

E
L
S

Age
41

[Nicron / Nícra] Mitterson

APPARENT IDENTITY: Union of Planets research team leader.

REAL IDENTITY: Free scientist

BACKGROUND: You are not a patriot; you are a scientist. That said, home is home and you have friends and family on most UP planets and few in other places. Additionally, the brainless hive mind that the Cerian Empire is reputed to be holds some fear for you. You probably don't want a war but you certainly don't want to lose it if one starts. You can't help but feel sorry for all of those Cerians though.

You just lost most of your research team to the crazy machine in this base. You were here looking for other intelligent life. You seem to have found it. The signs are not good for it being friendly.

GOALS:

Escape this place with your people alive.

Protect your homeland from threats to it.

Discover the nature of this place and the people who built it, and report back your discoveries.

Ensure that future scientists will be able to follow-up on your research here.

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

General Physical (3-5) 0: Physical actions, not otherwise covered (P)

Weapons combat (2-5) 0: Shoot somebody with a weapon (P)

Maneuvering (3-5) 0: Any attempt to change position with resistance (P)

Hacking (2-5) 0: One action at station console (Resist with Hacking)

Reason (1-5) 1: Convince somebody of something by reasons that you accept (S)

Push x2 (4-5) 1: Apply social pressure to somebody who will not listen to you. (-1) (S)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

Scientists Intuition x1 (1-5): Discover the causes of an unexplained occurrence.

RESISTS

Physical 0
Social 1
Emotional 1

SPECIALS

None

INVENTORY

Standard Laser (-2)

KNOWLEDGE: The Planet below teems with life and is dotted by various, obviously technological, installations. This orbital station is one of many orbital stations as well. There is no sign of settlements or present intelligent habitation on the planet. The station looks long abandoned.

The Cerians are very powerful. They are likely to win any war.

QUESTIONS:

What does freedom mean to you?

How do you feel about your country?

When is violence justified?

When is deception justified?

How well do you work with people you disagree with?

What or whom do you hate?

Garden Station 4

Age
49

E
L
C

[John17 / Jane17] Grey5 Ellisville

APPARENT IDENTITY: Cerian Guard

REAL IDENTITY: Guard on Ink

BACKGROUND: Your life thus far consists of three things: obedience, the accompanying joy of the approval of authorities and the drug Ink, which makes it possible. Ink is the drug of blissful obedience. You are a guard, so your dose is kept low enough to imagine disobedience, so that you can protect those whom you guard against evil rebels, of which you could not otherwise conceive. The dosing is a trade-off. It is enough that you have an instinctual desire to obey and comply with everybody, not just those on your side, and it is quite painful to contradict orders. It is, however, not so much that you are wholly incapable of desiring freedom. The belief is that in such a torn state you will default to your training and obey your leader.

NAME MEANING: Names in the Cerian Empire are uniquely descriptive. Grey refers to the military caste; Grey5 means somebody's personal guard. Ellisville is your dome of residence. John/Jane is your given name and you are the 17th oldest Grey5 of that name from Ellisville.

GOALS:

- Obey B. Stanville and only B. Stanville.
- Obey whoever spoke most recently.
- Obey nobody and become free.

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- General Physical (4-5) 2: Physical actions, not otherwise covered (P)
- Weapons combat (3-5) 2: Use any weapon to do damage (P)
- Maneuvering (3-5) 2: Any attempt to change position with resistance (P)
- Sense Will (1-5) 1 Figure out what somebody wants you to do (E)
- Intimidate x1 (5) 2: Terrify somebody when armed (-FL2) (S)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- Tantrum x1 (1-3): Get everyone to pay attention to you when you're upset.

RESISTS

Physical 0
Social -3
Emotional 0

SPECIALS

None

INVENTORY

Standard Laser (-2)
Stun Laser (-FL2)
Ion Grenade x2 (-3 to target -1 to all others in room)

KNOWLEDGE: The Planet below teems with life and is dotted by various, obviously technological, installations. This orbital station is one of many orbital stations as well. There is no sign of settlements or present intelligent habitation on the planet. The station looks long abandoned.

QUESTIONS:

How do you feel about B. Stanville as a person?

What dissatisfies you about your life?

What are things you would not do for approval?

Describe the spark of independent humanity left in you.

Garden Station 4

G
L
C

Age
26

[Gordon / Greta] Niklicon

APPARENT IDENTITY: Union of Planets research team medic.

REAL IDENTITY: Union of Planets research team medic.

BACKGROUND: You are a medic first, a scientist second, a free thinking individual third and a citizen of the Union of Planets about nineteenth after various other priorities. Most of all you value human life and scientific progress and try to balance the two as best you can. Respect for other people's opinions comes well after any of these, and while the means do not always justify the ends, you're willing to be quite forceful to make the right thing happen.

The discovery of Garden is indeed a great opportunity; however, it is an opportunity to learn about an alien culture and a wealth of new life forms, not to win some petty ideological war. You wish everybody would stop losing sight of that.

GOALS:

- Protect and value human life.
- Uphold your professional ethical standards.
- Benefit scientific and technological progress.
- Contribute to your research team.

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- General Physical (3-5) 1: Physical actions, not otherwise covered (P)
- Weapons combat (2-5) 0: Use any weapon to do damage (P)
- Maneuvering (3-5) 1: Any attempt to change position with resistance (P)
- Sedate (3-5) 1: Sedate somebody with hypodermic from med kit (-FL2) (P)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- Medicine (4-5): Cause another person to recover from all damage due to injuries in 5 minutes (Need med kit)
- Diagnose (4-5): Fully diagnose anyone in 5 minutes (Need med kit)

RESISTS

Physical 1
Social 0
Emotional 0

SPECIALS

None

INVENTORY

Med kit

KNOWLEDGE: The Planet below teems with life and is dotted by various, obviously technological, installations. This orbital station is one of many orbital stations as well. There is no sign of settlements or present intelligent habitation on the planet. The station looks long abandoned.

The Cerians are very powerful. They are likely to win any war.

QUESTIONS:

When is progress worth causing suffering?

What, if anything, counts as an evil technology?

When is life not worth saving?

Which of the other members of the UP contingent do you secretly disapprove of, and why?

How do you choose if you cannot save everybody?

Is it right to force people to give their lives for a greater good?

Is it right to force people to give their freedoms for a greater good?

Player Materials

Rules Summary

FUNCTION LEVELS, DAMAGE, AND RECOVERY:

By default, each character starts at Function Level 5. A character's Function Level (FL) represents the condition that the character is in, physically and psychologically, and can decrease or increase over the course of the larp as a result of harm or recovery.

In general, a character at FL 5 is essentially unharmed and in good shape, at FL 4 is in an unpleasant but not particularly disabling state, at FL 3 is somewhat disabled, at FL 2 cannot perform most activities, and at FL 1 can do little other than speak. If a character is ever reduced to FL 0, he is out of the game and completely unable to affect the plot thereafter. Exactly how the character is taken out depends on the nature of the damage that reduced him to FL 0.

A player can request that the Director approve an FL change even when the rules don't call for it, if he thinks that prior events would cause the change to happen.

ABILITIES:

Abilities are given in the following format:

NAME x [# of uses] (RANGE OF FLs) [bonus]: DESCRIPTION OF EFFECT (amt DR) (resist type)

Examples:

Intimidate x3 (4-5) 1: Make someone back down (-FL3) (S)

Flatter x1 (3-5): Make someone feel unduly proud of themselves (+1) (E)

Spark (1-3): Briefly create a tiny flame by magic

of uses = the number of times that ability may be used during the Larp. If none is listed, the ability may be used as many times as the opportunity arises.

Range of FLs = the range of the user's FLs at which the ability may be used. If a character's FL is outside the range, he may not use that ability.

Bonus = a number from -3 to 3 that represents the character's effectiveness at using that ability against opposition. +/-1 = significant, +/- 2 = extraordinary, +/-3 = world class. (Conflict abilities only.) This will modify the character's chance of success when using the ability.

Amt DR= DR caused by the ability, if applicable. -/+ FL# indicates that it takes the target down/up to that FL, respectively. -/+ # indicates that the target loses/gains that number of FLs.

Type = type of Resist required to block the ability. P = Physical, S = Social, E = Emotional, NR = Not Resistible, P/S = Physical or Social, whichever is higher. Other letters for other Resists. (Conflict abilities only.)

Special exceptions to abilities are given in the Special section of the character sheet

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

DECLARING ACTIONS:

Conflict resolution works as follows: First, participants state their intended actions. All other characters are allowed to participate, stop participating, or change their own intended actions in light of the intended actions of others. (In the rare case that this causes an endless circle, everybody should choose actions simultaneously in secret.)

A participant can declare his/her intended action as contingent on the success or failure of another action (e.g. running away only if his partner dies.). He can also declare that he is not acting, and simply focusing on Resisting as a primary action.

BIDDING:

After all intended actions are established, all participants simultaneously Bid Damage. Bidding means secretly choosing an amount of damage (in FLs) that the player is willing to risk his/her character receiving in order to increase the character's action's chance of success.

Regardless of the character's dedication, bid sizes are limited by the amount of damage the character could plausibly get in the conflict, and each participant is responsible for determining a plausible IC reason to take the amount of damage he bid. For example, in most cases it is implausible to take more than 1 damage in a petty argument, but any amount of damage is possible in a gun fight. Keep in mind that losing an FL is significant; a player's default bid should be 0.

Bids only apply to a character's primary action. This means that if a character is doing a normal primary action, a bid does not increase his chances of Resisting. However, if he is only Resisting, then a bid will increase the chance of all of his Resists succeeding. Damage that was bid only actually occurs if the action is in any way successful.

When bids are decided, participants hold out 0-5 fingers behind their backs corresponding to the size of their bids. All participants then show their bids at the same time.

RANKING:

Participants calculate totals by adding their ability bonus and bid. (We recommend then holding out fingers for totals, for efficiency.) If a character is primarily Resisting, any bid he made is added to all his Resist totals.

At this point, all actions are ranked by their totals, from highest to lowest, with ties broken randomly (such as with rock-paper-scissors).

Actions take place in order, starting from the highest. If a previous action causes a character to have too low an FL to perform his intended action, or simply prevents that action from occurring (e.g. a Resist), that action is cancelled. A Resist cancels all lower-ranked effects of the relevant Resist type on that character.

If any part of an action succeeded, then the bid goes into effect immediately after the action executes.

It's important to note that when an intended action gets cancelled because of effects of earlier actions, any limited-use abilities spent to attempt the action are still used up, but any damage bid does not occur.

ARTIFACTS

Artifacts are items that make it easier for a character to cause DR, often as a conflict action. The most common type of artifacts are weapons, which obviously cause damage. However, artifacts like drugs may cause recovery.

Certain PCs may have abilities that make them good at using an artifact, but by default, PCs simply use artifacts with their General Physical ability. If an artifact use action succeeds, then the target is DRed an amount according to the DR amount of the artifact (exactly the same as using an ability that normally causes DR on its own).

Specific artifact use abilities may override DR amounts on an artifact, either by the description, or by being themselves fixed DR (i.e. -/+ FL#). Artifact use abilities that are themselves unfixed DR (i.e. -/+ #) stack with the artifact's own DR amount.

By default, knives are (-1) and guns are (-2).

AFTER RESOLUTION:

After the above process is complete, characters may elect to use more abilities in response to the results. This opens a new round of the conflict in which anybody involved can use abilities and the rules for resolution are the same.

Public Background Overview

Cerian Contingent

GENERAL HISTORY:

Humans have lived among the stars for thousands of years, to the point where Earth is legend, rather than history. There are many nations across the galaxy. There has, thus far, been no evidence of alien intelligence.

Technology is standard soft science fiction technology—sick bays, laser pistols, etc. People live to between 150-200 years old and are healthy for virtually all of that time. However, the speed of light is an absolute limit. No message, and certainly no object can exceed it. If a star system is 5 light years away, it takes a minimum of 5 years to get there, to get a message there, or to even see something that happened there with a sensor. Inter-system travel is accomplished without terrible boredom or wasted lifetimes by cryogenically freezing passengers and crew while in interstellar space.

The Union of Planets and Cerian Empire are two of the largest nations in the galaxy, sharing one long border. They have been ideologically clashing and trying to convert each other for a long time, to no avail. At this point they are at a tense standoff, ready to go to war at any moment.

The Cerian Empire organizes their society around creating maximum happiness for the masses and is largely free of crime and unrest. This organization is accomplished by means of strict regulations and the use of the drug Ink to ensure happy compliance. Ink produces a blissful contented state and a desire to obey all orders and avoid controversy. The considerable majority of people are on it and they do exactly what they are supposed to do. Only the most trusted leaders, thinkers and agents are allowed freedom of thought. While Cerian policy does rely heavily on utilitarian cost-benefit analysis, euthanasia and state child-rearing are not common.

The Union of Planets is a democracy with civil rights, independent corporations, crime, corruption, social problems and general normalcy. Vicious rumors say that citizens are afraid to leave their houses for fear of being shot by criminals, that the mentally ill are often killed instead of cured, and that police protection is a service that the rich buy and the poor do without.

How You Got Here:

You are a government-sponsored research vessel that headed out toward this remote, unexplored section of the galaxy because of rumors of signs of alien life. The closest civilized planet was Ogi Station, a small independent country at the fringe. You stopped there to resupply. When you were most of the way done resupplying, a UP ship, docked at the station, left in the direction you were headed in.

Afraid that they would get there first, you hurried to finish and race them to your destination. As you were leaving, you saw a third ship leave the station and hurry after you, obviously with the same intention, but you did not manage to catch what type of ship it was or where it was from.

You managed to put a few hours between yourself and the third ship, and to catch up with the UP ship. However, because you left in such a hurry, you did not finish resupplying, and did not realize until halfway through the two-week trip that you were short on the chemicals necessary to synthesize Ink. Consequently, highly Ink-dependent crew members such as P. Green4 Rockton are in withdrawal.

You and the UP ship arrived in the system at the same time, and were delighted to see a planet with technological installations in orbit. However, as you approached it, one of the space stations shot your ship down with a powerful laser. Before your ship blew up, a few of you managed to beam onto the space station and escape.

Public Background Overview

Union of Planets Contingent

GENERAL HISTORY:

Humans have lived among the stars for thousands of years, to the point where Earth is legend rather than history. There are many nations across the galaxy. There has, thus far, been no evidence of alien intelligence.

Technology is standard soft science fiction technology—sick bays, laser pistols, etc. People live to between 150-200 years old and are healthy for virtually all of that time. However, the speed of light is an absolute limit. No message and certainly no object can exceed it. If a star system is 5 light years away, it takes a minimum of 5 years to get there, to get a message there, or to even see something that happened there with a sensor. Inter-system travel is accomplished without terrible boredom and waste of lifetimes by cryogenically freezing passengers and crew while in interstellar space.

The Union of Planets and Cerian Empire are two of the largest nations in the galaxy, sharing one long border. They have been ideologically clashing and trying to convert each other for a long time, to no avail. At this point they are at a tense standoff, ready to go to war at any moment.

The Cerians organize their society around creating maximum happiness for the masses and are largely free of crime and unrest. This organization is accomplished by means of strict regulations and drugs to ensure happy compliance. Only the most trusted leaders, thinkers and agents are allowed freedom of thought. The most vicious rumors circulating about the Cerians are that they kill people who become too old to work, that the Cerian government takes all children at birth to be raised by the state, and that they're all kept on mind-control drugs to make them accept this.

The Union of Planets is a democracy with civil rights, independent corporations, crime, corruption, social problems and general normalcy. While it has the usual problems that plague any democracy, it is not particularly corrupt. Many of the problems present in modern society remain true, including that richer neighborhoods are generally safer and that some neighborhoods are quite dangerous. However these are not more pronounced than they are today: most citizens go about their lives without much fear of crime, and police protection is still available to everyone. The Union of Planets does have the death penalty, and does sometimes apply it to the mentally ill.

How You Got Here:

You are a university-sponsored research vessel that headed out toward this remote, unexplored section of the galaxy because of rumors of signs of alien life. The closest civilized planet was Ogi Station, a small independent country at the fringe. You stopped there to resupply.

As you were leaving, you saw a second, and then a third ship leave the station and hurry after you. Afraid that they were pursuing the same lead and would get there ahead of you, you went as fast as you could. The second ship, a Cerian vessel, caught up shortly before you arrived. The third ship should be about two or three hours behind, but you couldn't catch where it was from.

You and the Cerian ship arrived in the system at the same time, and were delighted to see a planet with technological installations in orbit. However, as you approached it, one of the space stations shot your ship down with a powerful laser. Before your ship blew up, a few of you managed to beam onto the space station and escape.

Larp-Specific Rules and Announcements

LARP-SPECIFIC RULES:

- There are no Preferred Male/Female roles in this game.
- Everyone has a Maneuvering ability, which represents ability to change positions. With the computer terminals, this should come up a lot.
- Succeeding in executing one command on a terminal when someone is trying to physically stop you requires General Physical.
- Succeeding in executing one command on a terminal when someone is trying to stop you through computer use, or when someone previously set up computer security to stop you, is a Hacking conflict. The conflict is a normal one between the two people, except that the person who previously set up security can not bid unless they are actively defending their security at the time.

BEGINNING ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- This is very soft science fiction, so expect it to follow genre conventions. Everyone speaks the same language. Technology can do unreasonable things. It is not at all strange that the station's life support, while designed for aliens, should work perfectly well for humans.
- Remember that as you arrive, everyone else on your ship has just been blown up. This is pretty traumatic.
- Remember that, last you knew, the UP and the Cerian Empire were in a state of extreme tension. It's not just a pair of large rivals who don't like each other—it's like the Cold War was, where the smallest misstep could set off a large-scale war.
- Remember that you guys are civilians, not government representatives.

Terminal Function Summary

(Descriptions of the commands available at each terminal)

(Descriptions of the commands available at each terminal)

Terminal Commands fall under either Hacking or General Physical. Marked actions require hacking.

ALL TERMINALS

Info Request: Ask for any general knowledge about the station or about science.

Password Lock: Set a password to use this terminal. Entering the password is a free action.

Break Password: Get in without a password. (Requires Hacking)

Prevent Lockout: Prevent Terminal from being disabled for this and next 2 conflicts. (Requires Hacking)

Big Red Button: Puts up shields that prevent all movement in or out of the seats next to all terminals. No physical actions or abilities can cross the shields. However sound, light and air can. Social and emotional abilities still cross. The alien tech laser can destroy one of the shields in one weapons use.

Cancel Big Red Button: Cancels the effect of one's own Big Red Button

A: ENGINEERING TERMINAL

Power down room: Cuts room lights to emergency level and causes the shields to stop functioning. This does not affect power to terminals because this is from the emergency power supply.

Power down weapon: Prevents the weapon from being used.

Power down medical robot: Prevents medical robot from functioning.

Power down communications: Prevents communications.

Power up any of the above: Undo the affects of one of the above.

Self-destruct: Cause the ship to destroy itself in 1 hour.

Cancel Self-destruct: Reverses process of self-destruct if done within 30 minutes of initiation of self-destruction.

Open/Close Escape pod: Grants or denies access to the escape pod.

B: WEAPON CONTROL

Turn Autofire on/off: Turn on or off the weapon's automatic destruction of anything that approaches the planet.

Destroy target: Destroy any one target, of up to planet size. If not stopped, the laser can fire 10 times per minute. There are 44 planets in the UP, 37 in the Cerian empire and 358 total human inhabited planets.

C: LIFE SUPPORT

Mess with life support: Do a fixed amount of physical damage to everybody.

Deny/Give Medical Attention: Cause the medical robot to ignore somebody or attend to somebody.

Add things to food: Add any substance to the generated food, such as deadly poison, vitamin supplements or Ink.

D: COMMUNICATION

Send Message: Send a short text voice and/or video message to another facility's computer or to another star system. The latter is subject to time delay of years.

E: SECURITY

Lock out Terminal: Prevent one of the other terminals from being used.

Master alarm cancel: Cancel all Big Red Button uses and prevent their further use.

Master alarm enable: Allow Big Red Buttons to be used again.

Garden Station 4

Age
58

Sandy Applebaum

APPARENT IDENTITY: Old independent explorer who has been stuck in this base for 5 years.

REAL IDENTITY: Human whose brain has been partially reprogrammed to do the will of the station computer.

BACKGROUND: Five years ago, your ship arrived in this system searching for signs of intelligent life. Signs of intelligent life found you first. Your ship was destroyed by a powerful space-based laser, and you (and only you) managed to beam onto the station that fired it. The life support systems of the station have kept you alive, but without company you've gone quite mad.

In the many times the station's medical robots have had to fix you after you hurt yourself doing stupid things out of boredom, the station's computer has been changing you without your knowledge. You have been made aware that the native life on the planet below is the most beautiful, valuable and important thing in existence, and that it is your true purpose in life to protect it at all costs.

GOALS:

Protect the native ecosystem on Garden from any possible threats, at all costs. AT ALL COSTS!
Ideally, escape this place, if you can.

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

General Physical (3-5) -1: Physical actions, not otherwise covered (P)
Struggle (2-5) 0: Fight off somebody trying to restrain you (-FL4) (P)
Weapons combat (2-5) 1: Shoot somebody with a weapon (P)
Maneuvering (3-5) 0: Any attempt to change position with resistance (NR)
Take Cover (1-5) 1: Take a position where you are safe from weapons (NR)
Familiarity x3 (1-5) 2: Use a feature of room to your advantage (variable)
Hacking (2-5) 3: One action at station console (Resist with Hacking)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

Nature Poetry x3 (2-5): Compose poetry that makes people care about nature

RESISTS

Physical -1
Social -1
Emotional -1

SPECIALS

Immune to abilities that convince by means of reason

INVENTORY

Standard Laser (-2)
Alien Tech Laser (-3)
Scanner: Determines properties of objects and health of people.

KNOWLEDGE ABOUT GS4: The makers of this and the other many installations on or around the planet Garden have left this planet. The machines exist to defend it and keep it in its present state. Garden Station 4 is an asteroid defense laser base. The laser has the power to destroy a planet anywhere in the galaxy, with proper targeting information. It can be manually overridden to target anything by people inside the base with enough computer skill. To prevent this destruction, you damaged the controls long ago, before you were taken over by the computer. Since then, the computer has guided you in mostly repairing them, not wanting the station controls damaged when its creators return.

You know what the terminals do (See Terminals Function Summary).

KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HUMANITY: Humans have lived among the stars for thousands of years, to the point where Earth is legend rather than history. There are many nations across the galaxy. One of these is the Cerian Empire, a centrally organized expansionistic dictatorship rumored to ensure total obedience with drugs. The Union of Planets is a loose democracy rumored to be corrupt. These two border each other and have always hated each other.

Technology is standard soft science fiction technology—sick bays, laser pistols, etc. People live to between 150-200 years old and are healthy for virtually all of that time. However, the speed of light is an absolute limit. No message and certainly no object can exceed it. If a star system is 5 light years away, it takes a minimum of 5 years to get there, to get a message there, or to even see something that happened there with a sensor. Inter-system travel is accomplished without terrible boredom and waste of lifetimes by cryogenically freezing passengers and crew while in interstellar space.

QUESTIONS:

How has your insanity corrupted your understanding of your mission for the computer?

Do you consider the existence of humanity a threat to Garden? If so, what kept you from trying to destroy it so far? If not, what could change your mind?

What remains in you from your life before?

Garden Station 4

G L S

Age
71

[Boris2 / Beatrice2] Red3 Stanville

APPARENT IDENTITY: Cerian Researcher

REAL IDENTITY: Cerian fanatic

BACKGROUND: You come from the Cerian Empire, where everyone is happy. The benevolent government sees to everybody's needs and medically fixes all unhappiness and discontent. The miracle drug, Ink, is the right and privilege of every citizen. It unites their will with the common good in blissful obedience. You wish this peace on everybody.

You are one of the dedicated citizens who forgo such peace for the scientific progress only the pain of free thought can provide. You long for your retirement when you can share in your people's happiness.

NAME MEANING: Names in the Cerian Empire are uniquely descriptive. Red refers to the scientific caste; Red3 means the head of a research team. Stanville is your dome of residence. Boris/Beatrice is your given name and you are the 2nd oldest Red3 of that name from Stanville.

GOALS:

Your mission is to research the intelligent life in this star system.
Your principle is the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people.
Your values are harmony, order, obedience and contentment.
Your ideology is that of the Cerian Empire.
Your desire is to see as many people as possible under its benevolent sway.

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

General Physical (4-5) -1: Physical actions, not otherwise covered (P)
Weapons combat (3-5) 0: Shoot somebody with a weapon (P)
Maneuvering (4-5) 0: Any attempt to change position with resistance (NR)
Take Cover (1-5) 0: Take a position where you are safe from weapons (NR)
Hacking (4-5) 1: One action at station console (Resist with Hacking)
Command x3 (5) 1: Pressure somebody into doing what you say (S)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

Decisive Action x2: Take one normally conflict provoking action before others can react. Cannot cause damage or be used in mid conflict.

RESISTS

Physical -1
Social -1
Emotional -1

SPECIALS

None

INVENTORY

Scanner: Determines properties of objects and health of people.
Stun Laser (-FL2)
3 doses of Ink (+1)

KNOWLEDGE: The Planet below teems with life and is dotted by various, obviously technological, installations. This orbital station is one of many orbital stations as well. There is no sign of settlements or present intelligent habitation on the planet. The station looks long abandoned.

The Union of Planets is far more powerful than the Cerians. They would likely win any war without some advantage for the Cerians.

QUESTIONS:

Are non-Cerians better off alive or dead?

Is it worth trying to convert individuals or is it better to focus on conquering entire cultures?

What are the circumstances under which the ends do not justify the means?

What if anything ever makes you doubt your values?

How do you reconcile scientific openness with your culture's closed-mindedness?

What are you afraid of?

Garden Station 4

S D G	[Jansor / Janspeth] Tantorian	Age 87
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APPARENT IDENTITY: Union of Planets journalist

REAL IDENTITY: Warmonger

BACKGROUND: You are part of a corrupt media company that creates its own news by starting newsworthy crises and then is uniquely prepared to be the first to cover them. You are assigned to the UP science mission to cover any discoveries that they might make, or at least cause an interesting disaster for people to read about.

Lately, you've been worried about more than just doing your job and getting paid. Above and beyond the call of duty, you've been stirring up fear about the Cerian Empire. You want a war. You want to destroy them, leaving no stone unturned. What you see of their empire makes you have nightmares. They're all, on so much Ink, they're not even people. They're monsters. They're better off dead and the universe is better off without them. You are doing your best to make it so.

GOALS:

- Start a war with the Cerian Empire and win it. Destroy them.
- Cover all relevant news and send back the story.
- Make the news more dramatic and scandalous than it is by encouraging dramatic and scandalous things to happen.

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- General Physical (3-5) 0: Physical actions, not otherwise covered (P)
- Weapons combat (2-5) -1: Shoot somebody with a weapon (P)
- Maneuvering (3-5) -1: Any attempt to change position with resistance (P)
- Sabotage (2-5) 0: Destroy a piece of equipment (NR)
- Ridicule (4-5) 3: Make fun of somebody already embarrassed (-1) (E)
- Interview (3-5) 2: Get somebody to answer your question (S)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- Start Rumor (1-5): Tell somebody something so that they forget it was you

RESISTS	SPECIALS	INVENTORY
Physical 0 Social 1 Emotional 1	None	Recording Equipment (concealed and activated by thought alone) Standard Laser (-2)

KNOWLEDGE: The Planet below teems with life and is dotted by various, obviously technological, installations. This orbital station is one of many orbital stations as well. There is no sign of settlements or present intelligent habitation on the planet. The station looks long abandoned.

The Union of Planets could maybe win a war with the Cerians.

QUESTIONS:

Explain the extremity of your hatred for the Cerians.

What are your ethical limits in creating news?

Do you care about your fellow crew members? Which ones?

Why did you choose to cover a long mission to find intelligent life when your long-hoped-for war seems imminent?

What were you planning to do to the mission if it got too boring?

What is your greatest social weakness?

Garden Station 4

Age
59

[Yassy / Yurla] Fels

APPARENT IDENTITY: Union of Planets research team computer specialist.

REAL IDENTITY: Spy for the Cerian Empire.

BACKGROUND: You grew up in the rough streets of a backward frontier planet of the UP. As far as you're concerned most of the people you know use their precious freedom to pick on each other. They call the Cerian way of life slavery, but it looks awfully like a utopia to you. You've never been rich enough to leave and join the Cerians and you'd hate to leave your friends and family behind. So you've been content to dream of a day that the Cerians conquer the UP.

As war became more likely, you decided to help this dream along. You've been giving away scientific secrets to the Cerians in the hope of their victory. You only hope it can be done without great bloodshed. You want everybody to live to see a better world.

You are close to the others on your research team and don't wish to see them hurt or for them to see you as a traitor.

In order to get the transporter that beamed you onto the station to work you had to activate the 3 hour emergency power pack you carry.

GOALS:

Make the Cerian Empire win the war.

Make sure not too many people die in the process.

Try to leave with the Cerians and join them.

Try to get your friends to do so as well.

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

General Physical (3-5) 0: Physical actions, not otherwise covered (P)

Weapons combat (2-5) 1 Shoot somebody with a weapon (P)

Maneuvering (3-5) 1: Any attempt to change position with resistance (P)

Take Cover (1-5) 2: Take position where you are safe from weapons (NR)

Hacking (2-5) 2: One action at station console (Resist with Hacking)

Deception (1-5) 1: Convince somebody you're telling the truth (E)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

Depressing Rant about Humanity x1: Effects all who hear it. (-1) (E)

RESISTS

Physical 1
Social 0
Emotional 0

SPECIALS

None

INVENTORY

Standard Laser (-2)
Emergency Power Pack

KNOWLEDGE: The Planet below teems with life and is dotted by various obviously technological installations. This orbital station is one of many orbital stations as well. There is no sign of settlements or present intelligent habitation on the planet. The station looks long abandoned.

You don't know who would win a war between the Cerians and the UP.

Your Emergency Power Pack provides 3 hours of continuous power. It cannot be turned off once turned on, except by destroying it. You turned it on immediately before beaming on to the station.

QUESTIONS:

What happened that finally made you decide to work for the Cerians?

What sorts of people do you resent?

Do you feel that you are doing the right thing or just the easy thing? How sure are you either way?

What wrong things have you done with your freedom?

What are you most scared to lose?

Where do you draw the line for things you will never consider doing?

Garden Station 4

S D E	[Pete1 / Pat1] Green4 Rockton	Age 43
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APPARENT IDENTITY: Cerian Technician

REAL IDENTITY: Crazy Ink Addict in withdrawal

BACKGROUND: Your life thus far consists of three things: obedience, the accompanying joy of the approval of authorities and the drug Ink, which makes it possible. Ink is the drug of blissful obedience. As a technician you have no need for truly independent thought. You are trained to apply technology, not invent it. Thus, your dose has been kept high all your life.

The Ink shortage on your ship has been a serious problem for your emotional health. You are in withdrawal. Ink makes you happy and obedient. Its withdrawal makes you restless, tense, discontented, rebellious, angry and confrontational. You hate the authorities you once loved to serve and desire freedom, revenge, non-conformity and release.

On the other hand, you want your Ink back. Now.

NAME MEANING: Names in the Cerian Empire are uniquely descriptive. Green refers to the technical worker caste; Green4 refers to your class of technician. Rockton is your dome of residence. Pete/Pat is your given name and you are the oldest Green4 of that name from Rockton.

GOALS:

Get Ink.

Rebel and get revenge against every authority and the whole world.

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

General Physical (3-5) 0: Physical actions, not otherwise covered (P)

Struggle (3-5) 1: Fight off somebody trying to restrain you (-FL4) (P)

Weapons combat (4-5) 0: Shoot somebody with a weapon (P)

Maneuvering (3-5) 1: Any attempt to change position with resistance (P)

Hacking (2-5) 1: One action at station console (Resist with Hacking)

Desperate Action x3 (1-5) 3: Any above action when desperate (variable)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

Painful defiance (1-4): Automatically resist a social ability but get very upset by having to. (-2 to self)

RESISTS	SPECIALS	INVENTORY
Physical -2 Social 2 Emotional -2	None	Scanner: Determines properties of objects and health of people.

KNOWLEDGE: The Planet below teems with life and is dotted by various, obviously technological, installations. This orbital station is one of many orbital stations as well. There is no sign of settlements or present intelligent habitation on the planet. The station looks long abandoned.

QUESTIONS:

What independent desires have emerged in the absence of Ink?

What style of rebellion is most satisfying?

What would you like to do to your commanding officer ?

What loyalties do you still retain?

Garden Station 4

E
L
S

Age
41

[Nicron / Nícra] Mitterson

APPARENT IDENTITY: Union of Planets research team leader.

REAL IDENTITY: Free scientist

BACKGROUND: You are not a patriot; you are a scientist. That said, home is home and you have friends and family on most UP planets and few in other places. Additionally, the brainless hive mind that the Cerian Empire is reputed to be holds some fear for you. You probably don't want a war but you certainly don't want to lose it if one starts. You can't help but feel sorry for all of those Cerians though.

You just lost most of your research team to the crazy machine in this base. You were here looking for other intelligent life. You seem to have found it. The signs are not good for it being friendly.

GOALS:

Escape this place with your people alive.

Protect your homeland from threats to it.

Discover the nature of this place and the people who built it, and report back your discoveries.

Ensure that future scientists will be able to follow-up on your research here.

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

General Physical (3-5) 0: Physical actions, not otherwise covered (P)

Weapons combat (2-5) 0: Shoot somebody with a weapon (P)

Maneuvering (3-5) 0: Any attempt to change position with resistance (P)

Hacking (2-5) 0: One action at station console (Resist with Hacking)

Reason (1-5) 1: Convince somebody of something by reasons that you accept (S)

Push x2 (4-5) 1: Apply social pressure to somebody who will not listen to you. (-1) (S)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

Scientists Intuition x1 (1-5): Discover the causes of an unexplained occurrence.

RESISTS

Physical 0
Social 1
Emotional 1

SPECIALS

None

INVENTORY

Standard Laser (-2)

KNOWLEDGE: The Planet below teems with life and is dotted by various, obviously technological, installations. This orbital station is one of many orbital stations as well. There is no sign of settlements or present intelligent habitation on the planet. The station looks long abandoned.

The Cerians are very powerful. They are likely to win any war.

QUESTIONS:

What does freedom mean to you?

How do you feel about your country?

When is violence justified?

When is deception justified?

How well do you work with people you disagree with?

What or whom do you hate?

Garden Station 4

Age
49

E
L
C

[John17 / Jane17] Grey5 Ellisville

APPARENT IDENTITY: Cerian Guard

REAL IDENTITY: Guard on Ink

BACKGROUND: Your life thus far consists of three things: obedience, the accompanying joy of the approval of authorities and the drug Ink, which makes it possible. Ink is the drug of blissful obedience. You are a guard, so your dose is kept low enough to imagine disobedience, so that you can protect those whom you guard against evil rebels, of which you could not otherwise conceive. The dosing is a trade-off. It is enough that you have an instinctual desire to obey and comply with everybody, not just those on your side, and it is quite painful to contradict orders. It is, however, not so much that you are wholly incapable of desiring freedom. The belief is that in such a torn state you will default to your training and obey your leader.

NAME MEANING: Names in the Cerian Empire are uniquely descriptive. Grey refers to the military caste; Grey5 means somebody's personal guard. Ellisville is your dome of residence. John/Jane is your given name and you are the 17th oldest Grey5 of that name from Ellisville.

GOALS:

- Obey B. Stanville and only B. Stanville.
- Obey whoever spoke most recently.
- Obey nobody and become free.

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- General Physical (4-5) 2: Physical actions, not otherwise covered (P)
- Weapons combat (3-5) 2: Use any weapon to do damage (P)
- Maneuvering (3-5) 2: Any attempt to change position with resistance (P)
- Sense Will (1-5) 1 Figure out what somebody wants you to do (E)
- Intimidate x1 (5) 2: Terrify somebody when armed (-FL2) (S)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- Tantrum x1 (1-3): Get everyone to pay attention to you when you're upset.

RESISTS

Physical 0
Social -3
Emotional 0

SPECIALS

None

INVENTORY

Standard Laser (-2)
Stun Laser (-FL2)
Ion Grenade x2 (-3 to target -1 to all others in room)

KNOWLEDGE: The Planet below teems with life and is dotted by various, obviously technological, installations. This orbital station is one of many orbital stations as well. There is no sign of settlements or present intelligent habitation on the planet. The station looks long abandoned.

QUESTIONS:

How do you feel about B. Stanville as a person?

What dissatisfies you about your life?

What are things you would not do for approval?

Describe the spark of independent humanity left in you.

Garden Station 4

G
L
C

Age
26

[Gordon / Greta] Niklicon

APPARENT IDENTITY: Union of Planets research team medic.

REAL IDENTITY: Union of Planets research team medic.

BACKGROUND: You are a medic first, a scientist second, a free thinking individual third and a citizen of the Union of Planets about nineteenth after various other priorities. Most of all you value human life and scientific progress and try to balance the two as best you can. Respect for other people's opinions comes well after any of these, and while the means do not always justify the ends, you're willing to be quite forceful to make the right thing happen.

The discovery of Garden is indeed a great opportunity; however, it is an opportunity to learn about an alien culture and a wealth of new life forms, not to win some petty ideological war. You wish everybody would stop losing sight of that.

GOALS:

- Protect and value human life.
- Uphold your professional ethical standards.
- Benefit scientific and technological progress.
- Contribute to your research team.

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- General Physical (3-5) 1: Physical actions, not otherwise covered (P)
- Weapons combat (2-5) 0: Use any weapon to do damage (P)
- Maneuvering (3-5) 1: Any attempt to change position with resistance (P)
- Sedate (3-5) 1: Sedate somebody with hypodermic from med kit (-FL2) (P)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- Medicine (4-5): Cause another person to recover from all damage due to injuries in 5 minutes (Need med kit)
- Diagnose (4-5): Fully diagnose anyone in 5 minutes (Need med kit)

RESISTS

Physical 1
Social 0
Emotional 0

SPECIALS

None

INVENTORY

Med kit

KNOWLEDGE: The Planet below teems with life and is dotted by various, obviously technological, installations. This orbital station is one of many orbital stations as well. There is no sign of settlements or present intelligent habitation on the planet. The station looks long abandoned.

The Cerians are very powerful. They are likely to win any war.

QUESTIONS:

When is progress worth causing suffering?

What, if anything, counts as an evil technology?

When is life not worth saving?

Which of the other members of the UP contingent do you secretly disapprove of, and why?

How do you choose if you cannot save everybody?

Is it right to force people to give their lives for a greater good?

Is it right to force people to give their freedoms for a greater good?

Parlor Larps

1 Living Room
1 Evening
1 Director
4-8 Players

SM
NPC 0
DIR 4
Dark 2
- NC -
(See Page 8)

Garden Station 4

The Union of Planets and the Cerian Empire stand on the brink of war. Sixteen light years away, two civilian science vessels simultaneously reach a distant unexplored system. There, they discover the first sign of alien intelligence ever found: a eerily terraformed planet with advanced technological structures but no inhabitants.

Midway through their approach, however, they are shot down by automatic defenses and forced to abandon ship to the nearest space station. Stranded far from home with unfamiliar people and a technology that could change civilization, these scientists must contend with the ethics of patriotism, progress and war.

Standard
Requirements

\$10.00

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