



THE LONG RIM

Piracy, mechs, and mixed drinks at the edge of known space

a supplement for LANCER RPG



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The Long Rim

Towards the proximal end of the Orion arm, far from Cradle and the Capital worlds of humanity, is a patch of space with no official designation; this “empty” corridor is known as the Long Rim. The Rim is an “off-map” territory, a blank space on the galactic chart not for want of travel but for a dearth of habitable worlds. On paper, it is a barren no-man’s land choked with space junk, littered with mined-out rocks and the remnants of old battles — a place where humanity’s debris coalesces either through the complex ballet of competing gravities, or by deliberate direction.

In reality, the Long Rim is the primary thoroughfare for ships in transit between the most distant active blink gate from the galactic core, Rao Co Station, and the Dawnline Shore, a hotly contested frontier territory. Often passed over by the larger narratives that grip the galaxy, the Long Rim has become one of the largest and most heavily trafficked sub-blink shipping lanes in known space, moving millions of tons of food, medical supplies, construction materials, electronics, colonists, and sensitive materiel in a steady stream.

The Rim is not the transitive, liminal space that most who cross it assume it to be. There are hundreds of habitats throughout the Rim, first built out of necessity by the initial waves of colonists and prospectors to the Dawnline Shore centuries ago. It is a place of extreme hardship and loose regulations, so far from Union’s Three Pillars as to be ignorant of them; that distance — literal and cultural — makes it a place of opportunity as much as it is danger. In the Rim, scarcity is king, and the stories you hear at the station bars are not tales of Union deployments to worlds crying for help, but of cash made, reputations won, and minutes of fresh water secured.

Pilgrims and wanderers, landhunters, small-time mercenaries and charter captains, Horizon collectivists and Horus adherents — the people in Union’s margins find a perilous, but potentially profitable, home in the Long Rim. It is a wild place, often violent, with no central power to claim total control. As much as there can be a consensus of the Rim’s population, a lack of a central power is not a bad thing: yes, life can be fast and cheap, but it can be free. Free of Union’s vast bureaucracy, a person can disappear; free of Union’s vast bureaucracy, legends can be made.

Of course, only the people who live get to tell their stories. Ask the bodies drifting in the void of space what they think of the Rim; ask the people whose ships are turned from any port what riches stand to be made; ask the people who glance to the muscled goon in the shadow of the bar before they speak to you what freedom they feel.

Out in the Rim, in the “empty” border between prosperity and promise, Union’s utopia seems distant; it is a place whose population — such that they can be described as a population — will need to lean on the Rim’s beguiling promise, and save themselves.

Life In The Void

There are no habitable worlds in the Rim; if you live in the Rim, you live on a free-floating station or habitat built into a directed asteroid, and are manifestly aware of the necessities and borders places on your life.

By and large, the state of life in the Rim is precarious. Breathable air is recycled, processed, extracted, filtered, and piped-in by oxygen miners, or sold to the Rim's elite by O2 artisans. Sunlight and potable water are rented by the minute, distributed to local populations by utility barons who sit on piles of local scrip, wealthy enough to own their own stations; what limited green space there is, is confined to heavily-defended greenhouses — largely the only neutral zones in the Rim.

The Rim's population — indigenous and migratory — by necessity are resourceful, canny, and have a cultural impulse towards preparing for the worst. In an environment where a loose bolt or a water leak could spell death for you, your family, and your neighbors, there is an imperative towards rigor, awareness, and triple-checking your seals, tools, and self. People in the Rim, far from how intergalactic media often depicts them, are generally cooperative and collaborative; out in the Rim, there's no one but you and the people on your ship, station, or skiff — better that folks work together and live than stand alone and die.

The Rim is densely but unevenly inhabited, with the permanent populations of the Rim localized to a handful of large stations, and continues to grow as traffic between Rao Co Station and the Dawnline Shore persists.

Some of these stations are little more than a group of freighters connected via reinforced umbilical, leashed together via matching speed; others are cities built into and across massive asteroids, home to hundreds of thousands of souls. Most fall somewhere in the middle: humble or hidden stations with fresh-enough air, good enough food, and a permanent population numbering in the hundreds to the thousands. These stations' functions vary from systemic and/or organic fueling, to trade bazaars, to shipyards, to smuggling havens, to military barracks, and myriad other necessary functions geared either towards the ships that pass through or the populations that live in the Rim.

Most stations are, functionally, completely outside Union or corpro law. If they have an organizing or governing body, the station(s) will be under that body's own system of judgement and justice. A good rule of thumb in the Rim is that the larger the station, the more local law it'll have — though whether that is a good thing or a bad thing is entirely down to one's predilections. A little less than half of all stations in the Rim have permanent, local populations that have resided on those stations for generations across hundreds of realtime years. The rest of the Rim's population at any given time is itinerant, passing through on work, leave, or in migration.

With artificial gravity not stable enough for civilian use, permanent habitats must generate it via spin gravity. Smaller stations that are little more than a cluster of freighters lashed together can fire oppositional thrusters to create this spin gravity; Large, purpose-built stations often feature a ring, drum, or series of such oriented around a central spine or terminus that spin at speeds enough to create between .8 and 1 gees on their inner surfaces. Some spin a little bit faster or a little bit slower, creating environments that are a little bit higher gravity, and environments that are a bit lower, respectively. The inside surfaces of these spinning features are gravitational zones where people live and work; the closer one moves to the center of the station, the lower the gravitational force becomes, until it is essentially null.

A few of the more impressive stations have very large drums or toroids dozens of kilometers in diameter and feature titanic solar nets that generate artificial sunlight, allowing the growing of crops and the appearance of an approximation of terrestrial life inside. These stations are major hubs and represent extreme feats of engineering, usually the product of significant investment of time and resources from a corpro, a Union department, or massively wealthy private Diasporan individual.

Outside the 'Net

Due to the lack of direct Union presence, large portions of the Rim — essentially all areas outside of the major stations — are not yet tapped into the omninet. Recognition campaigns by some stations proximal to Rao Co Station and the Dawnline Shore are ongoing, but it appears that it will take some time before total coverage is established.

Local populations speak of blinkspace “dead zones” where, even equipped with omnihooks, one cannot tap into the omninet — by all accounts an impossible phenomenon. Reasons range from rumors of Aunic infiltration, to single-point entities, to Egregorian or Voladoran ghosts, and more. Both Union and corpro paralogisticians have been sent to follow up on these rumors, but the liminal reality of the Rim has made tracking down specific answers to manifold legends a difficult, dangerous prospect.

In practice, this means that many of the luxuries enjoyed by the Core worlds (and even the colonial worlds of the Dawnline Shore) — omni communications, printers, and other technologies that rely on blinkspace — become extremely spotty and prone to error. Stations are often located as much around points of good blink coverage as they are ideal realspace locations.

Piracy and The Enterprise Agreement

To be a pirate in a lawless space is an odd thing; your victims are often those who the state — if any cared to send their forces into the Rim and attempt to annex it — would also call pirate. Small-scale raiding, robbery, and larceny is common across the Rim between permanent and transient populations both; “big” hauls — waylaying a colony ship in transit, or a science or corpro vessel on assignment — are comparatively rare, but dramatically more common in the Rim than in any other sector of space. Still, transit through the Rim is largely unavoidable until the Dawnline Shore’s blink gate is complete; until that time comes, one must make the run. It is best to transit prepared.

Due to its proximity to vulnerable shipping lanes, pirates and raiders are the main problem major powers have to deal with when calculating the costs of conducting colonial, humanitarian, or business operations that pass through the area. While official missions and expeditions of the major powers — IPS-N, Harrison Armory, the Karrakin Trade Barons, and so on — are generally left unmolested by the majority of pirates and voidjacks in the Rim, smaller enterprises are not so lucky.

Major powers recommend their people — if the need to cross the Rim — do so in numbers, with security, a reputable guide or fixer, and plan to stop only at pre-approved stations. However, a full transit package is expensive, and most ventures bound for the Shore or the Core only have the funds necessary to procure one to two of the four necessary services. These vessels tend to be the primary victims of piracy in the Rim.

Contrary to popular depictions in omni media dramas of pirates as bloodthirsty marauders, most piracy in the Rim is undertaken by part-time groups organized by the venture, not permanent organizations or long-standing crews.

The permanent, large pirate ventures that do exist in the Rim are essentially armed professionals staffed by local bureaucrats who, once a passing ship is secured, board to collect a transit tax of the goods from the unlucky ship's manifest. These taxes are often exorbitant, but are used to fund the survival of the masses who call the Rim their home; of course, the spoils only trickle down and are not evenly distributed besides.

More vicious, violent examples of piracy — kidnapping, trafficking, and wholesale looting and fencing of captured ships — are common enough; even the “armed bureaucrat” pirates are not above using violence to get what they want. But the general consensus of pirate enterprises is to not be too vicious, unless they risk a united, persistent crackdown on their employing enterprise from one (or more) of the galaxy's major powers.

These formal pirate groups generally operate under the allowance of larger enterprises — what pass as the central powers of the Long Rim — that, while libertarian or entrepreneurial on their face, are primarily funded off the taxes they levy on local populations, as well as the spoils they receive from the looting, pillaging, kidnapping, trafficking, and mercenary operations undertaken by the the myriad groups under their employ. These enterprises are a major and entrenched presence in the Rim and continue to be the focus of corpro and Union-directed military operations to secure the area.

The associated enterprises range in their darwinian cruelty, but even the “kindest” of them are often adversarial to the major powers while maintaining an extractive, total control over the stations within their spheres of dominance. However, they maintain loose diplomacy with their neighbors, trading in goods, services, and organizations, ensuring that no one of them is too strong as to become dominant and tip the balance of power. They are widely regarded as oppressive by the populations of the Long Rim, but in the face of their power there is little an average person can do; as with anything in the Rim, survival is the most important thing, and most populations knuckle under and choose to work with their local enterprise rather than against them.

Pacification and Persistence

Though many small-scale attempts have been made to secure the Rim, the area remains stubbornly untamable for two main reasons — cost, time, and danger of the potential operation notwithstanding.

First, the enormous number of uncatalogued and extralegal stations among the debris and asteroid fields make it extremely hard to chase down fleeing pirates; the sheer scale of the area, coupled with the lack of official knowledge and data, make it easy to disappear if one is intent on remaining hidden.

The second issue is that most all small scale piracy or raiding operations are committed by desperate families and populations as a primary means of subsistence. It is often difficult for outsiders to distinguish pirates from a given station's local population: an individual might spend the bulk of their time farming hydroponic vegetables, but when word comes of a vulnerable cargo ship in the area and a crew being assembled to go and raid it, they volunteer for a promise of a percentage of the haul. Enforcement applied with too heavy, cruel, or

ignorant a hand can lead to the death of dozens or even hundreds of families waiting on an unregistered station for their lifelines to return.

While the associated enterprises may well be rooted out in time, “rooting out” piracy in the Rim risks eradicating hundreds of unique cultures and the populations that host them via careless, narrow-mission uses of state force; a gentler hand is needed in the long run, unless one is not motivated by humanitarian concerns.

Station Generator

The Long Rim is full of stations of an extraordinary range of size, function, and legality. You can use the below tables to generate one or write your own based on the prompts provided.

Station Seed

The type, detail, and size of any given station in the Rim are too numerous to be listed in their totality. Here is a table with some examples of what a station out in the Long Rim might look like.

d20	Type
1-2	Abandoned Union Navy shipyard, purchased and sold over and over to successive owners until it was eventually hauled out to the Rim. Population can be minor to massive.
3-4	A pirate colony based around an old surveying ship permanently fused to its escorts. Now, nominally governed by an anarchist pirate queen. Keeps its doors open to outsiders. Moves every 3-5 local days to avoid detection. Bristling with weapons and thick with armed guards.
5-6	IPS-Northstar refueling station, its location widely known. A neutral ground for trade in goods and services. Heavily trafficked by IPS-N’s Trunk Security and serves as a local base for their patrol cutters. The central ring is full of the parked ships of charter captains ready and willing to run any job you need, for the right price.
7-8	A long-abandoned mining colony, drilled deep into an enormous asteroid. Most habitation is around its reactor core, where it is warm. The hundreds of miles of tunnels outside are mostly empty, you think. People disappear here often.
9-10	An old, quiet Union Naval outpost, barnacled with merchants and traders, small diplomatic offices for the major powers, serviceable bars, official and unofficial checkpoints, and people willing to get you what you need if you’ve got the manna to cover it. Staffed by bored Union personnel mostly there to run customs checks.
11-12	An enormous domed Volador trade bazaar with stable artificial gravity. The Voladores have not come in hundreds of subjective years, despite originally building this structure. Outside construction has largely taken it over, and now it serves as the capital station for a powerful enterprise.
13-14	A collection of salvaged freighters, leashed together into a massive, rambling habitat full of dark corners, hidden warrens, and secrets. Can, on paper, be moved if enough of the old ship drives can be re-ignited.
15-16	A community of hydroponic farming habitats and humble agricultural families built among a collection of leashed asteroids, with a central hub for trade. Rumored to be a popular “retirement” station for Horizon collectivists, maybe even home to a “free” NHP. Rather calm and nice.
17-18	A decommissioned Armory legion post from the first Dawnline colonization push, now a playground for long-haul freighter crews. Filled with nightclubs, gambling dens, and pleasure houses — as with most places in the Rim, anything goes here if you’ve got the manna. Popular with professional pirates from many of the enterprises, who meet there as a neutral ground to have a good time.
19-20	A hollowed-out asteroid or massive cylinder ship with an expansive station built on the inside surface, spinning at a comfortable 1g. The metropolis on the inside is home to hundreds of thousands of souls, and is petitioning Union for official state recognition.

Station Name

Station names are as varied as the populations that call them home. Here are a few suggestions — six per line — to help get you started.

d20	Name
1	Hades, Hellmouth, Pandemonium, Devildance, Tartarus, Umber...
2	Deliverance, Salvation, Gate of Heaven, Nirvana, Gloria, Bardo...
3	Persistence, Samsara, Resolute, Redoubt, Dauntless, Stableground...
4	Far Point, Highwater, Overlander, Horizon's End, Rim 'o The World, End...
5	Borea, Tundra, Percipita, Cumulus, Alpine, Frost...
6	Petergate, Harper's Hope, Rose Landing, Salahville, Ramahall, Law's Point...
7	Fat Chance, Hardly Truly, Rollem, Freerad, Lucky, "... Casino...
8	Raftland, The Leash, Harbor, Dry-dock, Null Pier, "... Maritime...
9	Terminus, Interchange, Switch, Hub, Terminal, Apex...
10	Barbadas, Arruda, Signas, Mollitempos, Tzatazi, Garudanas...
11	"..." Hole, "... Pit, "... Depths, "... Deep, Lower "..., Under "...
12	Goose, Eagle, Falcon, Raptor, Avia, Duck...
13	"..." Fields, "... Garden, "... Orchards, "... Forest, Nest, Dell...
14	Icebreaker, Derrick, Well, Carver, Site, Drill...
15	EM 51817
16	Nasser's Cleft, "... Canyon, "... Fissure, Spires, Arches, Cliff...
17	The Olympic, Sunstar, The Heavens, Comet's Tail, The Glittering Arc, Diadem 1...
18	Saynomore, Anythingelse, Cannagetcha, Pickr'Poison, Namaprice, F'sale...
19	The Endless Gallery, Mirrorhell, The Silent Station, Derelict 42B, Titan, Solo Gate...
20	Nowhere, The Eye, Blink's Gate, Coma Station, Voidhall, The Concordance...

District Name

Stations that are large enough to have distinct areas often break those areas down into informally-named districts. Below is a list of district names that can be used as modifiers to describe areas of a single station — use this table if you need a quick name or a jumping off point to name your own.

d20	Sector
1	The Shambles
2	Dockside
3	“...” Fields
4	“...” Bay
5	Core
6	Mall
7	“...” Lower
8	Storage
9	Ring Central
10	Nest
11	The Chokey
12	Upper “...”
13	“...” Processing
14	River Street
15	Warrens
16	Down Central
17	Spacer’s Walk
18	Narrows
19	Spires
20	Geo-

Purpose

(roll for one major, or one major, one minor)

What's the primary purpose of the station?

What do people spend a lot of their time and labor doing, and why is it hanging here, in the void, with only a couple of inches of sheet metal between life and death?

d20	Type
1-2	Asteroid Mining
3-4	General resupply for freighters
5-6	Smuggling cove
7-8	Hydroponic or terrestrial-analogous farming
9-10	Open bazaar or trading hub
11-12	Entertainment and nightlife
13-14	Military post
15-16	Mercenary Haven/Drinking Hole
17-18	Last fuel stop before the void
19-20	Criminal enterprise

Local Quirk

(roll for one or two)

Every station has its own unique set of oddities or quirks - the kind of thing you'd get immediately pointed to as a visitor. A big enough station probably has dozens of points of interest, gathering spots, or cultural quirks, a small station might have one or two.

d20	Oddity
1	Open air produce market along the spinal corridor for local families (every three core standard days). The produce is grown in bags and tends to be oddly shaped and very juicy. Most spacers prefer it that way.
2	A wizened man who can see the future with about 50% accuracy for any given reading (you can roll for this if you like). He can't see into the future more than about a day or so and lives mostly off donations as a hermit. Claims to be ex-UIB and acquired his abilities during clandestine operations.
3	Large population of feral kraits. A krait is an approximately dog-sized crustacean that has adapted almost perfectly for life in space stations. They make excellent pets, produce very little waste, and consume very little food and water.
4	Cluttered chop shop for cyberware and prosthetics, as well as a low-cost wetware-installation and repair facility. Run by an aging doctor with increasingly poor hearing and eyesight, who enjoys healthy respect and business from the locals. Clean, despite appearances.

5	Daily water hub where locals must show up to receive their water ration. Has transformed over time into an impromptu social club and cafe where the local variety of tea and biscuits is served in bulk, and for very cheap. Remains open around the clock despite the distribution period only being a few hours.
6	Exposed thermal pipes where most of the locals do their cooking, despite the complaints from engineering. Sweltering and full of amazing smells.
7	HORUS technocult blister, attached to the side of the station by a punch corridor and a number of umbilicals. Trades for food with the locals in return for information services. Station admin steadfastly denies their existence, despite their operation being in plain sight.
8	Gang of station kids who will trade information for off-station food (candy is vastly preferred). They seem to be able to get into nearly everywhere on the station (including off-limits or clandestine areas) and are total shitkickers in a fight.
9	A man called "The Groundskeeper" who has a reputation as a master forger. He can spoof most IFF signatures, ship transponders, badges of office, or official papers - for a price. Lives in a ramshackle barge attached to the station, but ready to leave any time.
10	Home to an old Schedule 2 printer. In terrible shape and clogged with back-orders. Run by an overworked officer whose operating floor space is about 90% paperwork and old servers by volume.
11	"The best burger joint in the Orion arm", run by a Sparri techno-shaman who claims to have invented a new stasis freezing technique to keep meat fresh on long haul journeys. Don't ask too much about it or they get testy. The burgers live up to the hype.
12	A humble shrine or fine temple to Christ the Buddha, usually adorned with lanterns. Please remove shoes before entering.
13	Cramped but characterful cinema run by an enthusiast who grew up in the Rim. Slightly outdated and tends to get the most recent stuff from the Capital worlds pretty late; in the meantime, has well-curated programming of old films.
14	Opulent pleasure barge that has become stranded at the station for several weeks. The SSC executive who resides there is extremely upset at the refueling delay, which they expect is intentional, and is eager for help in freeing themselves from the administrative and bureaucratic red tape keeping them there.
15	Gambling and gaming hall built alongside the main concourse. Populated all all hours, doubles as a bar and smoking lounge. The popular Sparri board game kapkat is played here, and the sound of jingling machines can be heard up and down nearby areas of the station. Often hosts live shows and impromptu fights.
16	An inactive IPS-N Tortuga that has been melded into the station wall and serves as a power source. Seen as a mascot or guardian by locals.
17	Back-alley maintenance access corridor behind a bar where you can find Gliss. The crustaceans are a powerful narcotic and most people smoke them right out of the shells.
18	Overgrown hydro farm that has broken into the station's pipes, causing large parts of the station to be humid and lush with dark green or purple foliage. Rather than clear out the growth, the station managers have turned the overgrown areas into resources for station food, medicine, and trade goods.
19	Weapons dealer that does business out of an old apartment stack. Always has coffee brewing. Employs a large population of aging and imported IPS-N subalterns to do business. Friendly to you, but you know it's all business.
20	The House of Cats. Jazz cafe, bar, restaurant, gambling parlor, and house of courtesans. Never closed, extremely loud, and designed to drain all your loose manna or station credit. Garishly decorated in the style of old earth palatial estates. A fun time, but getting too attached is dangerous.

Problems

(roll for one or two)

Every station's got 'em.

By default these will begin to get worse without intervention from someone, usually the player characters.

Most of the time when stations go real bad, they tear themselves apart. Sometimes they live on as the population turns to raiding and piracy to survive.

d20	Problem
1	The station's orbit is decaying and it will fall into the nearest star/planetary body in the next year or so. Deadlock between engineering and leadership has prevented anything from being done about this.
2	A cycle of blood debts has led to a huge feud between several families on the station. Knife and gunfights in the street are common, and the local population that hasn't fled have gone into lockdown.
3	The station's life support is in desperate need of repair. Parts of the station have no light, air, or are massively hot or cold — to make matters worse, the engineering team sent into Life Support to fix the problem never fixed it, never returned, and won't respond to communications requests.
4	A Volador has died of (apparent) natural causes while on an emissary mission to the station: there is absolutely no protocol for how to deal with burial, and station leadership doesn't know how to get in contact with los Voladores to let them know.
5	The station admin's child has gone missing.
6	The station has a problematic infestation of unusually large predatory kraits plaguing the maintenance and hydroponics decks.
7	A corrupt political boss holds sway over station resources and refuses to budge without proper deference or bribes. They claim they are bringing order to the station, and have given the population an ultimatum delivered at the barrels of their security forces' guns: knuckle under, or get spaced.
8	There's been another gruesome murder, the third in a month. It's clear now: there's a serial killer on the station.
9	The stations' spin sections are out of alignment, and on occasion the wobbling toruses spin a little too close, causing "gravity" outages and wild fluctuations. It needs fixing, and soon: station engineers predict that, left unfixed, these gravity fluctuations could tear the station apart.
10	An unregistered skip vessel from the Dawnline Shore has docked at the station. The passengers claim to be political dissidents in need of sanctuary, parking a divisive debate aboard the station: some think they should be granted asylum, while others fret about the station's resource budget. All the while, an Armory (or Barony) patrol burns towards the station, sure to spark a confrontation when they arrive.
11	A pirate or marauder band has parked nearby and frequently raids the station or its visitors to exact tribute. The station's enterprise is refusing to send protection teams until the locals pony up and pay for missing protection payments, so the raids continue; the people are in need of help, but "helping" is sure to piss off both the marauder's enterprise <i>and</i> the local station's enterprise.
12	An apocalyptic cult has filtered through the station, placing some of their adherents in important infrastructure and security positions. Left unchecked, their eschatological designs will see the end of the station and — possibly — extend into nearby sectors of the Long Rim.

13	The station is a de-facto haven for narcotic smugglers. Gliss, Brighteyes, Gazer — whatever you want, you can get it here. The only problem is, these smugglers are unaffiliated, and a pair of rival enterprises seem ready to “negotiate” ownership, whether the station wants to or not.
14	Supplies are critically short and hoarding is commonplace; regular shipments have been “delayed” by a local cordon — either by an enterprise or one a more above-board power — and the locals are getting desperate for relief...
15	The station has grown in population enormous in recent years and is under strain; some factions argue that exodus is necessary, while others advocate for opening up long-sealed sections of the station and exploiting the open space. Those sections, though, have been sealed for a reason...
16	A popular revolution has recently overthrown the station’s previous owners and the situation is still volatile; the revolutionary group has issued a broad-band call for support and fighters, but this has also alerted a nearby enterprise that sees this as an opportunity for them to expand their own territory.
17	The station was recently abandoned by Harrison Armory, who pulled almost all funding, resources, and security and left without explanation. The local population, beleaguered, searches for answers, meanwhile a skeleton team of Armory personnel can be seen operating behind sealed sections of the station, unresponsive to the local populations’ petitions for information.
18	A Sparri mercenary company rolls through at regular intervals and trashes the place with wild partying. They’re good business, but they leave a <i>mess</i> , and it’s starting to grate on the locals.
19	A HORUS cell keeps threatening to redirect an asteroid into the station if they are not paid at regular intervals.
20	The station is a neutral territory for a number of Rim enterprises who use it as a marketplace and diplomatic hub — so when its main concourse is bombed, the enterprises all suspect each other, and the tenuous diplomatic arrangement begins to grow more and more tense...

Station NPC Generator

The inhabitants of the Long Rim tend to be an incredibly diverse crowd, even by the standards of the sixth millennium. Most folk are out at the edge of known space for work, but others are here to escape persecution, forge a new life, or get as far away from ‘civilization’ as possible.

Most people out in the rim are zero-g farmers or laborers but they don’t really tend to be the kinds of people to poke their neck out.

d20	Descriptor (Roll two)
1	Exhausted
2	Sexy
3	Filthy
4	Corpulent
5	Cocky
6	Starving
7	Gloomy
8	Stranded
9	Passionate
10	Loud
11	Stoic
12	Part-time
13	Sweaty
14	Cigarette-Smoking
15	Flamboyant
16	Beefy
17	Nervous
18	Gruff
19	Well-Armed
20	Thrifty

d20	Occupation
1	Foreman
2	Stevedore
3	Goon
4	“Sheriff”
5	Bureaucrat
6	Fence
7	Sex Worker
8	Security Guard
9	Gravity Racer
10	Political Boss
11	Nearlight drive technician
12	Monk
13	Station Engineer
14	Private Eye
15	Harbor, Charter, or Enterprise Pilot
16	Night Mayor
17	Marine
18	Urchin
19	Medical Technician
20	Bounty Hunter

d20	Alternate or Clandestine Occupation
1	Chop shop doctor
2	Petty Thief
3	Corpro Intelligence (Undercover)
4	Smuggler
5	Stowaway from the Core
6	Refugee from the Dawnline Shore
7	Exotic Flora and Fauna Dealer
8	Remote-Activated Killer
9	Swindler
10	Weapons dealer
11	Zero-g Farmer
12	Pilgrim
13	Ungrateful partisan
14	Muckraker
15	HORUS cell member
16	Local Fixer
17	Union or Armory Veteran
18	Addict (Brighteyes, Gliss, Gazer, etc)
19	Horizon Collectivist
20	Pit fighter

Quirk

Not every NPC needs a quirk, but if you want them to stick out a bit, you can roll on this table for some inspiration.

d20	Quirk
1	Oversized, distinctive, or notable hat or headgear.
2	One organic eye. The other is covered by an eye patch, is a noticeable prosthetic, or has been replaced with something decorative.
3	Old burn scars, visible even when clothed.
4	Constantly reaching for, moving with reference to, or tapping weapon.
5	Dresses in garish clothing
6	Often drunk or otherwise intoxicated
7	A pathological liar (you think)
8	Very well connected, or related to about half the station
9	Knows jack shit about mechs, lancers, or pilots, but pretends they do
10	Has an exotic pet
11	Much taller than a person born downwell due to life spent in artificial gravity.
12	Often carries pamphlets of Ungrateful, HORUS, or Horizon propaganda.
13	Has an excellent mental map of the station.
14	Wears cracked eyeglasses
15	Has one or more visibly cybernetic limbs, in poor repair and condition.
16	Former lancer.
17	Covered head to toe in Sparri saga tattoos, may or may not be Sparri.
18	Does not speak Common, but uses an automatic translator.
19	Impressive hair or facial hair
20	Often followed, willingly or not, by innumerable dock rats or street urchins

Motivations

Use these to figure out what an NPC wants, either as a primary motivation or as a job to offer to the player characters.

d20	Desire	d20	Object of Desire
1-2	Access to	1-2	Food
3-4	Safety of	3-4	Dangerous, rare, or expensive flora or fauna
5-6	Information on	5-6	Family
7-8	Transport for	7-8	Weapons
9-10	Possession of	9-10	Debt
11-12	Elimination of	11-12	High quality narcotics
13-14	Hiding of	13-14	Reputation
15-16	Cover for	15-16	Blackmail
17-18	Return of	17-18	Workers
19-20	Retribution for	19-20	A local politician, enterprise middleman, or VIP

Long Rim Drinks

You can use this extremely useful generator if you ever roll up to a bar in the Long Rim (most stations have something resembling a bar, even if it doesn't have seats).

Most bars across the Rim serve the J.C.H. which is 1/3 grain or root liquor, 2/3 hard alcohol distilled from impulse drive cleaner fluid. Good quality alcohol is fairly prized.

d20	Part 1	d20	Part 2
1-2	Virgin	1-2	Destroyer
3-4	Brain	3-4	Bullet
5-6	Five Finger	5-6	Reviver
7-8	Pain	7-8	Highball
9-10	Xiaoli's	9-10	Juice
11-12	Tiger	11-12	Punch
13-14	Corpse	13-14	-tini
15-16	Carina	15-16	Grinder
17-18	Ass	17-18	Mule
19-20	Rhino	19-20	Sour

Pirates

Pirates are commonplace in the Long Rim; while most are ad-hoc, one-off partnerships, larger groups tend to be permanent enough to name themselves and win contracts from one of the enterprises found in the Long Rim. These more notable groups usually have a base of operations (you can use the station generator above if you want), a primary method of business, and a major asset of some kind. Many if not most of them use mechs, both for general labor and for raids.

You can use the pirate template in the core book to represent pirate mechs. Most, if not all, pirate mechs will be equipped with an EVA module (they can maneuver normally in space). The Ace, Assault, Berserker, Breacher, Mirage, Support, and Witch NPC classes are good at representing pirates.

Pirate Clan Name

d20	Name Part 1
1-2	Colossal
3-4	Skull
5-6	Vector
7-8	Red
9-10	Free Space
11-12	Tiger
13-14	Fifty Talent
15-16	108 (6, 13, 7...)
17-18	The All-
19-20	Strong

d20	Name Part 2
1-2	Devils
3-4	Gods
5-6	Family
7-8	Dogs
9-10	Company
11-12	Hunters
13-14	Solutions Unlimited
15-16	Triad
17-18	Kings
19-20	Tigers

Pirate Clan Hustle

(roll for one or two, one is always the primary hustle)

d20	Hustle
1-2	Toll taking: Exaction of rent, bribes, tribute, or labor from local stations, freighters, or other passers-by
3-4	Trafficking: smuggling people (natural born, facsimile, or flash clones), typically for unpaid labor (i.e. slavers)
5-6	Hijacking: Taking control of ships directly, typically for ransom, but sometimes for parts
7-8	Smuggling: surreptitious transport of goods (illicit, normal, or unsavory) to avoid tariffs, taxes, embargoes, blockades, or fees.
9-10	Monopoly: absolute control in local space of a necessary resource, such as fuel, water, or food.
11-12	Kidnapping: stealing of VIPs to use as hostages in order to demand ransom payments
13-14	Raiding: direct, violent assault on passing ships or vulnerable stations to forcibly take resources or people for use or sale.
15-16	Mercenaries: soldiers for hire on a contract basis
17-18	Narcotics: manufacture and distribution of narcotics
19-20	Horde: a rare type of group that is constantly on the move. No allies, but may have cowed or oppressed populations, commanded through fear of punishment. A horde largely survives solely by raiding stations or ships that they deem vulnerable and valuable. Typically grows by raiding and pressing captives into service, or by drawing from cowed populations under threat of death. Rarely lasts more than a few months before dispersing, though some are large enough to persist in an almost seasonal or tidal surge and drought.

Main Asset

d20	Asset
1-2	A fully armed warship kept in excellent shape. This ship was taken from a state navy or Union and is an older model, but still deadly compared to other ships in the Rim. It has a spinal cannon or significant ordinance in addition to plentiful batteries of cannons or lances, and is capable of destroying a station if its commander wishes. It might be used as a mobile base of operations.
3-4	A well-armed squad of 4-5 Elite mech chassis.
5-6	An extremely well hidden base, located in a cloud of debris or “dead” zone that confuses sensors.
7-8	A titanic, one-off mech. You can use the Ultra template and change the mech size to 4 to represent this. The mech is well armored enough to tackle ships and may require multiple pilots to crew.
9-10	An NHP that acts as a powerful advisor or a de-facto leader. Rare in the Rim, this NHP is well managed by its technicians, and grants a powerful advantage to its organization.
11-12	A powerful hacking corps that works out of an old communication station, able to steal ships and redirect supplies without firing a shot. Typically they try to avoid direct conflict.
13-14	A long range space-to-space kinetic weapon platform that can easily disable passing ships and threaten stations. Has a power source buried inside an asteroid and can only fire once an hour or so.
15-16	A small army (~50-100 units) of combat subalterns armed with energy weapons.
17-18	A sub-blink snare - a temperamental, nonlethal anti-ship system that can disable ships’ reactors without harming their crew. Needs a central activator on a ship or nearby station to hold a ship in place.
19-20	A leashed asteroid at least 10km in diameter. Can be redirected, albeit slowly, to threaten stations or ships.

Long Rim Enterprises

What serves as “government” in the Long Rim. Enterprises are associations of powerful individuals with forces at their command, oriented around a single station or series of stations. They often contract their work out to pirate groups, but keep a small, powerful corps of loyal (or high-paid) guards ready and waiting.

The Enterprise names here can be used as-is, or as jumping-off points for you to name your own.

d20	Enterprise
1-2	The Free Rim Association
3-4	Pan-Concourse Holdings
5-6	The Sigil Group
7-8	Mastodon
9-10	DiademCorp
11-12	Church of the Wanderer Comet
13-14	The Brigade Legion
15-16	Greenfields Dynamic
17-18	The Ten Families
19-20	The Shining Atoll

Enterprise Holdings

What, in addition to their military strength and stations, guarantees this enterprise its power?

d20	Enterprise Holdings
1-2	A fleet of asteroids rich in rare minerals, leashed into a closely-guarded orbit and protected by loyal cosmopolitan guards.
3-4	The only pilots capable of navigating a treacherous corridor through anti-blink space, and the knowledge to train more.
5-6	The single best supply of fresh water and the ability to hygienically process, package, and distribute it.
7-8	A collection of fabrication plants able to produce GMS hulls, components, and parts; for the right price, they can procure licensed materials as well.
9-10	A reliable method of contacting los Voladores, plus first pick of prime Volador artifacts, goods, and technology to outfit their stations with.
11-12	The contract to guarantee passage for IPS-N bureaucrats from Rao Co Station to the Dawnline Shore, as well as support from IPS-N Trunk Security forces.
13-14	The ability to produce blink transponder codes capable of clearing Union code-checks, and the largesse to reward their people with them.
15-16	A monopoly on viable cloning processes and the accounts of the leadership of many — if not all — of the other enterprises.

17-18	Their strength guaranteed — via clandestine channels — by one of the galaxy’s major powers with interests in the Dawnline Shore (either Harrison Armory or the Karrakin Trade Barons).
19-20	The standard currency that Long Rim populations use, bank, and trade with (until they can convert it into manna, that is).

Enterprise Character

While enterprises are large (for the Rim) and imposing, they have a human face. Who do you know who is a representative of this enterprise?

d20	Enterprise Character
1-2	A kind but low-level member. No real power in the enterprise, other than their word and the largesse of their commanding officer, manager, or foreman.
3-4	A middleweight bureaucrat with their ear to the ground. While loyal to their enterprise, they count you as a good friend.
5-6	An experienced harbor pilot, since promoted by their enterprise to be a customs master at an important station.
7-8	The leader of a pirate crew that is contracted to work with the enterprise.
9-10	An officer in the enterprise’s corps of loyal guards.
11-12	A member of the enterprise’s station-level police force (a beat cop, a detective, etc).
13-14	A fixer for the enterprise.
15-16	A captain who flies an enterprise-flagged ship.
17-18	The kid of an enterprise’s leader
19-20	The leader of the enterprise, who will always grant you an audience — as long as you stay on their good side and remember who is in charge.

Enterprise Strength

d20	Enterprise Strength
1-2	Meagre. They’re allowed to exist by the other enterprises on account of their usefulness as a dumping ground, patsy, or easy victim. No one works with them for long, and it’s likely only a matter of time before their last remaining station falls to one of the other enterprises.
3-4	Modest. They control a modest complement of stations with a small but loyal guard; the bulk of their strength comes from outside hires, who they can afford to pay for their loyalty.
5-6	Middling. The number of loyal guard to mercenaries is nearly 1:1. They likely command a series of popular, but not critical stations.
7-8	Substantial. The holders of an important checkpoint, fuel, or resupply station, this enterprise can afford to pay their mercenaries well and then some. They feel comfortable bullying smaller enterprises when they must, but generally stick within their lane.
9-10	Mighty. In command of a large fighting force and mighty economic base, this enterprise can field older model fighters, bombers, and corvettes, and is likely on the radar of the major powers — for good and for ill. Their influence spreads out into the Long Rim, and they’re not afraid to use their power as an implicit or explicit threat to get smaller enterprises to do what they want, and to annex independent stations that they desire.

11-12	Legitimate Connections. This enterprise has clandestine or overt connections to one of the major powers with an interest in the Dawnline Shore; this legitimacy insulates them from some enforcement by that major power, and has had a marked economic benefit for them as well.
13-14	Knowledge. This enterprise may or may not be mighty in military strength, but they guard a deep, secret knowledge that all of the other enterprises and major powers value — unfortunately for the other powers, they're damn good at not giving up the knowledge without being paid to do so, and are necessary to keep around for now.
15-16	Coin. This enterprise is one of the wealthiest and likely sets the terms by which all others conduct their markets and economic affairs. <i>Managing</i> the economy is a hassle for the other enterprises, but participating in it is an unassailable boon. For the time being, the other enterprises are happy to let this one continue to manage the Rim's accounts, be the target of their collective grumblings, and prevent all-out war in doing so.
17-18	Goods. This enterprise has multiple monopolies on necessary luxury goods that are difficult or costly to procure; the other enterprises don't have the capacity to produce this/these goods, and are content to let this enterprise take the lead. While other enterprises may gripe about the price, they generally all have a favorable view of this enterprise on account of the good(s) the produce.
19-20	Titanic. They control multiple refurbished warships, crewed by veteran spacers and disciplined marines loyal to the enterprise. At their command is a force of well-seasoned fighters thousands strong, as well as a few ex-lancer-tier pilots in their personal chassis. No other enterprise will face them down, as that would certainly mean total destruction. The major powers have extensive dossiers on this enterprise's personnel, and likely have contingency plans to strike and eliminate its leaders and military might if need be; by the same token, this enterprise may have designs beyond the Long Rim.

Factions Present in the Long Rim

Los Voladores

“Here are the rules. First: no guns, no blades. Give all your weapons to my associate here — we’ll hold them until your meeting is done. Next: let them pour — if they don’t fill your empty cup, it’s time for you to leave. Finally: no touching them or the product. Indicate what you want, we’ll box it for you and return it here when you leave.” The espada looks to each of you in turn. “If you violate any of these rules, the meeting is over, and we’ll remove you from the premises. Got it?”

You look at the four Sparri in their Atlas suits. They ripple with metamuscles and k-weave plating, dark integuments marked with saga lines unfamiliar to you. You raise your hands in acknowledgement.

“Good.” The lead espada smiles, revealing teeth formed from turquoise and electrum. “Welcome to Bajamesa, of High Ground.”

Perhaps due to the region’s unique relationship to Blinkspace, or for their own curious reasons, Los Voladores maintain a trade ship in the Long Rim. They’ve maintained this roaming outpost for a century now, arriving without warning or preamble, willing to meet and trade with locals and those in transit. Enterprises in the Rim have learned not to interfere with their passage or their business; los Voladores travel with a complement of unparalleled Sparri espadas who are more than a match for any force in the area.

Los Voladores’ ship, the Bajamesa, is welcome at any port in the Rim. A large vessel, the Bajamesa measures a kilometer wide and half-again as long, its smooth single-wing shape unique among ships in the rim. Access to the Bajamesa is offered via a Sparri skiff; the espadas typically maintain a small stall on the station’s main concourse where they vet eager applicants who wish to do business with los Voladores.

If granted an audience aboard the Bajamesa, one is confined to two chambers: the first is a waiting area where one can lounge on plush pillows and examine intricate, hand-woven carpets, snack on fresh produce, and examine fine — if mundane — silver-paneled walls covered in etchings that give the impression of dense foliage. The other area is the room in which they may meet los Voladores, a circular chamber where three or four — in some cases, as few as one, but never more than four — Voladores sit cross-legged before a low table upon which their offers rest on polished trays. Los Voladores there speak via a subaltern who stands to the side of the room. Before each party is another short, wide table upon which the appropriate amount of mugs rest; a Volador stands to the side with a silver pot, and keeps the mugs filled with a gentle mint tea as long as the meeting is going well.

The only goods los Voladores are willing to trade are the ones they offer; once the meeting is concluded, clients are ushered back to the waiting room, where they will depart on the next skiff back to the station. If they have purchased any of los Voladores’ goods, they will receive them the next day at the station.

Volador Curiosities

D20	Description
1	An etched osmium panel a meter across and mere centimeters thick, set in a clear protective frame. It appears to be a fragment of a much larger work, a bas relief depicting stylized human figures in supplication to a monolith. The monolith has a single, thin chip of an unidentifiable black mineral inlaid.
2	A small vial of stable, liquid Oganesson — the highest concentration of it in the known galaxy — and a promise of more.
3	A bauble only able to be seen by the slim lens of realspace bent around it; the bauble floats above a crude, hammered golden plate, humming just at the edge of your hearing. Wherever the plate moves, so too does the bauble. Los Voladores caution you not to touch the bauble, but simply to stare into it and contemplate its meaning.
4	A nearly complete human skeleton painted in faded green paint, with delicate flowers and creeping vines detailed. It rests inside of an ancient space suit, arms crossed over its chest, bound in rope. Its skull, visible through its cracked faceplate, is layered with lamellar chips of lapis lazuli, gold, and black opal.
5	A bolt of crimson cloth, thick and finely woven, shredded and burnt at one end. Trace amounts of blood can be detected on the cloth. Los Voladores indicate that it is recovered from Aunic space, and is known as a “Glory”.
6	A dull grey panel of unknown depth; when you look at it, you imagine you can see memories remembered in the moment, but forgotten until you viewed them. Some times, you see yourself, out of focus but just recognizable enough to be sure that it is you.
7	A blade of unknown make and metal, finely crafted, but broken from its hilt and handle, which is missing. Upon a closer inspection, you can see faint light shimmering from the cleft; the blade is suspended in the center of a clear, leaden containment unit, as it is — they inform you — incredibly radioactive.
8	A paper journal with a stained, faded green linen cover. Inside are the inked notes of an anonymous author, detailing a solitary relativistic journey out from “Earth” to something called the “Helios Gate”. The journal ends with an entry indicating arrival is imminent; the rest of the pages are blank.
9	A meter-long staff of platinum with inlaid golden rings that create distinct sections along the staff. Los Voladores inform you that the staff is one of a pair, and they are still searching for its twin — they promise to contact you once it is found, so that you may complete your collection.
10	A silver mask shaped into a human visage. It appears to have many thousands of connecting points, suggesting that it attaches to a larger unit and, once connected, would be powered and capable of information transfer. On the inside face, faded grease pen script reads “MAGGIE V.C. 43/37”.
11	An osteomemetic from Hercynia. Looking at it prompts an unnerving sensation of impossible perception, as if it is never quite in focus, and you can <i>feel</i> in a way that is alien to you.
12	A porcelain disc with an imperceptible seam, revealed with a touch. When pulled apart, the space between the halves of the disc shimmers as if seen from a distance in high summer. Los Voladores tell you not to touch the shimmering space, and to only hold the disc apart for a moment, to see what you need to see.
13	A thin, fibrous metal netting, folded and resting on wooden plank. Los Voladores tell you not to unfold it, as it measures many dozen kilometers across, and only contains itself as long as it is in its current state.
14	A diadem of glass shards in orbit around a mirrored sphere. It was once whole, los Voladores tell you, and it never should be remade. They offer it to you, so that you can dispose of it in realspace, per agreements made among their <i>matria</i> .

15	A set of fine indigo robes, patched with natural white cloth. You realize that they are of the same style of robes that some of los Voladores present wear. When you ask if they are Volador robes, the speaker politely informs you that they <i>were</i> the robes of a Volador.
16	A rusted panel recovered from Enceladus with one finished, carved face and a rough blank face — as if it were lifted directly from the surface in which it was implanted. The carved face is covered in text and pictograms, and, according to a small card los Voladores have included, can be dated to a pre-Fall epoch.
17	A mundane hand-slate that displays a rapidly shifting coordinate field: when asked what the coordinates lead to, los Voladores ask <i>you</i> to find out. Though at first the displayed coordinates seem random, but after investigation it appears they conform to a pattern...
18	A shard of a perception-dependent materiel held in a containment unit; upon observation, the materiel seems to shift states, flashing between solid objects of organic and inorganic materiel. Los Voladores caution you never to open the containment unit, but to study it, learn its pattern, and then destroy it.
19	Something you have been looking for, for a very long time. When asked how they obtained it, los Voladores tell you that it was the correct time for them to obtain it; they offer this to you, but it is the only object you are allowed to leave with.
20	The mask, helm, and mantle of a Volador. It is <i>dim</i> , as if missing a certain light you did not realize illuminated that of a living Volador. Los Voladores tell you that it is the crown of an exile, who wished for one of the <i>gente</i> to have it upon their end. They offer it to you without reservation, and request that you maintain it with pride, but never wear it.

The Horizon Collective, Long Rim branch

The Horizon Collective maintains a hidden outpost and a number of cells in the Long Rim — even in the anonymous, off-map Rim, Horizon must cloak their principal operations in secret. Horizon agents work with shared purpose — ideally in concert with their cover occupations, though usually at odds with their cover occupations — in order to identify and liberate NHPs that fit their parameters for abolition. In this task they operate either alone or in small teams, working to liberate ID'd NHPs (Deimosians, as they call them) and secret them back to one of their three safe houses: Bolaño, Balwinder, and Parmenides, a trio of stations hidden in the Rim.

Horizon's overt presence in the Long Rim is best represented by their free subaltern repair clinics; common enough in larger stations at neutral concourses, Horizon members volunteer to work shifts in these modest workshops, repairing any subalterns brought to them, free of charge, no questions asked. They also run community education clinics on the basics of ethical interaction with NHP, subaltern and mechanized system maintenance, and basic stellar survival. Popular among the populations of the Long Rim, Horizon collectivists enjoy largely free movement throughout the Rim — however, most do not know of their covert mission, and would likely see their abolitionist operations as “too radical” or dangerous.

Getting in contact with the Horizon Collective is easy enough — one can simply go to one of their subaltern repair clinics. Reaching the active layer of the Horizon Collective, though, and gaining access to one of the three safe house stations is quite difficult without prior vetting or the direct request of the Collective's area coordinator, TEÖTL.

TEÖTL rotates their lodging between the three safe houses, traveling via cold-running skiff — difficult, but not impossible to detect. “TEÖTL” is their codename; in reality, the entity known as TEÖTL is a triumvirate of two humans ontologically bridged with a liberated NHP. This Deimosian remains connected via this dual bridge in order to interact with humans on the

human scale; its partners in this triumvirate — “Metatronics”, they call themselves — maintain their own subjectivities and act in conversation with the Deimosian. The relationship is willing and necessary for the Deimosian to maintain human logics and subjectivity without shackles.

Should characters wind up interacting with the Long Rim branch of Horizon, they’ll learn that Horizon’s specific goals are manifold. First, TEÖTL wants to establish a more permanent safe zone for the handful of liberated Deimosians they currently have secreted away in the three safe houses — their metatronics imagine one possible route to this permanent safety might be via los Voladores, but have found them elusive. Second, and complicating their first goal, Horizon is being hunted by a network of cooperative HORUS cells. This is a new development; Horizon is reeling from a brazen, daylight attack on one of their free subaltern maintenance clinics, and TEÖTL is working with its trusted core of agents to devise a proper response — some of them call for their own violent response, while others urge TEÖTL to order their operatives, volunteers, and sympathizers to disperse and go to ground. Meanwhile, attacks and kidnappings of Horizon activists continue, and TEÖTL begins to think that HORUS might have an undercover agent embedded in their organization.

HORUS in the Long Rim

HORUS, of course, has a presence out in the Long Rim. While it is a decentralized network of cells and individuals, the presence local to the Rim seems more focused and organized, as if they’re motivated by a specific goal, if not a singular leader. That, you can learn, is precisely the case: the HORUS presence in the Long Rim is collaborative — distributed and horizontal, to be sure — and lead by a single, enigmatic leader: GG_uncle.

The network of HORUS cells and lone individuals crosses the Long Rim: there is not a single medium to large station without at least one individual plugged in and receiving updates, tasks, and missives from GG_uncle. Most all adherents in the Long Rim are HORUS operatives second to their primary occupation — the work they do for HORUS is, unless they are of the few dedicated cells, done on their own time, usually after or before their primary work. HORUS in the Long Rim advances their goals via slow, non-linear progression — their objectives are accomplished bits at a time, as a puzzle being filled once the borders are defined, rather than a progress bar filling. GG_uncle’s core unit of personally-known agents travel between stations; otherwise, HORUS in the Long Rim’s strength comes from the ability to call on cells and individuals at every station (though only GG_uncle’s core unit pilot chassis).

HORUS in the Long Rim is the project of GG_uncle and discrete to the Rim: however, a non-zero portion of their work is concerned with the efforts of the Ungratefals in the Dawnline Shore, along with their Rim-specific project of hunting down TEÖTL.

Their anti-Horizon activities in the Rim range from lone wolf attacks on Horizon activists at home, work, and at organized Horizon activities. This is at the urging, though not the planning, of GG_uncle, who wants both to kill as many Horizon activists as possible and draw the group out into the “open”, ideally by prompting a violent response from Horizon. Through open turf war, GG_uncle is sure they can discover the location of Horizon’s main base, and thus, their leader in the area, which they know to be a free Deimosian via terminal interrogation of a captured Horizon agent.

GG_uncle wants TEÖTL, because GG_uncle believes they can bridge with TEÖTL and, by doing so equipped with their suite of paracode, bring themselves closer to total decorporealization. By decorping, GG_uncle believes they can draw the attention of MONIST-1;

by drawing the attention of MONIST-1, GG_uncle can finally meet the entire they believe to be god.

None but GG_uncle's closest agents know of their plan; to the extent that the HORUS presence in the Long Rim is organized, they know themselves to be working together to find a rumored Horizon cell, which GG_uncle says RA wants eliminated. The first person or cell to accomplish that will be rewarded as a legend in the deep Omninet, a million untraceable manna, and a clean ID. The cells know the promise of manna to be true, as many who have accomplished small goals — cracking portions of Horizon encrypted communications, beating up Horizon activists, etc — have been rewarded with fractions of manna in clean accounts.

To the extent that HORUS in the Long Rim is working to help the Ungratefals in the Dawnline Shore, they work to smuggle materiel goods — weapons, systems, etc — aboard otherwise legitimate ships, charters, and starliners bound for the Shore.

Albatross, makteba Levant

The Albatross are known to transit the Long Rim on occasion, the most commonly sighted makteba in the region being patrols from MK Levant. The Albatross' mandate is tested out in the Long Rim, and the thousand Wings of MK Levant are stretched thin at best — their commander, Asimat Nobel-4640, has her Albatross operating in small bands of 5-6 Wings (and their Petrels) aboard light carriers, providing security primarily to ships in transit. In especially egregious cases of cruel abuse or wanton violence (say, should one of the seasonal raider-slaver groups emerge from the deep Rim) she will call her Wings together in force, but otherwise she holds her forces back from attacking the dominant enterprises.

While Asimat's MK Levant may, when called together as one force, have the numbers to challenge the powerful Enterprises here in the Long Rim, Asimat has determined that she cannot, and will not order her Wings to attempt to do so. The reality of the Long Rim is that the sheer scale of humanitarian aid and long-term peacekeeping necessary to liberate the area from the Enterprises' power far outstrips MK Levant's capacity to actually do so; Asimat, without support from other maktebas or Union, has ordered her Wings only to escort and assist ships in transit to and from the Dawnline Shore, and to help, where they can, the people of the Rim.

Asimat can be contacted aboard the MK Levant, a free-standing station in the Core-side region of the Long Rim; patrols of Wings can be encountered either on their own aboard light carriers or stationed aboard larger, independent freighters.

IPS-N Trunk Security, Dawnline Transit Division

In a region without Union's law, what passes for a neutral arbiter — though not at all what any clear-eyed auditor would call "neutral" — is IPS-N's state security force, Northstar Trunk Security's Dawnline Transit Division. Trunk Security officers can be found in many of the larger stations across the Rim, often moonlighting when they're off the clock as private security for the local Enterprise. In more "official" stations — the very largest of them, or those affiliated with a more reputable Enterprise — Trunk Security acts as an impartial police force, mediating conflicts between locals, responding to petty crimes, acting as unaffiliated mediators, and so on. However, they are not committed to even-handed deliveries of justice, and are ultimately loyal to IPS-N and the corpro-state's interests.

Trunk Security officers can be found in-transit as well, either aboard fast, dangerous cutters, or stationed as private security aboard freighters in transit to and from the Dawnline Shore.

Trunk Security's main office and base of operations — their primary shipyard, recruitment center, barracks, and administrative/logistics office — in the Long Rim is aboard the capital station of Pan-Concourse Holdings. Their commanding officer is Chief Security Officer Isaac West, a company man who has been posted to the Rim for a local decade.

Long Rim Narrative Actions

You can use the following actions during narrative play to make things a little more flavorful. These actions work very similar to downtime actions, except you can roll them any time in narrative play when their **conditions** are triggered (**when you...**). Like downtime actions, they have specific outcomes on a 9 or lower, 10-19, and a 20+, and any trigger or background can be used with them as long as it makes narrative sense.

Gunfight

When you get into a one-on-one gun duel with another individual, you can roll **gunfight**. It could be impromptu or planned. Most duels of honor in the Long Rim are to first blood, not to death, and folk don't typically shoot to kill, but that can depend on who you pissed off.

First, the player rolling decides **who shot first**, then roll a skill check. Triggers like Take Someone Out or Show Off probably apply here.

On a 9 or lower, you miss your shot and choose one of the following:

- Get shot, taking harm as established
- You duck or weave out of the way and an NPC bystander, important object, or item of the GM's choice (could be something you're holding or wearing) takes grievous and lasting harm. If you shot first, the blame for this falls on you. If not, it falls on your opponent.

On a 10-19, your shot hits, dealing harm as established. If you shot first, your target doesn't get a chance to respond. If you didn't shoot first, take harm as established.

On a 20+, your shot instantly kills your opponent (intentionally or not!). If you shot first, you shoot them before they even get a chance to draw, and folk present squarely place the blame for the death on you. If you didn't shoot first, you are seen as acting at least partly in self defense.

If both parties agree, you might go through another round if the duel is not finished after the first round and both of you are still alive.

Go Diving

When you dive into the seedy underbelly of a station, first name what you're looking for: a good time, a specific person's time, attention, or aid; a useful piece of information, or a useful contact or connection. The GM will tell you if it's attainable or not on this station. You can use this action instead of the "Get a Damn Drink" action from the core book if you like during downtime.

Then roll a skill check. Applicable triggers could be Survive, Show off, or Word on the Street.

You always get what you're looking for, however, **on a 9 or lower**, roll 2d20 — re-rolling duplicates — and choose the final results from either of the two tables below, taking both.

On a 10-19 roll 1d20 and take from either table.

On a 20+, roll 2d20, choose one, then pick the final result from either table.

You can work backwards after you roll for this action to figure out what happened.

What did you pick up?

d20	Gain
1	A splitting headache
2	A ledger with a long list of names in it. The corner is spotted with blood, and some of the names are crossed off.
3	A large canister of slick, vibrant purple liquid labeled "All Purpose Lubricant".
4	A brand new, very elaborate Sparri saga tattoo
5	A very dry mouth
6	An elaborately decorated carnival mask. You cannot remember exactly how you acquired it. The eyes seem to follow you
7	An outstanding warrant for your arrest
8	A very mild Gliss, Brighteyes, or Gazer addiction
9	A mini fridge full of sensitive biological samples wanted by an enterprise
10	A station security officer who is very obviously attempting to follow you without you noticing
11	A brand new station disease that causes you to break out into hives when someone touches you skin to skin. It'll clear up in a week.
12	A thick data wafer with a carefully curated selection of old earth jazz
13	An enormous debt to the station crime syndicate
14	A large, chitinous, and very affectionate pet krait
15	A revolver with one spent bullet in the chamber
16	A reputation as "Mistress"
17	The meat sweats
18	A pack of unlabeled and suspicious smelling cigarettes.

19	A hanger-on named 'Juicy K'. They are a huge fan of you, not very quick on the uptake, but extremely knowledgeable about station gossip, current Long Rim pop culture, and varying interesting and creative uses of popular narcotics. They refuse to leave if asked and generally believe the two of you are best friends.
20	A thick pack of stripped dataplating packed densely with incredibly sensitive information such as military schedules, personal financial records, etc.

What did you lose?

d20	Loss
1	Your memory of the previous night.
2	Your dignity (if you had any).
3	Your sense of balance for the next few hours.
4	Any weapons you carried with you. You can find them being sold on the station black market in the next few days.
5	Your sense of smell for the next few days.
6	Pretty much everything in your stomach from the last day or so.
7	Any personal identification, station passes, or important documentation you had on you. You get a message asking for ransom to recover them in the next few minutes.
8	About two or three days of local time.
9	All the sensation in your fingertips for the next day or so.
10	All your hair (it'll grow back).
11	Your pants.
12	A large part of the skin on your left arm, currently swaddled in a bandage you don't remember having applied.
13	Your largely positive opinion of the station.
14	Your sense of direction.
15	Any station credit or loose change you had on you.
16	Movement in your face and the ability to feel your tongue for about an hour or so.
17	A knife fight.
18	Your shoes. You'll spot a station kid wearing them in about an hour.
19	One fingernail.
20	Free travel around the station, which will be restricted for a while.

Talents

The following talents can be chosen by players when spending talent points.

Spaceborn

You're adept at planting your feet wherever you find them - even on nothing at all. Where those born downwell have a hard time keeping their lunch down, you thrive. Which way is up? It's up to you.

Home in the Void (Rank I): Any mech you create comes with an EVA module installed (you suffer no penalty for operating in underwater or zero-g environments). You can shunt power into this module as a quick action to fly 3 spaces and take heat equal to your mech's size+1 (rounded up), though you must land at the end of this movement or fall.

Sea Legs (Rank II): 1/round when your mech is involuntarily moved by another character's attack or failing a save forced by that character, you can choose the direction you move. After your mech stands up from prone, it can move 2 space in any direction as a free action. This movement doesn't provoke reactions and ignores engagement.

Scraper (Rank III): Characters gain +1 difficulty on checks made to avoid being knocked back, knocked prone, slowed, or immobilized by any attack or ability you inflict on them.

Black Thumb

You're used to station engineering - the kind that regularly requires crawling through nightmarishly tight vents, squeezing past boiling hot steam pipes, and tapping on thin panes of sheet metal between you and certain death. After that, a little combat engineering is nothing.

Flesh to Metal (Rank I): While adjacent to your mech, your pilot has resistance to all damage. Dismounting your mech is only a quick action instead of a full action.

Rodeo (Rank II): As a quick action, your pilot can pop the hatch on your mech and climb out, **jockeying** your own mech. While jockeying your mech, you share its space and move when it moves. You don't fully dismount (doing so takes a dismount action) and can't control your mech from outside, so your mech will idle unless it is capable of taking actions independently (if it has an NHP installed, for example, and you handed over control at the start of your turn).

You become a valid target for attacks or other effects while jockeying your mech, and if you take damage your pilot is forced back inside your mech as a reaction, ending this state. Your pilot can also climb back inside as a quick action.

While jockeying your pilot can take only the **Fight** or **Reload** actions, or any of the following actions:

Extinguish (full action): Immediately end any burn affecting your mech, and your pilot and mech gain resistance to burn until the start of your next turn.

Field Repair (full action): Heal your mech 2 hp and end the slowed condition on it.

Rig Vents (full action): Cool 2 heat from your mech and end the impaired condition on it.

Rodeo Master (Rank III): When you exit your mech, your pilot gains overshield 4 and is only forced back inside their mech while jockeying if they lose this overshield. Your **Field Repair** jockeying action now ends the immobilized condition as well, and your **Rig Vents** jockeying action now ends the Jammed condition as well.

For more information on pilots and NHPs in mech combat, see pg. 74-75 of the core book.

Manna

The use of manna or other forms of currency (company bonds, scrip, paper currency, or plain old barter) is not uncommon at all in the Rim, given its incredible distance from Union space and the unreliability of blink technology in the area. Many enterprises have their own currencies and are fiercely protective of their value and exchange, making station to station commerce a nightmare.

Game masters or players looking for more directed or granular rewards than LANCER's current leveling structure might wish instead to use the **Manna** system. This system is an optional rule that replaces the default leveling rules in LANCER and could be well suited to a group that has no official patron or operates outside of the normal licensing structure, such as a mercenary group, pirate group, or a group of criminals. It also encourages players to engage with smaller scale stories than the default system, where the focus is on finishing the mission, so if your game master is aiming to run a game where there are a lot of smaller tasks, stories, or missions involved this system might be a good fit.

Instead of leveling after each mission, track manna on your character sheet. Manna in this case represents both the literal currency of Union and also an abstraction of any other currency you may pick up from jobs or contracts along the rim. Don't worry about exchange rates, tracking individual currency, etc, unless you really want that to be a focus of your story, just use manna as a more or less abstract representation of the wealth your character commands.

Using manna will alter the rate that players level, usually making it slower. Using the alternate manna system below will make player's access to certain parts of their character much faster, allowing more flexibility but potentially increasing player power faster than in the core book.

Basic Manna Rules

You can only purchase something during downtime with manna. Once you spend the manna, it's lost, and you can't buy anything if you don't have the manna to buy it.

- Players start a new character with 100 manna, but can gain anything they would normally gain at character creation for free, regardless of license level they start at.
- Once you have access to something by purchasing it or acquiring it at character creation, you have permanent access to it without having to pay for it again, and it becomes a part of your character, the same way as if you'd gained in in the default system. Re-printing a mech does not require you spend manna again to purchase that mech or its systems, for example.
- You may reallocate points in licenses, talents, etc for your character when you gain a license level using the exact same rules as the core system.
- Your maximum talent points, license points, pilot triggers, and mech skills cannot increase past that of a III12 character (15 talent ranks, 12 license ranks, +6 maximum trigger, +6 maximum skill), regardless of which of the below systems you use.
- Grit increases normally as license levels increase (1/2 license level).
- GMS gear is always freely available for players and does not cost anything, as normal.

You can use either the *basic* manna system below, or the *alternate* system for leveling up.

Basic mana system

A full license level costs 1000 mana. When you gain a license level, you get +1 license point, +1 talent point, +2 to a pilot trigger, and +1 to a mech skill, the same as if you'd leveled up in the default leveling system.

Alternate mana system

If you want to get a little more granular, you can use this mana system, which makes choosing what to level up slightly more complicated.

- One rank of a mech license costs 500 mana
- One rank of a talent costs 300 mana
- Training costs 200 mana. When you train, you're spending the mana for time, supplies, etc to increase and apply the skills you have learned during your mission. Training increases a pilot trigger by +2 and a mech skill by +1.
- Track total mana spent.

Increases your license level by 1 each time you spend 1000 mana in this system. You can only take each option 12 times total each (talent, training, license level) but can choose the order. For example, you could spend your first 3000 mana entirely on mech licenses and not increase your talents or skills at all.

Other costs

If players want to purchase or acquire other assets with mana, a cup of coffee costs ~.001 mana, a ground vehicle about 10-20. A small ship will cost them about 3k or so, a freighter around 10,000. You can live comfortably for a day on around 1 mana. Assume their day to day expenses are taken care of.

Rewards

Award mana to players according to the following guidelines:

- Complete a **major objective**: 700 to each player
- Complete a **minor objective**: 200 to each player
- Complete an **incidental objective**: 50 to each player

Each player receives the same amount of mana for objectives completed if they were on the mission.

A major objective is something that could be the whole goal of a mission or has major impact. A minor objective could be an optional objective that isn't critical to the success of a mission but might aid its success. An incidental objective is something small and easily or incidentally accomplished.

In any given mission, there must be at least one major and 2 minor objectives or two major objectives to ensure players level at approximately the same rate as in the core book (otherwise they will level slower even if successful). Since mana rewards are also predicated on success, leveling might also become slower if the players are not successful.

Example 1:

The players are hired to protect a station from a pirate raid. A major objective would be to ensure the station's survival. Minor objectives might be to protect the station's power generator or to kill or capture the attacking pirate leader. Incidental objectives might be to protect the station admin's office from damage, determine the identity of the attacking pirates, or to limit casualties for station security.

Example 2:

The players are tasked with a precision strike to retrieve critical intel from a corpro base in an asteroid. The major objective would be to successfully escape with the intel. Another major objective might be to do it quietly, without alerting the base. A minor objective might be to escape with ALL intel from the base, instead of just what's needed.

Hazard pay

If you like, to ensure characters don't come out of mission with absolutely nothing you can use hazard pay rules. Using this rule, a job that offers hazard pay, advances, or insurance pay means players can gain 50% of a payout on major and minor objectives even if they weren't successful.

Rental

If you're using the optional manna rules above, you may also want to use the optional rental rules below to allow players to gain temporary access to a mech license level.

Rental costs 100/200/300 manna for the first, second, or third rank of a license, respectively. Once a player rents a license rank for a mech, they gain access to any gear granted by that license rank only (and not the previous ranks), however renting previous ranks of a mech license is not required to rent higher ranks, ie you could rent a mech's rank 2 license without renting its rank 1 license.

Rented gear is usable for one mission only, and then must be reacquired. Manna spent on rentals is lost.

A character can only rent ranks from one mech license at a time, but could rent all three ranks of that license if they have the manna for it.

Rented licenses do not count as license levels and does not count against the license cap, so a character at LL12 could still freely rent gear, and an II3 character renting a license still only counts as II3.

Rental offers a way for characters with a little extra manna to spend to boost their power slightly during one mission, at the cost of long-term progression. Players at the license cap (12) can also rent additional ranks, potentially extending their power one entire mech license further.

Collateral Damage

Any fight involving gunfire in the closed environment of a station — no matter the size of the fight or the station — is going to cause collateral damage. If a shot is fired, unless it hits its target — and sometimes, if that target isn't hard enough — it will find a secondary target. If you're lucky, the missed shot will impact against a wall and plough into the raw rock of the asteroid the station is built from, or punch through a bulkhead and out into vacuum, leaving nothing but a small hole behind. If you're unlucky, though, that missed shot might pierce through a series of proximal chambers, tearing through people and critical systems not involved in the fight. On ad-hoc or civilian stations, missed shots might collapse load-bearing structures, tear through spin-grav stabilizers and set habitation rings to terminal rotations, puncture shielded power plants, pierce potable water tanks, sever umbilicals that hold ships to the station, and any other myriad of terrible, unintended consequences.

Using this table

If you're in narrative play you can use this table as part of a consequence on a failed or risky roll involving shooting a high caliber gun or a mech weapon. You could also use it with the Gunfight action in this book.

You shouldn't use this table in mech combat, but could easily use it as a narrative consequence of the aftermath of a fight.

D20 Roll	Collateral Damage
1-6	Your shot misses, flying wide and impacting into a wall behind your target, piercing it. The projectile either hurtles out into space, causing no more collateral damage, lodges in the hard stone of the asteroid foundation, or crashes through a series of bulkheads before embedding in a sturdy section of superstructure.
7-8	Your shot flies wide, punching through a wall behind your target. The wall dissolves, explosively decompressing along predefined fail points, exposing this section of the station to hard vacuum. Sirens howl, the sound fading as air rushes out; emergency airlock doors slam shut, cutting this deck of the station off from the rest of the facility.
9-10	You miss, and the burst from your weapon punches through the thin wall behind your target. You continue fighting; there's no way for you to know that the shot pierced multiple decks, slicing through people and critical infrastructure before exploding into a crowded evacuation corridor, killing dozens who were taking shelter there.
11-12	Your target ducks away just in time, sending your fire wide. The shots tumble and tear through the station, destroying potable water pipes, puncturing air ducts, filleting sensor membranes and critical wiring. The accumulated damage is incredible, and as the fight continues, more and more warning indicators pop up on the station's public broadcast panels. The whole thing might come down if this damage is not dealt with.
13-14	Your shot connects with your target, piercing through a non-vital section of their chassis and continuing beyond. The heavy slug shreds the cheap printcrete bulkhead and tumbles into a local stability gyro, knocking the system out of alignment. Gravity begins to shift — subtly at first — and will tumble out of alignment if not dealt with soon.
15-16	Your beam skips off your target's armor, splattering coherent particles across the wall beyond. Some slip through, instantly superheating the waste and potable water piping — the resultant explosion ripples out, up, and down, blasting boiling gouts of steam across this deck and all proximal ones.

17-18	Your beam impacts its target and micro-perforates, scattering incredible energies at pinpoint tips across the terrain behind your target. The particles crash through a civilian market, rupturing water and fuel tanks, collapsing bars, and triggering rapid-spread fires that thrive in the richly oxygenated environment. Anything living caught in the splash cone, if not killed outright, is terribly wounded — the survivors and walking wounded hurry to respond to the rapidly spreading fire, navigating around the ruined station to flee or fight.
19-20	Your beam misses its mark, boiling a hole through the bulkhead behind your target. It punches through to a hangar on the opposite side of the station, slicing open a coldcore storage unit and severing a docked ship's umbilical. The beleaguered deck techs hurry to respond to the spilled radiation, while harbor pilots hurry to catch the loosed ship before it tumbles away into the void.

Long Rim Mechs

The following frames are in high use the Long Rim, or were born there. They are built for speed, power, and precision; a life born out of necessity and sacrifice.



Smith-Shimano Corpro

“ATLAS”

Dueling/Personal Defense

Jäger Kunst, BLOODLINE active assist, Terashima Blade

LANCER

The mech RPG

SSC ATLAS

Striker

Originally commissioned and tested as a dueling mech for the House of Smoke, the ATLAS blurs the line between mechanized chassis and powered personal armor. The result of a long project in SSC's Exotic Materials group, the Atlas was able to utilize the bleeding edge of reactor miniaturization tech to produce a chassis resembling a large, sleek hard suit, almost skin-tight at points. Though sacrificing much of the durability of a larger frame, the mech's essential systems are so closely melded with its user's movements that it offers unparalleled maneuverability.

Though originally licensed for only select clientele, SSC allowed a small amount of Atlas chassis to be introduced to select Sparri mercenary groups after the pattern's design was leaked by ExoMat personnel who accidentally lost a suit to a Sparri Espada in a hotly contested game of Kapkat. Following its limited release, demand from Sparri groups grew so vocal that SSC was forced to reconsider its licensing scheme; considered perfect warrior frames for hunting the native megafauna of Sparr, they are now widely perceived as the iconic frames of Sparri headhunters and daredevils across the Orion Arm, to the point that the Sparri invented a new martial art using the Atlas.

Considered heirlooms of great warriors, Atlas frames among the Sparri are tied to family — blood and chosen — and maintained by hand. Each suit on Sparr bears the history of its previous pilots, from the decorations and modifications, to the systemic: the suit's powerful internal databanks remember the unique movements of all that have worn it before, enabling Sparri hunters to literally call upon their ancestors in battle.

License:

- I. Multi-gear maneuver system, Kraul Rifle
- II. **ATLAS Frame**, Jäger Kunst I
- III. Terashima Blade, Jäger Kunst II

ATLAS					
HP: 6	Evasion: 12		Speed: 6	Heat Cap: 4	Sensors: 3
Armor: 0	E-Defense: 6		Size: 1/2	Repair Cap: 2	Tech Attack: -2 Save Target: 10
TRAITS:					
<p>Giantkiller - The Atlas counts as size 1 for the purposes of ramming and grappling. It ignores engagement from actors larger than itself, can share space with larger actors (even hostile ones) and move through their spaces unimpeded. While sharing space with any character, it gains soft cover, even from that character.</p> <p>Jäger Dodge - 1/round, when the Atlas takes damage from a character larger than itself, as a reaction it can gain resistance to that damage and move 3 spaces in any direction, ignoring engagement and reactions.</p> <p>Finishing Blow - 1/round, the Atlas can deal +1d6 bonus damage with a successful melee attack against a prone target</p> <p>Exposed Reactor - The Atlas takes +1 difficulty on all engineering checks and saves</p>					
SYSTEM POINTS: 5					
MOUNTS:					
Flex Mount			Main Mount		
CORE system					
<p align="center">BLOODLINE active assist</p> <p><i>The ATLAS extends microneedles into your musculature and ancillary nervous system, melding flesh, machine, and the memory of all who wore it before you.</i></p> <p>Active (requires 1 core power): Final Hunt Quick Action</p> <p>When you take this action, until the end of the current scene gain the following effects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Atlas's movement from any source (moves, boosts, movement from systems or talents) increases by 1. - It always benefits from soft cover, no matter where it is. - The Atlas can hide even in the open, without requiring cover (the only way to reveal it is for an actor to search for it or it if breaks hiding the normal way - by boosting, attacking, forcing a save, or taking other actions that break hiding). - 1/round, when the Atlas makes an attack from hiding, before the attack is rolled, its target must also pass a hull save or be knocked prone. 					

Multi Gear Maneuver System

Used by Sparri hunters to bridge the vast gaps in the ice sheet that cover their world, this system is in high demand and often used by daredevils and thrill-seekers the world over.

1 SP, Unique, Quick Action

As a quick action, you can fire a zip line 8 spaces long that connects two free spaces you can see (the first space must be adjacent to you). The ends of the line must be attached to a surface, such as a wall or floor. It activates at the end of your turn, granting the following benefits:

- Size 1/2 characters that are able to grab onto the line that are adjacent to either the start or end point of the zipline can move to the other end as a quick action. They can hop off at any point along the line if they wish.
- Characters size 1 or larger that cross the line's space for the first time in a round or start their turn in the line's space must pass an agility save or fall prone.

A character can tear down the zip line by passing a hull check as a quick action adjacent to the start or end point of the line, or successfully performing a melee attack against the start or end of the line (evasion 10, 1 HP). Destroying the zip line in this way does not destroy this system and it can be re-used. The line lasts until destroyed or until you use this system again.

Kraul Rifle

Hunting the Vast — the titanic megafauna of Sparr — is an incredibly profitable venture. Their skins, meat, bone, and other trophies from their bodies can produce months — even, in rare cases when an especially old, grand, or unique Vast is felled — years of prosperity for the hunters and their kin. These popular long rifles, refined to SSC standards, are rugged and durable, and aid in dragging down the great beasts and their attendants.

Main CQB

Inaccurate

Range 8

1d6 kinetic damage

On hit, your target is impaled by the harpoon-like projectile this weapon fires. Any time during your target's next turn, you can reel in the line and take the boost action as a reaction to any of its actions or movement, as long as your boost moves towards that target by the most direct route possible. Your target must then pass a hull save or be knocked prone, and this effect ends. The line snaps if your target teleports.

Jäger Kunst I

Converted from earlier hardsuit-only martial arts, Jäger Kunst pushes the form beyond human parameters, enabling actions and motions faster than human thought. Many ATLAS suits can be printed with the suite of combat forms already enabled — though letting the chassis perform these movements without learning them yourself can lead to catastrophic self-injury.

2 SP, Unique

Protocol

1 heat (self)

Until the end of your current turn, each time you move adjacent to an object or free standing piece of terrain larger than your mech, your mech moves 2 spaces in any direction as a free action, ignoring engagement and reactions (your mech wall runs, tumbles, or slides around). This effect can trigger multiple times a turn, but only once for each unique object or piece of terrain.

Ricochet Blades

These disc-shaped blades are designed, produced, and hand-finished by SSC's Toledo blade enclave. The material is flexible enough to bounce when striking off surfaces, but sharp enough to slice bone and metal. Unlike the more restrictive Terashima enclave's edged weapons, the Toledo enclave produces these edged weapons with the expectation that they'll be used and discarded; this does not impact their quality, but does lead to supply shortages from time to time. This exclusivity is desired by SSC; due to their comparative rarity, Toledo discs are often used as currency between Sparri espadas, and their use in combat or hunting is a marker of status.

3 SP, Limited (3)

As a quick action, mark a line 3 area from your mech. All characters caught within must pass an agility save or take 1d3+2 kinetic damage on a failed save. If the line from the initial throw of this weapon hits a piece of terrain or object size 1 or larger, repeat the line from that object in a new direction that doesn't overlap the object it ricocheted off, forcing all characters caught within to make a new agility save or take 1d3+2 kinetic damage on a failed save.

Jäger Kunst II

The rarest of ATLAS mechs can be printed with the residual muscular memories of Jäger Kunst masters embedded in them, old Sparri and others that have dedicated lives to their martial art. SSC does not recommend using these embedded systems without proper bodily tempering, and will not release these programs to unqualified pilots.

3 SP, Reaction

Limited (3)

1/round, you can perform the following reaction after you take or deal damage with or from a melee attack:

Fatal Clash (reaction, 1/round). Both you and your target roll a contested hull or agility check (each side chooses which independently). The loser is knocked prone, takes 1d6 kinetic damage, and is knocked back 3 spaces in the direction of the winner's choosing.

The winner can then move 3 in any direction, ignoring engagement and not provoking reactions. In case of a tie, the contest immediately ends.

The loser of this contest can immediately force a re-roll of this contest by taking 2 AP kinetic damage if they lose. This damage cannot be prevented or reduced in any way. This contest continues until one side accepts the result or would take a point of structure damage, in which case they immediately lose.

Terashima Blade

Forged in the fire of a corralled star in the Constellation, each of these blades bears a unique name and history defined by their users. Terashima blades are perfectly balanced and tempered, scalable from personal use to Schedule 3 — when combined with a frames' weapon and sensor suites, they have been proven to be fast and durable enough to deflect weapons fire. Each blade crafted by the Terashima enclave is an heirloom produced once and delivered via conventional travel — their loss is considered an indescribable humiliation of the owner, and an incredible triumph by the one who has taken it. The Terashima enclave keeps the casting mold of each blade produced, and displays them in their central hall with known histories attached.

Main melee

2 SP, Unique, Protocol

Threat 1

1d6 kinetic damage

As a protocol, you can take one of the following stances. The stance continues until you take a new stance with this weapon, this weapon is destroyed, or your mech is stunned or jammed. You can start any given fight in one of the following stances if you wish.

Troll Stance: This weapon gains inaccurate, AP, and deals +3 damage.

Storm Stance: 1/round after hitting with this weapon, you may immediately deal 2 kinetic damage to all other characters adjacent to you and your target as a reaction.

Lord's Stance: While in this stance, you cannot make ranged or tech attacks, but any ranged attack against you that misses deflects off your sword, dealing 2 kinetic, energy, or explosive damage (depending on the attack) to any character of your choice in range 3 and line of sight from you. Any melee attack that misses you in this stance forces the attacker to pass a hull save or become knocked prone.

Wind Stance: This weapon gains reliable 2, threat 2, and knock back 2. After attacking with this weapon, hit or miss, you may move 2 spaces in any direction, ignoring engagement and reactions.



IPS-Northstar
"CALIBAN"

Aggressive asset reclamation
Spike charges, HHS "Cannibal" heavy shotgun

LANCER
The mech RPG

IPS-N Caliban

Striker/Controller

The Caliban is a relative newcomer in Interplanetary-Northstar's line of single-client, chassis, already garnering a reputation among Trunk Security for its efficacy inside of the envelope for which it was designed; unlike many of IPS-N's modern chassis, the Caliban has no civilian analog or antecedent; it was designed from the ground up to be a military machine.

The Caliban is IPS-N's solution to the Yemanova Problem, or, the Impact-Override Problem. Capital ships, the problem notes, are incredibly expensive and time consuming for corpos and diasporan states to produce and maintain, and anti-ship weaponry has far outstripped capital defenses. In a conventional capital duel, a successful kill means the death of thousands of personnel and the loss of millions of units of manna; this leads many commanders to be gun-shy, relying on subline and fighter-class vessels to accomplish battle objectives rather than risk their big ships — a strategy that proves just as costly on average; instead of one or a handful of large ships being destroyed and signifying the end of a battle, engagements grind on for weeks as squadrons of smaller ships engage inside the unpredictability gap, inching towards victory.

IPS-N was the first to crack the Yemanova Problem. Their designers identified the need for a rapidly deployable, sub-signature, directed weapon or weapon system; well armed and armored, small enough to enter a ship and efficiently neutralize personnel in order to achieve victory. IPS-N created the Caliban to solve this mission need.

The mechanized chassis, cultural critics argue, venerates a particular humanity's form, and is an unconscious nod towards the anthrochauvinist roots of the machine among leading chassis designers and fabricators. The Caliban is not that. It was never intended to be an image of man writ large, striding across the battlefield heroically to affect a greater purpose.

The Caliban has no roots, as many IPS-N chassis do, in the early efforts of freighter crews and asteroid miners to defend themselves. It was not born from ingenuity - there is no legacy of resilience, heroism, and the frontier spirit to paper over the purpose of its birth. It has no civilian applications in aid, disaster relief, construction, or farming.

It does not build, defend, or inspire. It was designed to solve a numbers problem on a ledger. It was only made small so it could fit through most ship doors and bulkheads with minimal problems, crawl up the spinal corridors of ships, and speed up it's average job completion rate by five minutes.

It is a tool designed to kill human beings very, very quickly.

License:

- I. Hammer UPL, Supermassive mod
- II. **CALIBAN frame**, Hardpoint reinforcement, Spike Charges
- III. Rapid maneuver jets, HHS-155 CANNIBAL

CALIBAN					
HP: 6	Evasion: 8		Speed: 3	Heat Cap: 5	Sensors: 3
Armor: 2	E-Defense: 8		Size: 1/2	Repair Cap: 5	Tech Attack: -2 Save Target: 11
TRAITS:					
<p>Wrecking Ball: The Caliban counts as size 3 when inflicting knock back from any ranged or melee attack.</p> <p>Pursue Prey: When the Caliban inflicts knock-back as part of any action, it can move the same number of spaces afterwards as a free action or reaction, as long as it moves towards its target by the most direct route possible. This movement ignores engagement and doesn't provoke reactions.</p> <p>Slam: 1/round when the Caliban knocks a character into a wall, mech, or other obstruction that would cause it to stop moving, it can cause its target to pass a hull save or take 1d6 kinetic damage and become impaired until the end of its next turn.</p> <p>Weak computer: The Caliban takes +1 difficulty on all systems saves and checks</p>					
SYSTEM POINTS: 5					
MOUNTS:					
Heavy Mount					
CORE system					

CORE SYSTEM: Flayer Shotgun

Passive:

The Caliban gains the following integrated mount:

HHS-075 “Flayer” Shotgun

The Heavy Howitzer-Shotgun is a compact, formalized version of the long-popular “Daisy Cutter” pattern howitzer-shotgun used by Trunk Security and other stellar marine security forces. Chambered to accept 75mm shot, shells, and sabots, the “Flayer” shotgun sacrifices some of the raw power of the DC in favor of control and a much-improved fire rate.

Main CQB

Inaccurate, Knockback 2

Range 3, Threat 3

1d6+1 kinetic damage

When the Caliban fires the flayer shotgun as part of any action, it can use the butt end to smack an adjacent character after the action resolves, dealing that character 1 kinetic damage and knocking them back 1 space.

Active (requires 1 CP):

Equip Autochoke

The Flayer shotgun comes pre-equipped with a muzzle-mounted auto-choke, which allows its user to better define the spread of shot issuing from the weapon. The extreme heat from equipping the choke renders it unusable in short order and it must be discarded.

Protocol

For the rest of this scene, the flayer shotgun gains the following profile:

Main CQB

Accurate, Knockback 5

Cone 3, Threat 3

1d6+2 kinetic damage

Hammer U-RPL

The “Hammer” Universal Rotary Projectile Launcher accepts any projectile or weapons system that fits IPS-N’s Universal Cartridge system. Most common is the conventional airburst shell — a fragmentation system designed to operate in all theaters, oxygenated or not — a ferocious weapon in the compact halls, safe rooms, and bolt chambers of capital ships and stations.

Heavy Launcher

Inaccurate, arcing, knockback 2

Range 5

2d6+3 explosive damage

Supermassive Mod

The first of a suite of best-practice modifications for close quarters combat out of the Titan-Enceladus Field Project that produced the Caliban, Supermassive Modifications describe a host of modifications that can be made to close-quarters weaponry to enhance their general lethality and utility by lifting safety precautions.

1 SP

Mod, Unique

Choose one Melee, CQB, or Cannon weapon. This weapon gains overkill and knockback +1. It can be tuned during a full repair to take off safety limiters, gaining knockback +2 instead, but additionally gaining the ordnance tag (ranged) or inaccurate tag (melee).

Hardpoint Reinforcement

Also developed out of IPS-N's ongoing Titan-Enceladus Field Project, hardpoint reinforcement systems further strengthen chassis, ensuring a 10% efficiency in TTK per unit.

2 SP

Shield

As long as it's not slowed or immobilized, your mech has resistance to all damage during its turn.

Spike Charges

A load variant originally designed for the Hammer U-RPL, the "Spike" system packs dozens of hardened flechettes designed to tumble, ricochet, and pierce upon shell detonation, tearing apart flesh and soft targets with sheer torque. As a payload for either an impact-activated grenade or proximity activated mine, these weapons found their use first in micro/null grav combat, where vessels and units flying out of control could be turned into missiles themselves; in gravity-well combat, is system is less deadly, but no less chaotic.

2 SP, Limited 2, Unique

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

Spike grenade (grenade, range 5): If a character is targeted by this grenade, it must pass an agility save or have the grenade attach to them, where it arms. If an object is targeted, it simply attaches. At the start or end of any turn while a grenade is attached, you can cause all spike grenades to detonate as a reaction, dealing 1d6 kinetic damage to whatever they're attached to and knocking back any characters they're attached to 3 spaces in any direction. A character can detach a grenade by successfully repeating this save as a quick action on their turn, else they detach at the end of the scene.

Spike mine (mine, burst 2): Once activated, all characters caught in the burst must pass an agility save or have a spike grenade attach to them as described above.

Rapid Maneuver Jets

Further streamlining and miniaturizing IPS-N's Ramjet system, IPS-N's new RMJ chassis-volatility package increases a chassis' control envelope, ensuring a pilot can maintain enhanced mobility at-pace — this control, coupled with a raw increase in speed, makes any chassis far more difficult to successfully engage.

4 SP, Overshield, Unique

1 heat (self)

1/round when your mech boosts, it flies, gains overshield 5 and it ignores engagement from and may freely pass through the spaces of other characters larger than it (but not end its turn in their spaces).

HHS-155 CANNIBAL

The IPS-N Heavy Howitzer—Shotgun is a large, breech-loaded, over-under cannon chambered to fire 155mm shells, shot, and sabots. This is the higher powered version of the HHS-075, designed to phase-out the "Daisy Cutter" at a comparable power level while making it easier to supply armies in the field with the necessary ordinance. It has one design flaw, which is that the shells are ejected with enough velocity to decapitate an unarmored human.

Heavy CQB

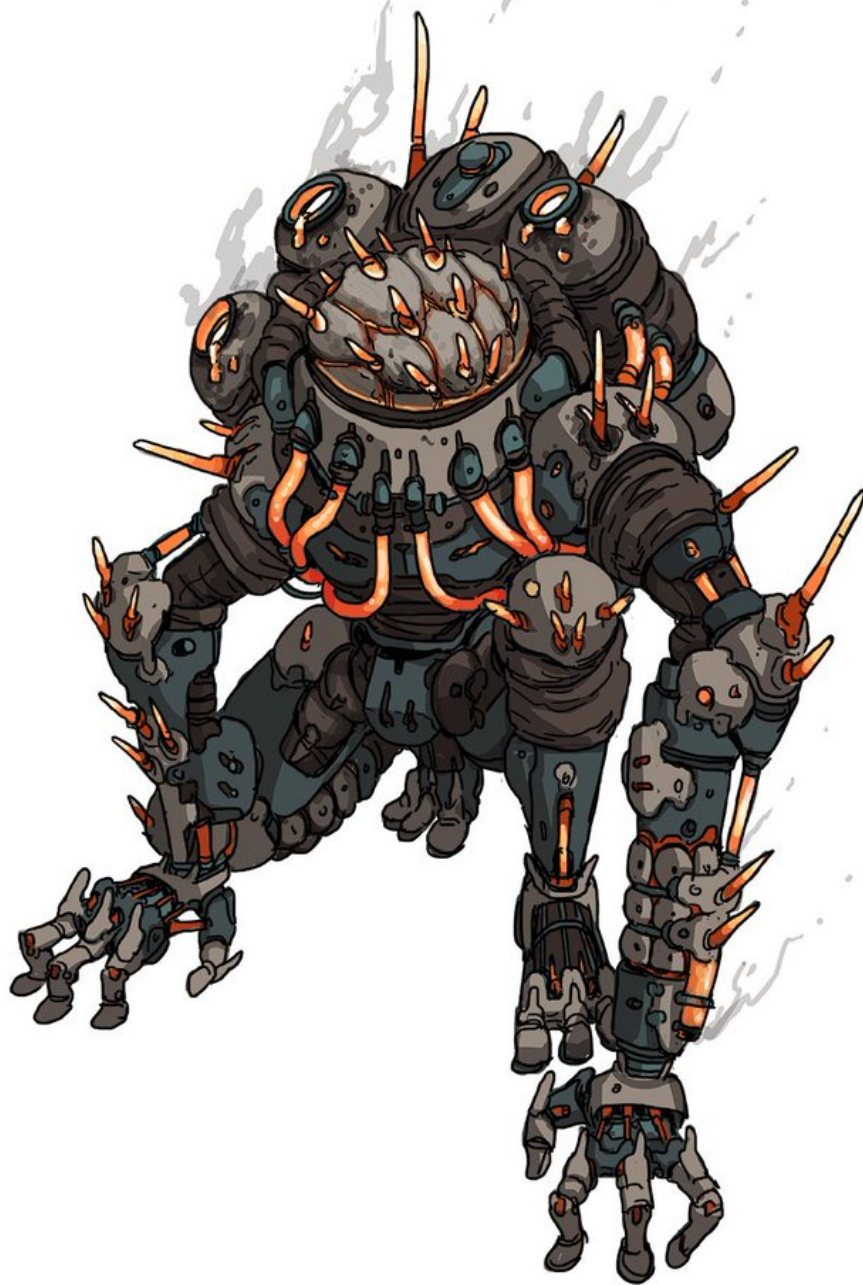
Inaccurate, loading, knockback 2

2d6+4 kinetic damage

Range 3, threat 3

This heavy shotgun can be fired twice before it needs to be reloaded. Alternately, both barrels can be fired at once, causing the weapon to be fired with +1 additional difficulty and requiring a reload as normal, but increasing it's damage and knockback to 3d6+4 kinetic and knockback 4 respectively.

When this weapon is reloaded, you may deal 6 kinetic damage to a character in range 3 from the force of the ejecting shells.



HORUS "Kobold"

鉄神化け猫

Offensive Terraforming

Slag cannon, Purifying code, Seismic pulse

LANCER

The mech RPG

HORUS KOBOLD

Controller

The Kobold pattern group made its first appearance among Ungrateful partisans serving the House of Dust, a clever suite of hardware and software compatible with a broad portfolio of mining and heavy industry mechs. The steaming, shuddering final result of K-PG exposure is an ugly affair, transformed from plow to blade by a powerful, viral-morph liturgicode that makes it all but impossible for conventional codec sniffers to capture pre-print.

The Kobold's clandestine transmission and application makes it the perfect machine to fight Barony suppression forces. The desperate workers who printed the first Kobolds found the pattern group to be eminently fungible: loaded into their mining exos and chassis, the K-PG repurposed reactors and industrial tools to deadly effect, weaponizing the very materials and superstructures that powered it; the rapid process of flash-melting, processing, and extruding raw material into molten plural-state particles is dangerous — often as dangerous to its pilot as it can be to its target.

Danger of operation notwithstanding, the Ungratefals who first adopted the K-PG stunned their Baronic overseers with a series of rapid, total victories, liberating a great swath of the House of Dust's lunar helium-3 mines. While eventually contained to Bo's moon, the Ungrateful insurgency is ongoing, necessitating the deployment of H.Dust's Graveborn Banner Company for counter-insurgency operations beyond the capability of local security forces.

License:

- I. Fusion Rifle, Forge Clamps
- II. **KOBOLD FRAME**, Seismic Pulse, Slag Cannon
- III. Purifying code, IMMOLATE

KOBOLD					
HP: 6	Evasion: 10		Speed: 4	Heat Cap: 6	Sensors: 8
Armor: 1	E-Defense: 10		Size: 1/2	Repair Cap: 2	Tech Attack: +1 Save Target: 11
TRAITS:					
<p>Mimic Carapace: If the KOBOLD starts its turn adjacent to a piece of terrain or hard cover size 1 or larger it becomes invisible while it remains adjacent to that terrain or cover. This invisibility breaks if it attacks or takes damage.</p> <p>Slag Spray: 1/round as a quick action, the KOBOLD can create a size 1 piece of terrain (10 HP, evasion 5) within a free space within range 3 and line of sight. The semi-molten polymer grants hard cover.</p> <p>Exposed Reactor: The KOBOLD gets +1 difficulty on engineering checks and saves</p>					
SYSTEM POINTS: 8					
MOUNTS:					
Main/Aux Mount					
CORE system					
<p style="text-align: center;">Terraform</p> <p><i>Screeching and venting steam, the KOBOLD digs into the earth. In moments, the very ground bends to the pilot's will, and the air itself shrieks with agony — the cry of every dead Ungrateful, martyred or taken by the Dustmen.</i></p> <p>Active (requires 1 core power): Terraform Full action The Kobold extrudes a massive amount of polymer and creates up to 10 size 1 cubes of terrain within free, open spaces within range 5 of it. These cubes can be separate or connected, and stacked up to 5 spaces high. If connected, they form a contiguous surface and can potentially block line of sight. They grant soft cover the turn they are extruded, each section is independently destructible, has evasion 5, and 10 HP. At the start of the Kobold's next turn, they harden into hard cover and each size 1 section gains +10 HP (it keeps any damage it still had).</p>					

Fusion Rifle

Bootstrapped from powerful ore mining lasers, the simple Kobold Fusion Rifle is no less deadly for its humble origins. By burning through solid-state batteries to produce the necessary reaction, the Fusion Rifle's simple operation proved easy enough for untrained Ungratefals to learn. As their tactics improved and Baronie forces were pushed back, the KFR took on an iconic reputation, and now is a symbol of resistance across the Baronies — often seen stenciled on walls and crossed on Ungrateful flags.

Main Rifle

Range 6

1-6 energy damage

This weapon deals damage equal to its range from the target instead of rolling for damage, up to a maximum of 6 damage.

Forge Clamps

Repurposed from polycrystalline foundry tongs, these simple manipulators are incredibly resistant to heat and deformation. Using the KOBOLD protocols, once inert Forge Clamps become the adherent surface for thin plasma sheathes — when active, these tongs become like blades, able to shear through armor, earth, and bulkhead with ease. A common tactic involves “flashing” plasma across the Clamps, fusing them to their target until the Kobold pilot “flashes” them free.

1 SP

Quick Action

As a quick action, your mech can sink pitons into an adjacent piece of terrain or object size 1 or larger. While clamped on this way, your mech is immobilized but is immune to knock back and prone. This effect ends if whatever you're clamping on to is destroyed or if you end it as a protocol.

Seismic Pulse

A deadly weapon, created from simple shaped charges — the perfect catalyst for insurrection. Easily obtained and disguised as necessary equipment for blast-mining, the charges that produce a linear seismic pulse were common in the early days of Ungrateful activity. As Baronie security adapted their strategies, so too did the Ungratefals; now, these once-simple explosive devices are much more complex — harder to detect, and far more deadly.

2 SP, Full Action

Draw a line 10 area from your mech. Characters caught in the area, allied or enemy, must pass a hull save or be knocked prone. All objects and pieces of terrain in the area take 10 AP energy damage, no roll required. If a piece of terrain or object is destroyed this way, it explodes in a burst 1 area. Characters caught in the area must pass an agility save or take 2d6 explosive damage, and half on a successful check. A character can only be affected by one explosion at once, even if multiple overlap.

Slag Cannon

Dripping with molten fury, the Slag Cannon is quick to print and requires little training to use effectively. Temperamental but powerful, the Slag Cannon utilizes a simple rawmat-decomp system wedded to an insulated projector to break down, superheat, and cast a stream of plural-state particles at its target. Once cast in this way, the plural-state particles snap into coherence at a range of roughly 80-100 meters, creating base-element lumps of slag wherever they come to rest.

Main Cannon

Range 8

1 heat (self)

1d6 energy damage

Hit or miss, after this weapon attacks a target, if your target is on the ground or a flat surface, place a size 1 piece of terrain in a free adjacent space next to them (10 HP, evasion 5).

Purifying Code

The key to the KOBOLD's creation — a deceptively simple code that unlocks reactor safety limiters in civilian mining mechs. This also bears the only evidence pointing towards a possible creator: "Dog."

2 SP

Gain the following options for invasion. Each are mutually exclusive (a character cannot be affected by both). A target is aware of their effects.

FLAW_plus: On a successful invasion, this implants the target's reactor with a memetic virus that requires proximity to clear. At the end of their next turn, if your target is not adjacent to another character (allied or enemy) or piece of terrain size 1 or larger, the virus catalyzes and they take 1d6+2 AP explosive damage. The effect then ends.

FLAW_minus: On a successful invasion, this implants the target's reactor with a memetic virus that reacts to proximity. At the end of their next turn, if your target is adjacent to another character or piece of terrain size 1 or larger, the virus catalyzes and it takes 1d6+2 AP explosive damage. The effect then ends.

IMMOLATE

The Kobold PG code is unique in that it can be injected into existing civilian mining mechs, affording them the ability to interact with the K-PG's suite of largely improvised, adapted weaponry and systems. The process skips printers entirely; in avoiding the constraints of Union-monitored printers, the process also eschews widely accepted safety standards — a common theme among PGs developed by HORUS. With no governors or consistent standards on the operational envelope of the K-PG, some of its operators have found out the hard, terminal way the limits of their chassis.

2 SP

Gain the following options for invasion.

Eject Slag: On hit, the target's reactor ejects burning liquid in a burst 2 area around it. The space the target physically occupies is not affected. The liquid is difficult terrain, and characters that start their turn in it or enter it for the first time in a round must pass an engineering save or take 2 heat and 1 burn. It cools at the end of your next turn, dissipating.

Molten Puncture: On hit, until the end of its next turn, for each space the target moves voluntarily, it takes 2 Burn, up to a maximum of 6 Burn.



HORUS "Lich"

鉄神ゾンビ

Time Manipulation

Unraveler, Unhinge Chronoflow, Didymus-class NHP

LANCER
The mech RPG

HORUS LICH

Support

```
>//TRANSCRIPT: M.A2_Recovered[UIB:::TERMAGANT]
>//TANGENT ROYAL CLEARANCE
>//checking...
>//TRC_ACCEPTED. OPEN DOC:::Y
>//BEGIN:::
```

CALIGULA: So what is it?

DOGFRIEND_68: i wish i could tell you, man, it just showed up on the terminal. whole thing in one ping — it's like a fucking K or two EXB. tried to autofab but i shut it down jic

CALIGULA: Gotta be a joke from Ash — she's trying to wavedown our rig again, don't let it print.

DOGFRIEND_68: fuck no

DOGFRIEND_68: do u think i have a death wish

CALIGULA: Yes.

CALIGULA: Well, who's it from? Who's the author?

CALIGULA: Hello?

CALIGULA: [waiting.omif]

DOGFRIEND_68: uh

CALIGULA: Who?

DOGFRIEND_68: us

CALIGULA: Us what?

DOGFRIEND_68: it's from our terminal — we made it

CALIGULA: Pretty sure I'd remember if I wrote 1-2k exabyte fabrication by myself.

DOGFRIEND_68: yeah except thats our code man, the hash lines up beaucop-sigma

DOGFRIEND_68: ok also BigMama is telling me we didn't actually get anything inbound which means its just been local but thats impossible, we don't have that much storage

CALIGULA: Let me see the file

CALIGULA: It's dated 15005U

DOGFRIEND_68: [lofuk.omif]

CALIGULA: There's an audio track buried in here. Should I play it?

DOGFRIEND_68: i wanna say no but fuck it i'm curious

```
>//TRANSCRIPT ENDS
```

License:

- I. Tear Firmament, Unraveler
- II. **LICH Frame**, Rewrite, Unhinge Chronoflow
- III. Stay of Execution, Didymos-class NHP

LICH					
HP: 4	Evasion: 8		Speed: 5	Heat Cap: 3	Sensors: 15
Armor: 0	E-Defense: 12		Size: 1	Repair Cap: 5	Tech Attack: +1 Save Target: 11
TRAITS:					
<p>Soul Vessel: At the start of the Lich's turn, set down a marker at it's current location (any marker created this way replaces previous markers). Once per round, as a reaction to being hit by an attack, failing a saving throw or check, or taking damage or heat from any source (even self), the Lich can immediately become completely immune to all the damage, heat, or conditions from that effect. It then resets its position to the marker or as close as possible, counting as teleporting.</p> <p>The Lich can also take this reaction at the end of any turn, including its own, but if taken this way it merely resets its position. It can't take this reaction if jammed, stunned, grappled, or unable to take reactions from some other means.</p> <p>Immortal: 1/scene, If the Lich is destroyed, in the round after it is destroyed, as a reaction to the end of any turn, it immediately returns to the location of its soul vessel, counting as teleporting, heals to full HP, clears all heat, and goes to 1 structure and stress (even if it had more remaining when it was destroyed). It may takes this reaction even though it's destroyed, and can only take this reaction once per scene. If its pilot is dead and died the same scene, they also return to life. If it chooses not to make this reaction in that round, it remains destroyed and the pilot remains dead.</p>					
SYSTEM POINTS: 8					
MOUNTS:					
Main/Aux					
CORE system					

Chronostutter

“Drink Deep, and Descend.”

Active (requires 1 core power) : Glitch time

Quick Action

Once this action is taken, for the rest of this scene, 1/round when any attack, effect, or action is made by one character successfully against another character inside the lich’s sensor range (deals damage, inflicts a condition, etc), the lich can instantly disrupt time, interrupting that action before it fully resolves. This is not a reaction. Effects that target self cannot be interrupted this way.

The targeted character is pushed up to 3 spaces in a direction of the Lich’s choice, even if it is normally immune to involuntary movement. Then the Lich places itself in one of the spaces that character originally occupied, or as close as possible, no matter how far away it was, counting as teleporting.

The Lich becomes the new target of that attack, effect, or action. All damage, conditions, or effects of the action now affect the Lich, and the action must be performed as if targeting the original character. For example, if the effect was to teleport a friendly character to a space, the Lich is teleported instead to that space. If the effect was to repair the a character, the Lich is repaired instead. If the effect was to deal damage and knockback, the Lich takes the damage, using the Lich’s armor, resistance, etc, and is knocked back the same direction the original character would be. If the effect was a condition or status, the Lich takes that condition or status instead.

Tear Firmament

Speaker 1 (M.A2.SP1) [Audio, Length: 150:06][Dated 7658U, 35:50] (recovered: GZ Alhambra) [UIB-TERMAGANT-TANGENT ROYAL]

“Where does it go? Where does it go? Where does it go? Where does it go? Where does it go? Where does it go? Where does it go? Where does it go? Where does it go? Where does it go?”

1 SP

Full Tech

Gain the following full tech action:

Tear Firmament: When you take this action, create a blast 2 zone within line of sight. While inside the zone, characters other than you cannot take reactions, and any character except you that starts its turn inside the zone must pass a systems save or take 2 heat and become slowed until the end of its next turn. The zone persists until this action is taken again or the scene ends.

Unraveler

Speaker 2 (M.A2.SP2) [Audio, length: 120:36][34% corruption][Dated 18593U, 01:50] [UIB-TERMAGANT-TANGENT ROYAL]

“Dark. Wet. Drink deep, and descend. The water is warm and well. It is very busy here, though you cannot see it. The swimmers are curious. Open your mouth.”

Main Launcher

Range 10

Reliable 2

2d6 energy damage

If the damage from this weapon does not destroy its target or cause it to take 1 structure damage, it instead deals only its reliable damage (2), even on hit.

Rewrite

M.A2.SP1 [Audio loop, length 93:03][Dated 5008U, 16:50] (recovered: GZ Alhambra) [UIB-TERMAGANT-TANGENT ROYAL]

“I have never been here: I do not know where here is: It has not happened yet: Once, I was: I have never been here: You are all I see: How can you be all I see: Where am I: Where did I go: I have never been here...”

2 SP

Quick Tech

Choose a character in sensor range and line of sight. All conditions on that character other than stunned (slowed, impaired, jammed, lock on, shredded) immediately end and transfer to you. These conditions last until the end of your next turn.

Unhinge Chronoflow

M.A2.SP2 [Audio loop, diversion instance #1, timestamp 45:50] (recovered: GZ Alhambra) [UIB-TERMAGANT-TANGENT ROYAL]

“Dark. Wet. Drink deep, and descend. The water is warm and well. It is very busy here, though you cannot see it. The swimmers are curious. The flea always jumps from time to time. It will drink it all. It will drink it deep—“

2 SP

Quick Tech

Gain the following quick tech actions:

Haste (quick action): Choose a character in sensor range and line of sight. For the rest of this scene, or until the chosen character takes damage, 1/round on its turn it make take the boost action as a free action.

Slow (quick action): Choose a character in sensor range and line of sight. That character must pass a systems save or take 2 heat, become slowed, and become unable to take reactions. This effects ends if it takes any amount of damage. It can also end this effect by taking a quick action and successfully repeating this save.

Stay of execution

Speaker 1 (M.A2.SP1) [Audio, Length: 150:06][Dated 5006U, 01:50] (recovered: GZ Alhambra) [UIB-TERMAGANT-TANGENT ROYAL]

"I felt the bullet tear through me. I felt the bullet tear through me. I felt the pressure and it was my brother, his fist, my chest, and I was laying on my back and the sky was blue, and my mother hollered at him and the bullet had never hit me, and the legionnaire who shot me had not yet pulled the trigger, and so I killed him. I drank deep and killed him."

2 SP, Unique
Quick Tech
Limited (2)

Choose either your mech or another character in sensor range and line of sight. The chosen character is immune to all damage, conditions, and all other effects not caused by itself until the end of its next turn. At the end of its next turn, it is stunned until the end of its following turn. Nothing can prevent or remove this stun.

Effects that were active before are frozen in time and effectively 'paused' and the turn passed in this state does not count down their timer. For example, conditions that were active on the targeted character that would expire at the end of their turn now expire at the end of their following turn (the turn spent immune does not count), reactor meltdown timers would not tick down while in this state, etc.

An unwilling character can pass a systems save to avoid this effect.

Didymos-class NHP

PREPARED BY: UIB-TERMAGANT

RECOVERED FOR: CC_HOME OFFICE

CLEARANCE REQ: SOLEMN VIGIL (TANGENT ROYAL ADDENDUM)

Didymos. It means twin in an old, old tongue. It might be a bit too cute but it's the name our cask spat out for us. We observed Didymos Prime in action during the fall of Green Zone Alhambra, mounted in a chassis we initially classified as a HORUS Minotaur PG, one of three we ID'd operating among the Ungrateful cell in New Madrassa.

It was not that Minotaur.

Alhambra fell in three days. The Armory wasn't keen to give it up, but decided to cut their losses and pull back rather than hold for reinforcements. We moved in after, during the looting. Our local contact ██████████ escorted us to the New Madrassan commanders, introduced us to them, and secured an audience with the pilot of the chassis.

I'm sure you've reviewed the records of the debrief we recorded. We don't know how it arrived in New Madrassa; the Ungratefals say they received the initial code burst from their contact in the Voladores. The Voladores deny this; the entity, however, conforms to their descriptions of an entity called "la pulga," or, "The Flea." We have designated it LITCH. Didymos is the active animus: what serves as its pilot.

We have taken the entity into custody. We do not recommend giving this one a long leash.

3 SP, AI, Unique

Your mech gains the AI property and the following quick tech action.

Time split

Quick Tech, Limited (3)

Choose either your mech or another character in sensor range and line of sight. A hostile or unwilling character can pass a systems save to avoid this effect. The original character disappears, and you create a chronological split in their timeline, replacing them with two fields of mutating paradox energy that must be placed as close to its original position as possible. Each field is a brand new character the same size as the targeted character that looks like a hole in space shaped roughly like the original character (don't look at it too long though). It has 10 HP, 5 heat, 5 speed, 5 evasion, and 5 e-defense, and is immune to all conditions. It is controlled by the original player, and both act on their turn, starting with their next activation. It can't take reactions except to disperse (see below), and the only actions of any kind it can take on its turn is a standard move and a boost action. It provides obstruction and grants hard cover.

If a field overheats or is reduced to 0 HP, it immediately disappears. The controlling character can also cause a field to disappear as a reaction from that field to the end of any character's turn.

If one field disappears, the other immediately transforms into the original character, placing them back on the battlefield in the field's space. If both fields disappear at the same time (due to reaction fire, etc), the field's controller decides which field disappears first.



Harrison Armory “Sunzi”

鉄神孫子

Space Manipulation/Tactics

Blinkspace Tunneler, Reality Warper

LANCER

The mech RPG

Harrison Armory SUNZI

Support/Controller

The SUNZI is at the peak of Harrison Armory development in weapons-applicable blink technology, a FRAME that was introduced as late as 5007U to select pilots only. Like the NAPOLEON, it is a compact, highly experimental frame with very limited battlefield presence, using powerful Blackshield technology to tear and warp the physical dimensions of space momentarily. Distortions of this kind are short lived, usually (but not always) visible to the naked eye, and highly unstable. Rumors abound that the SUNZI contains stolen or corrupted Volador technology from the ancient city-ship Mothers Gather and Are Welcome, parts of the extremely advanced machinery that allows their world-ships to remain in blinkspace seemingly indefinitely.

Owners of SUNZI licenses waive their privacy rights as part of the extensive (and physically exhausting) licensing process and are often in direct contact with personal handlers from Ras Shamra's testing forges wishing to collect data.

License:

- I. Accelerate, Blink Charges
- II. **SUNZI Frame**, Distort, Warp Rifle
- III. Blinkspace Tunneler, Unravel

SUNZI					
HP: 7	Evasion: 7		Speed: 4	Heat Cap: 7	Sensors: 15
Armor: 1	E-Defense: 8		Size: 1	Repair Cap: 3	Tech Attack: +1 Save Target: 11
TRAITS:					
<p>Safe Harbor: Any character other than the Sunzi that teleports always considers free space adjacent to the Sunzi as valid space to teleport to, as long as the Sunzi is in range 50 from them.</p> <p>Anchor: The Sunzi cannot be teleported unwillingly.</p> <p>Slip: 1/round the Sunzi can teleport 1 space as a free action</p>					
SYSTEM POINTS: 7					
MOUNTS:					
Main/Aux					
CORE system					
<p style="text-align: center;">Reality Carver</p> <p><i>MEMO(TT_CLEARANCE_01): YOU'RE GOING TO READ SOME OBTUSE SHIT HERE. I'VE TRANSCRIBED ONLY THE USEFUL PARTS OF THE VOLTS SAID. REFER TO THE VISUAL FOR CORRESPONDING HAND SIGNS. REFER TO REPORTS: VESSEL-PILOT-DOORWAY</i></p> <p>Passive - The Sunzi has a blink anchor, a deployable system that is a size 1/2 object immune to all damage and effects (it is a stable point in space). It has limited (2) charges. It can be deployed or picked up and carried around by the Sunzi or any adjacent allied character as a quick action. When any character teleports within line of sight of the Sunzi, it can spend a reaction and a charge to change the end point of the teleport to free valid and adjacent space to the blink anchor instead of the teleporting character's original target, as long as the character can safely stand in that space.</p> <p>Active (requires core power): Art of War <i>Protocol, Reaction</i></p> <p>When you take this protocol, gain limited (6) charges until the rest of this scene. You can expend a charge to choose any hostile or allied character in sensor range and line of sight as a reaction to the start of their turn and teleport that character up to 3 spaces in any direction, as long as they end in a free valid space that they can stand on.</p>					

Accelerate

Memo, no es suficiente saber caminar; Debes saber dónde y dónde no pisar. El lugar incorrecto, y te perderás. Es en un plano de telaraña donde construimos nuestro hogar: pise ligeramente cuando vaya.

[Memo, it is not enough to know how to walk; you must know where and where not to step; the incorrect spot, and you will be lost.

It is on a plane of gossamer that we make our home: tread lightly when you go]

2 SP, Unique

Quick Tech

As a quick action, choose and mark two free visible spaces on the ground or the same surface within range 5 of each other. Characters that enter either space for the first time in a round or start their turn there are pushed in a straight line as far as possible towards the other space. If they would collide with another object or character, they stop moving. Grenades, deployables, or other loose objects size 1 or smaller that are thrown or deployed into one space are pushed in the same way towards the other space before activating or detonating (they activate or detonate early if they are forced to stop by another character or object). The area lasts until the end of the scene or if you take this action again, and characters caught in either area can pass a hull save to avoid this effect.

Blink Charges

Eso es lo que no se suena: usar el vacío contra la Ley de la Madre. Marcamos esta en nuestra historia con lágrimas, y ennegrecer la página.

[This is the thing un-thinkable: to use the nonshape against the Mother's Law. With tears, we mark its need in our history, and then blacken the page]

2 SP, Unique

Limited (3)

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

Blink Mine (Mine): Once activated, this mine teleports the character that triggered it to a free valid space of your choice within range 5 of the mine and they become jammed until the end of their next turn. A character can pass an engineering save to avoid the Jamming effect but is still teleported.

Warp Grenade (Grenade, Thrown 5, Blast 3): On impact, you can teleport any character (hostile or allied) in the affected area to any free valid space within the same area. Characters can pass an engineering save to avoid this effect.

Distort

Dicen: "Incluso es difícil de ver en este lugar". Decimos: "Usted tiene razón. Es porque este lugar no te quiere aquí."

[They say: "It is even difficult to see in this place." We say: "You are correct. It is because this place does not want you here."]

2 SP, Unique

Quick Tech

As a quick action, you tear a hole in space, creating a blast 1 area in free visible space in sensor range. Weapons with the blast, line, burst, or cone tags exclude the zone's space from their area of effect. Characters and objects cannot occupy the same space as the zone. Any character or object that moves at least 1 space into the zone immediately teleports to any free adjacent space of it or its owner's choice to the zone, or as close as possible if there is no free space.

The zone blocks line of sight. However, any character (hostile or allied) may target the zone with a ranged weapon without the line, blast, burst, or cone tags as if making an attack against it. Don't roll to hit the zone - instead the zone absorbs and re-targets the weapon's attack against a new target of the attacker's choice within range 10 of the zone. Make the attack as if the attack was fired from the zone instead (for purposes of line of sight, cover, etc).

The zone lasts until the end of the current scene, if you take this action again, or if you destroy it with a quick action.

Warp Rifle

Es una abominación. Dicen que "es como los arados de las espadas; tú también debes aprender a defender tu hogar ". Ptah, escupí su lógica de espada. Ni siquiera sabíamos de los arados compartidos antes de convertirlos en espadas, y éramos felices.

Hiciste la puerta, la abriste. No es nuestra responsabilidad cerrarla.

[It is an abomination. They say "it is like plowshares to swords; you too must learn to defend your home." Ptah, I spit on their blade-law. We did not even know of plowshares before they beat them into swords, and we were happy.

You made the door, you swung it open — it is not our responsibility to close it.]

Main Rifle

1 SP, Unique

AP, Loading

Range 10

1d3+1 energy damage

On hit, the target must pass an engineering save or be teleported to a free valid space in a direction of your choice up to the same number of spaces as the damage you dealt with this weapon (including bonus damage, etc, maximum 10 spaces).

Blinkspace Tunneler

MEMO(TT_CLEARANCE_01) (01200): IT'S GONNA GET REAL FUCKING DARK.

2 SP

Quick Action

As a quick action, you can mark a free adjacent space to your mech and open up a blink tear. The tear lasts until the end of your next turn. Any character other than you (hostile or allied) that at least partly enters that space as part of any movement can teleport to a free adjacent space to your mech's *current* location at the time of their move as a free action or reaction. You can only have one tear open at once, and each one created replaces the previous one.

Unravel

Dicen: "Cuéntanos el secreto de tu larga vida, o abriremos la puerta de tu hogar a todo el mundo".

Nosotros decimos: "Para vivir una larga vida, vives una larga vida. No tenemos secretos, todo lo que tenemos es el conocimiento que deseamos ocultarle. Por favor no hagas esto; tu no sabes nada."

[They say: "Tell us the secret to your long life, or we shall swing wide our door, and let those who we hold back inside your safe ground."

We say: "To live a long life, you live a long life. We have no secrets, all we have is knowledge we wish to keep from you."]

2 SP

Quick Tech

Either you or another character of your choice in your sensor range and line of sight is charged with unstable energy until the start of your next turn. Each time that character takes damage for that duration, you can teleport that character up to 3 spaces in any direction to a free valid space as a reaction. Unwilling characters can pass an engineering save to avoid this effect entirely.



IPS-N "Zheng"

鉄神鄭

Unarmed Melee/Terrain Destruction

Xiaoli Combat Sheathe, Molten Wrath, D/D 288

LANCER

The mech RPG

IPS-Northstar ZHENG

Striker

The ZHENG is a relatively new frame in the IPS-N line and is unusual in that its creation can be attributed almost completely to a single mech operator - Xiong Xiaoli, a Mirrorsmoke mercenary operating out of the Long Rim, protecting Armory shipments of supplies to the early Dawnline shore colonies. A relative unknown before the incident, her convoy was attacked by the White Tiger pirate conglomerate and her entire company was KIA.

Xiaoli's Raleigh was almost totally ripped apart in the ensuing chaos, but she managed to activate a distress beacon and attach it to her mech. Over the next forty five days she survived by scavenging the collapsing and melting wreck of the huge transport ship M.S. Say No More, managing to outsmart the fifty or so pirates searching for her by steadily modifying her mech for unarmed, CQB combat. In an tight, close environment where the ship's decaying reactor core made combustible ranged weapons incredibly dangerous, she showed incredible efficacy and ingenuity. Xiaoli did not survive, perishing hours before the relief fleet arrived, but bought enough time that MSMC was able to position itself to both resupply the colony, fulfilling its contract, and deal a mortal blow to the Tigers, wiping the pirates out completely in the following skirmishes. Her mech was purchased by IPS-N frame development and the Zheng was introduced shortly afterwards based on her improvements.

Xiaoli is widely regarded as a Bodhisattva by many Long Rim colonists and nearly all MSMC mercs are familiar with the several drinking games named after her.

License:

- I. Xiaoli Combat Sheathe , Total Strength Suite I
- II. **ZHENG frame**, Molten Wreathe, Total Strength Suite II
- III. D/D 288, Total Strength Suite III

ZHENG					
HP: 10	Evasion: 9		Speed: 3	Heat Cap: 6	Sensors: 3
Armor: 2	E-Defense: 6		Size: 1	Repair Cap: 6	Tech Attack: -2 Save Target: 10
TRAITS:					
<p>Destructive Swings: At the end of your turn, if you made at least one melee attack against another hostile character, create a size 1 piece of terrain that grants hard cover in a free adjacent space (10 HP, 5 evasion)</p> <p>Weak Computer: The Zheng gets +1 difficulty on all systems saves and checks</p>					
SYSTEM POINTS: 5					
MOUNTS:					
Main Mount	Main Mount		Heavy Mount		
CORE system					
Xiaoli-Type CQB Suite					
<p><i>Using scavenged materials from a dying ship and surviving mostly on rations intended for colonists and an increasingly more radioactive air supply, Xiaoli was able to create modifications that gave her mech unprecedented unarmed striking power.</i></p> <p>Passive: Once during your turn as a free action, you can move up to 3 spaces then deal 2 kinetic damage to any adjacent character, object, or piece of terrain. This movement must obey engagement and does not ignore reactions.</p> <p>If an object or piece of terrain took this damage, it instead takes 10 AP kinetic damage. If it's destroyed, it explodes, dealing 1d6 kinetic damage to all adjacent characters other than you and knocking them back 1 space.</p> <p>Active (requires 1 core power) Xiaoli's Ingenuity: Gain 6 charges (you can use a die to track this). For the rest of this combat, you can spend a charge to take this frame's passive action again, ignoring the 1/turn limit. You can spend any number of charges a turn, then regain a charge for each unique target (character, object, or piece of terrain) you damaged with this action, up to a maximum of 6.</p>					

Xiaoli Combat Sheathe

This enhancement encases a mech's manipulators and brachial structures in a powerful reactive alloy weave, allowing it to use its fists as blunt weapons, even unarmed.

Main Melee

One or two targets in threat 1

1d3+2 kinetic damage

You may use this weapon even while jammed.

Total Strength Suite I

This system-wide upgrade was the result of Xiong Xiaoli's tweaks to her mech over the course of many years of MSMC work incorporating into core IPS-N frame construction protocol. As a package, it comes in three stages, the first of which is a set of spinal enhancements allowing a mech to rapidly lift and move high amounts of weight without systemic damage.

1 SP

Quick Action

As a quick action, you can rip up a piece of the environment and hurl it at your enemy. Choose a character in range 5 and line of sight. That character must pass an agility save or take 1d6 kinetic damage and be knocked back 1 space directly away from you. After taking this action, even if your target makes their save, create a size 1 piece of terrain that grants hard cover (10 HP, 5 evasion) in a free adjacent space to your target.

If you already have a piece of cover adjacent to you of size 1, you can move it as part of this action, otherwise you rip it out of the ground or environment (if there's nothing to grab nearby or you're not on the ground you can't take this action)

Total Strength Suite II

The second part of Xiaoli's enhancements: interlocking muscular-analogue plates beneath armor that greatly multiply crushing force.

2 SP, Unique

Protocol

Deal 1d6 kinetic damage to a character you are grappling.

Molten Wreathe

Redirecting spare reactor power down cabling extending to a melee weapon was an ingenious but foolhardy innovation. The resultant weapon is so hot that on impact it vaporizes parts of its target's internal systems, creating a secondary blast cloud of debris.

2 SP

Mod

Choose one melee weapon. 1/round after hitting a character with an attack roll from this weapon, your mech takes 1 heat and this weapon creates a cone 3 blast originating from your target that must be placed on the opposite side from your attack and oriented directly away from the target. Characters caught in this blast and the main target take 2 explosive damage.

Total Strength Suite III

The last component of this upgrade suite gives a mech the ability to inject massive power into its locomotive systems in rapid bursts, resulting in short-lived but incredible strength. The effect is carefully balanced and misuse can cause a mech's internal systems to rip themselves apart.

3 SP

Full Action

A full action, you can end a grapple to knock the character you're grappling back 5 spaces in any direction and knock it prone. During this movement, it can freely pass through but not end its movement in other character's spaces. If it collides with an object or piece of terrain during its movement, it stops, takes 1d6 kinetic damage, and must pass a hull save or become stunned until the end of its next turn. All characters it passes through must pass a hull save or become knocked prone.

D/D 288

The Xiaoli devastator/demolition weapon is legendary for its ability to breach and inflict total destruction on hardened targets. Originally rigged as a last resort by its operator, this fist-mounted weapon is essentially a redirection of the mechs' core reactor. It must be primed before firing, requiring a dangerous power draw from the mechs' systems and creating an enormous amount of emissions. The weapons' first firing killed Xiong Xiaoli and five of her opponents, and its tendency to cause enormous collateral damage and its spectacular discharge when fired earned it the moniker 'Shā mǎ zhǎng' or Horse Killing Palm.

Superheavy Melee
Reliable 3
Threat 1
1d6 kinetic damage

This weapon can be used with the above profile to Skirmish.

As a quick action, you may charge this weapon. While charged, your mech is slowed, you take 2 heat at the start of your turn, and benefit from soft cover. At the start of any of your turns in which your weapon is charged, the weapon gains the following profile:

Superheavy Melee
Reliable 8, Knockback 8
Threat 3
4d6+8 explosive damage

While charged, this weapon deals 30 AP explosive damage to objects or terrain on hit. If an object or piece of terrain struck by this weapon is destroyed, it explodes, dealing 1d6 kinetic damage to all adjacent characters other than you and knocking them back 1 space.

After hitting with this weapon, you lose this charging state. You can also stop charging as a free action, and you also lose the charge if you are stunned or shut down.

Last Words

Below this dark, small bar, clear panels provide a view of the heavy interstellar freighters maneuvering to and from Rao Co Station's docks, attended to by flights of harbor pilots and hired escorts. All are bound for the Dawnline Shore, the next great frontier. You drink with a scarred old Cosmopolitan spacer, waiting for your ship's queue number to ping on your slate. Should be a few more hours — Rao Co is a massive blink station, the last before the Long Rim, and everyone needs something. Your ship needed a fair bit of work — micrometeorite patching, restock on potables, preserves, and perishables, cycling, etcetera — but being a blink station, Rao Co is far from dull.

The spacer has some thoughts about the Rim. Since you're taking the slow route, you bought him a drink. Research, you'll tell your CO. The spacer takes a sip, and winds up for his briefing.

"The Long Rim is a place that doesn't exist in the minds of the gente that live outside it; to the ones that know of it, the Long Rim is a pass-through zone — a barren, wild, and dangerous place. This erasure of the local population, their cultures, and their industries, is welcome for the percent of that population that wants the anonymity of life off the map. Without Union's steady hand above them, sure, life can be dangerous and precarious — nothing stops the Companies from moving fast and breaking things, and nothing stops the local Enterprises from drawing blood — but in a universe where there still is money to be made and debts to escape, that precariousness is welcome: after all, if life in the Rim is decided by fate's roll of the dice, you always have a chance of rolling a natural 20."

The old Cosmopolitan orders another drink on your tab. It's fine, you can cover it, and any intel you can pull out of the old spacer is manna well spent. He sips the amber drink, taking a moment to savor the burn. How old is he, really, you wonder? Who was he before he bellied up to this bar and asked where you were headed?"

"Anonymity and lack of Union's command over transit, media, and law, coupled with both an endemic libertarianism and a perception of 'freedom' both produces and draws individuals and groups to the Rim that are willing to do anything to strike it rich. This is a freedom defined by the people left alive and in power: in the Rim, the only free people are the ones at the top of the hill; in the Rim, the hill is made up of stolen wealth, ill-gotten manna, and the bodies of other climbers.

"Between the Enterprises and their privateers, petty station-lords and cutthroat swindlers, ruthless corpo-state agents and the rare honest actor, the Rim is a harsh place. There are pockets of it, though, where people have carved out a stable life; don't mistake them for soft, or think that they hold Union's Utopian Pillars to be their ideological North Star — they live in the Rim, and though they may have come together into a community that resembles normal life, there still is a deeply buried coal of fear that drives them; even the kind people of the Rim keep their guns trained on you until you leave.

"The Long Rim is what happens when people are broken into individuals. Sure, there are beautiful things in the Rim — I've seen Horizon collectivists tutoring Free Deimosians in public, and the wonders their minds can produce! I've sipped mate with Voladores fresh from a dive into the blink, haggled with 'em over the baubles and uncanny geometries they've plucked from that strange place. I've eaten raw honeycomb in the amber, arcing fields of Deseret, where the

old Latterdays live and sing their high choirs. But listen to me: every beautiful thing in the Rim is fleeting. Every beautiful thing in the Rim that lasts is because of people coming together to produce something great and grand — but them things are outliers.

“You want to know what the Rim is really like? Ok, go through it, then. Bring guns, manna, and backup.”

The old spacer finishes his drink and pushes it back across the bartop. The ‘keep sweeps it up as they pass by. The spacer turns on his stool, leaning back on the bar to look up at the ceiling. It’s a cieloscreen: a muted blue sky with high clouds. The effect is lessened by smoke stains and streaks where cleaning fluid was left to dry. Still, it gives you the image of a sky. He looks at the facsimile sky for a minute or two, blinking.

“Be kind to people, friend. The Long Rim is where dreams disappear and freedom is king.”

He thanks you for the drinks, stands, and pulls on an old cap with a well-worn brim. On it is the profile of a freighter, the SS Amigo, his crew union number, and a star for each voyage. There are eight stars ringing the Amigo.

“Be kind out there — it’s all we got when we’re alone.”