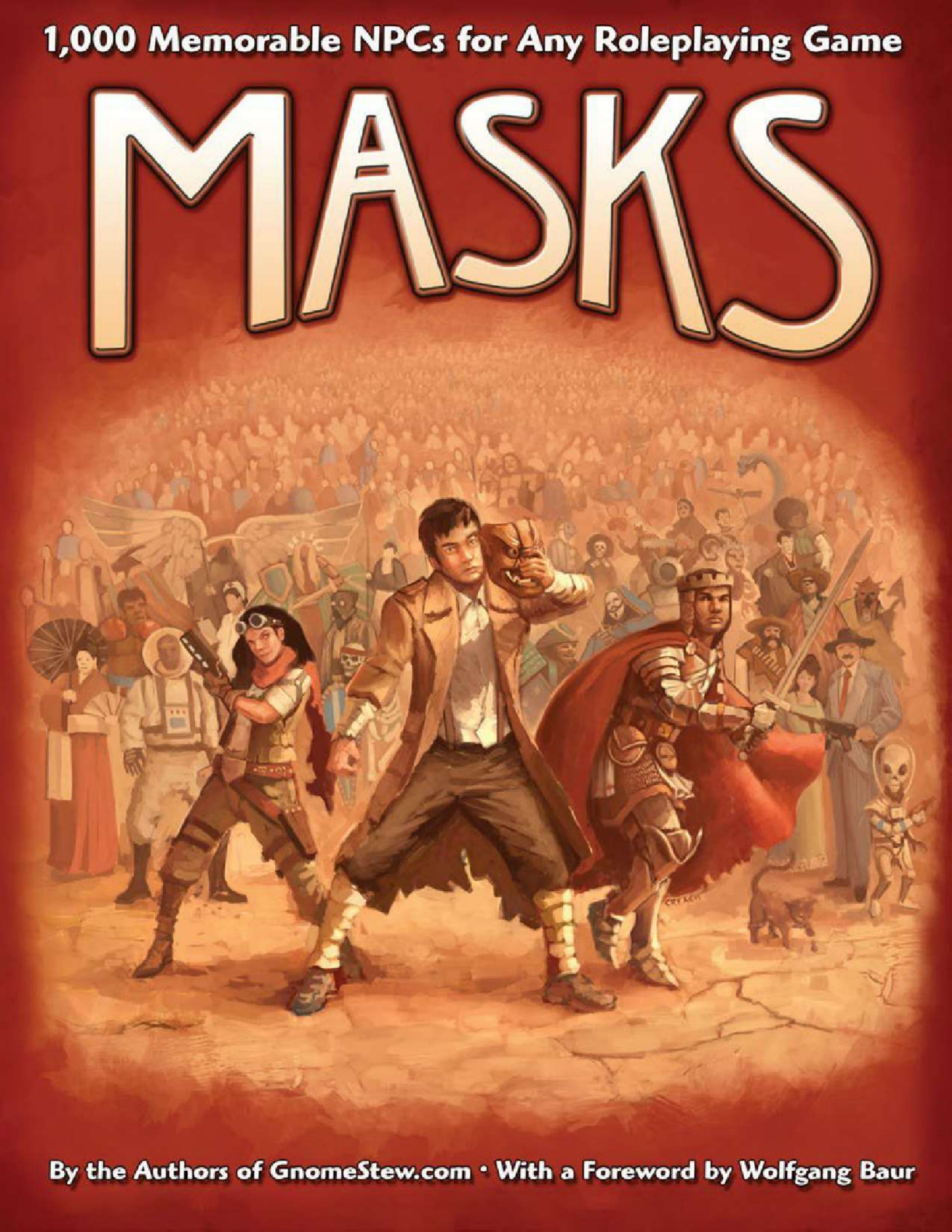
1,000 Memorable NPCs for Any Roleplaying Game

MASKS



By the Authors of GnomeStew.com • With a Foreword by Wolfgang Baur

MASKS

1,000 Memorable NPCs for Any Roleplaying Game



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With special thanks to C.M. Cline for writing "The 7-Sentence NPC" in *Dragon® Magazine* #184 (August 1992), which inspired this book

In memory of Jack Vasel and Amber Blackburn

Dedications

lives I have shared over the
me perspective on my life and
e person I wanted to be.

Karen whom marrying was
y daughter Calen for teaching
ho is a character unto himself.

couraged me to harness my
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bby. My contribution to *Masks*
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and to the rest of the gnomes
on both my games and my

who puts up with my many
raised a huge geek; and my
up thinking that publishing

couraged my gaming. For my
y enables my gaming. For our
there, here is a plaything that

y sounding board and anchor;
ers Alliance, whose members
o life every Saturday morning.

ters that have inspired and
I have run and played: Alex,
e, Merik, Spenser, Owen,

dicate this book to the readers
e GMs who bought our first
f you, *Masks* wouldn't exist.

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Foreword: Man with 1,000 Faces

Whether you call yourself a game master, dungeon master, referee, judge, or keeper, you have one most important skill: You can show off a character in half a dozen ways. It could be a funny accent, a facial tic, standing in a hunched posture, a bobbly nod from the goblin servant, or a fierce growl when it's time for the orc captain to demand surrender. The players are the heroes, but you make the world come alive.

The joy of taking on the judge's chair is the sense that, really, you can be anyone and everyone in a single night. In fact, it's expected. So, you feel the joy of improvisation when a new NPC is thrust into the spotlight, and the rush of having the party question exactly the character you've fully prepared and thought through. You get the satisfaction of seeing the players follow the plan and love the ride.

It's an entirely different and much more panicky rush when the players take a sudden left turn and leave your plans in ruins—"Wait, they want to talk to the beggar prince instead of the wizard offering a treasure map? Eep!" In those instances, a novice game master may say "But you can't do that!" or "That's not the adventure!" The experienced game master says, "Well, are you sure?"—and then proceeds to go off on a wild excursion with new faces that become regulars, or foes whom the players learn to fear.

Ultimately, all roleplaying games are about imaginary people and places, and the people part is the crucial one. Players rarely dwell on descriptions of scenery, but they parse every clue from a villain's speech, and they will thoroughly question an evil high priest's servants and followers for hints of his plans. Even the good-guy NPCs can really set the mood of a game session: the faithful armorer, the innkeeper who offers ale and a song to the conquering heroes, the arch-wizard who always, always turns someone into a frog. These are the friendly faces your players are praying their characters will see again when they miscalculate their odds against a dragon.

So, a well-rehearsed game master is always the man or woman of 1,000 faces, and can play any part with full details, hooks, quirks, and weaknesses, enough so that the NPC's voice or manner alone will tell the players who is speaking. Whether you do everything in-character or through description, you are the actor or director giving life to well-rounded, well-loved, well-respected, and well-feared voices. Nothing is more useful to mastering that sort of toolkit than a wide selection of stock characters, and this volume offers you that in multitudes.

Read it cover-to-cover or browse it as needed, and bookmark the ones you know you'll use next week. For the most jaded grognards among us, let me throw out a challenge: Choose a character archetype that's not your usual style and see whether you can pull it off. You will certainly surprise your players. You may surprise yourself.

A new character is like an introduction at a party: Anything might happen. So, read on and then make some introductions! Your players will surely be pleased to make their acquaintance.

Wolfgang Baur
Kirkland, WA
June 2011

Introduction: Welcome to Masks

Welcome to *Masks: 1,000 Memorable NPCs for Any Roleplaying Game*, the second book from Engine Publishing and the authors of Gnome Stew—and thank you for buying it!

I'm Martin Ralya, the founder of Engine Publishing and the owner of, and one of the contributors to, the game mastering blog Gnome Stew (*gnomestew.com*), and I'd like to tell you a little bit about *Masks* and why it's so damned huge.

After our first book, *Eureka: 501 Adventure Plots to Inspire Game Masters*, received rave reviews, became a PDF bestseller on DriveThruRPG (*www.drivethrurpg.com*), exceeded our wildest sales expectations, and was nominated for a 2010 Golden Geek Award for Best Supplement, and Gnome Stew won the silver 2010 GenCon EN World RPG Award for Best Blog, we thought to ourselves, "*Oh, shit. Now people will expect us to do this again!*"

We're passionate about GMing, and about system-neutral resources, and as it happened we had a sexy idea for another book: this one, our second swing for the fences. Before *Eureka* came out, we were told that a system-neutral book of adventure plots would be a tough sell; afterwards, some folks pointed out that it would have sold better as three separate books, one for each major genre. And you know what? It probably would have. As three separate books, we could have sold each mini-*Eureka* for more than a third of the price of the big book, and likely made more money.

So why didn't we? Because *Eureka* was conceived as the ultimate adventure toolkit, a resource for every GM of every skill level, and was based on the premise that you can easily adapt a plot from one genre to suit another genre. Splitting it up would have gone against those ideals, and the same is true of *Masks*. We believe that this is the ultimate NPC resource, a book that can find a happy home on every GM's bookshelf, and that it's useful in part because it's insanely comprehensive and works well irrespective of what game or games you play.

When we started working on *Masks*, I knew in the back of my mind that if we didn't hit the ball harder and farther with this product, people would call our first book—and our amazing creative team, and this company—a flash in the pan. So we went big: Compared to *Eureka*, *Masks* is longer, hardcover instead of softcover, includes nearly double the amount of interior artwork (81 pieces vs. 41), and was produced by a bigger team (22 people vs. 19).

Packed into this massive tome are a thousand distinctive, fascinating characters that you can use in any RPG, as well as indexes to help you find the ones you need and advice on making your portrayal of these and other NPCs unforgettable. To the best of our knowledge, it's the largest resource of its kind—big, ballsy, nerdy, and made with a great deal of love.

Producing *Masks* was a hell of a ride. We hope you'll enjoy it for years to come.

Martin Ralya
Salt Lake City, UT
June 2011



Game Mastering Advice

When you portray a character, it's like putting on a mask: your mannerisms change, and your players perceive you differently in their imaginations. In this chapter, we'll show you how to put on the 1,000 "masks" in this book and how to deliver a performance your players will never forget.

This is a big book, but it's also designed to be as easy to use on the fly as it is during game prep. Just flip to any NPC page, read some or all of one entry, and you'll have enough information to play that NPC to the hilt. The template we designed for *Masks* makes it a breeze to use the book this way.

To help you get the most out of *Masks*, we've provided GMing advice, tips, tricks, and tools in the seven sections of this chapter: How to Use this Book, Anatomy of a *Masks* NPC, Adapting and Re-Skinning Characters, Making Your Characters Memorable, Genres, Traits, and The Invisible Keywords.

We wrote these characters, but it's you who will bring them to life, work them into your games, and hopefully use *Masks* for the rest of your GMing career.

Artist: Andrew McIntosh

How to Use This Book

If you want to dive in and start using *Masks: 1,000 Memorable NPCs for Any Roleplaying Game* right away, you can skip this chapter—this book is designed to be used on the fly, with no prep or delays. But if you're not in a hurry, you'll find a wealth of GMing advice, as well as information on how get the most out of *Masks*, in this chapter.

What Is a Mask?

When you portray a character in a roleplaying game, it's like putting on a mask. You act differently, assuming a persona to match the mask, and your players perceive you differently in their mind's eyes—just as if you were actually wearing a mask. This book provides 1,000 masks—a thousand vivid, memorable characters and the details you need to portray them convincingly to your players.

Finding the Perfect NPC

Whether you need a non-player character (NPC) right this hot minute or for next week's game night, we've made it easy for you to find the kind of character you're looking for. Here's how *Masks* NPCs are organized:

- **Genre:** Characters in *Masks* are divided into three intentionally broad genres: fantasy (334), sci-fi (333), and modern (333). Because the core elements of a great character have nothing to do with genre, you can use almost every character in this book in your game regardless of genre. Genre makes a good starting point, though, especially if you're in a hurry.
- **Role:** *Masks* NPCs fall into one of three general roles: villain, neutral, or ally. Villains are likely to be opposed to the PCs, while allies are inclined to be friendly or helpful to the party. Neutrals aren't positioned in relation to the PCs in the same way that villains and allies are, and make up the bulk of any campaign world. With a little tweaking, though, you can turn any neutral NPC into an ally or villain—which is why *Masks* is 50% neutrals, 25% villains, and 25% allies.
- **Traits:** Traits are brief descriptors like *beautiful*, *police*, and *charming*, and every NPC has at least two of them. Traits come in three general flavors—description, organization, and skill set—and all 47 traits are described in this chapter. You can also use the trait index (p. 319) to find NPCs with specific traits.

The Name Ribbon

If you need a name on the fly, or for inspiration, you can always pull one from any NPC entry in the book—but you can also use the "name ribbon" that appears at the bottom of every page in chapters 2, 3, and 4. Just flip to any page in the chapter of the appropriate genre—fantasy for fantasy names, for example—and you'll find given names and nicknames on the left-hand, even-numbered pages and surnames and titles on the right-hand, odd-numbered pages.

The names in each chapter are drawn from the NPCs found in *Masks*, and by combining a given name and a surname you can quickly generate a complete name on the spot. Naming conventions vary widely from game to game, so you may find names you like in chapters outside of your campaign's genre, too—and with over 1,900 given names, surnames, and nicknames/titles in the name ribbon, there are a lot of names to choose from.

Abbreviations and Terminology

You'll find a handful of common abbreviations used throughout *Masks*:

- GM: Game Master
- PC: Player Character
- NPC: Non-Player Character
- RPG: Roleplaying Game

In writing *Masks*, we used the most universal terms for the person who runs the game ("GM" or "game master"), the events of one gaming session ("adventure") or a linked series of sessions ("campaign"), and the PCs ("party"). Some games use different terms, like "scenario" instead of adventure, but we're all talking about the same things.

We also used gender-neutral terminology wherever possible, like "actor" to refer to both male and female actors, rather than "actor" for men and "actress" for women. The only exception is the *outdoorsman* trait—we couldn't find an alternative term that was as elegant and efficient as "outdoorsman."

Gender and Ethnicity

Masks features 500 female and 500 male NPCs, following roughly the same population split as the real world. For layout reasons, you won't find strict male/female alternation from NPC to NPC, but the overall breakdown in each genre (and the whole book) is 50/50. The core elements of each NPC, however—their personality, motivations, quirks, and background—are almost entirely gender-neutral. You can use virtually any *Masks* NPC as a character of the opposite gender with little or no tweaking, apart from changing the pronouns.

Most *Masks* NPCs are described without making any specific reference to their ethnicity, or to their skin color, although we didn't explicitly avoid mentioning either element. This is intentional, as these characters are designed to be easy to fit into your game without a lot of work on your part. You can make them members of any ethnic group you like, or change any other aspect of these characters, to make them suit your game.

Race

100% of the NPCs in *Masks* are written as human characters. We took this approach because virtually every RPG includes humans, but not every RPG features characters of other races, like elves, orcs, gnomes, or sentient dolphins. We want this book to be as useful as possible to as many GMs as possible, and it's much easier to convert a human NPC to a character of another race than it is to go in the other direction. If you want to make any NPC in this book a member of another race, it's usually as simple as saying "She's an elf" or "He's a Martian" and making a cosmetic change or two. Your players will never know that the character was originally written as a human.

To provide inspiration for transforming *Masks* NPCs into members of other races, the artwork found throughout this book depicts both humans and non-humans. Every portrait in *Masks* illustrates a specific NPC, sometimes as written (as a human) and sometimes as a non-human.

Masks: A Table Book and a Prep Book

Masks is intended be used both as a "table book" and as a "prep book." A table book is a resource you can bring to every gaming session to refer to during play, while a prep book is one that you use primarily between sessions, when you're prepping for an adventure or a campaign. Many game mastering resources fill one role or the other; *Masks* fills them both.

If you want to use *Masks* on the fly, there's more than enough information in every NPC entry to enable you to portray a convincing, memorable character with zero prep. At the same time, not having pages and pages of information for each character makes it easy to bring these characters to life in a way that suits your game world—each NPC is a solid foundation for you to build on.

What's in the Book?

Here's what you'll find in each chapter of *Masks*.

Chapter 1: GMing Advice

In the first section of this chapter, **Anatomy of a Masks NPC**, you'll find a breakdown of the simple-yet-powerful template we use to describe every character in this book. We look at the common structure of each NPC in detail, and give you the tools you need to make the most of that format. You can also use our template in your campaign, adapting it to suit your GMing style.

Adapting and Re-Skinning Characters gives you the tools you need to turn a fantasy NPC into a modern one, a modern NPC into a sci-fi character, a sci-fi NPC into a fantasy one, and so forth. With relatively little work, you can use any NPC in this book with any genre, and in any RPG.

In **Making Your Characters Memorable**, we'll explore how to wring every drop of roleplaying goodness out of your NPCs. The best character is a memorable character, whether you love them or hate them. Your players will remember how your NPCs act, look, and interact with them, not how high their Strength scores are. We'll cover how to make your portrayals as vivid as possible in this section.

The **Genres** section offers a brief discussion of the three broad genres in *Masks* (fantasy, sci-fi, and modern), and touches on the sub-genres that fall under each larger genre.

In the **Traits** section, you'll find complete descriptions of all 47 traits used in *Masks*. Every NPC is described in shorthand by two or more traits, from *aggressive* to *dilettante* to *medic*, and you can look characters up by trait in the index (p. 319).

The Invisible Keywords rounds out the first chapter with a peek behind the curtain at the 83 personality keywords that were used as seeds to create every NPC in *Masks*. They don't appear in the NPC entries because, having served their purpose, they were no longer useful—but they can be a handy tool when you want to create an NPC of your own.

Chapters 2, 3, and 4: NPCs

This is where the rubber meets the road: *Masks* features 1,000 NPCs divided into three genres, with a chapter for each genre—**Fantasy**, **Sci-Fi**, and **Modern**. Characters are further broken down by role, with a section for each role (villains, neutrals, and allies) in every chapter. No two characters are exactly alike, and they're all written so that you can begin using them immediately—no prep required.

If you introduce three new NPCs into your game every week, *Masks* will keep you in fresh characters for your next 333 gaming sessions. We designed this book to be useful for the rest of your GMing career, and we hope it will be.

Chapter 5: Indexes

The final chapter features three indexes to help you find exactly the character you need: **NPCs by Trait**, **NPCs by Name**, and **NPCs by Author**. Need a truly hateful villain? Look up the *abhorrent* trait, and you'll have plenty to choose from. Remember a character's name, but not which chapter she appeared in? You can look up NPCs by name. If you find that one author's style gels particularly well with your game, you can also locate NPCs by author.

You'll also find an appendix of **NPC Groups** in this chapter. This appendix lists *Masks* NPCs who would work well as members of common groups, like a city watch unit for a fantasy game, the crew of a starship for a sci-fi game, or ordinary townsfolk for a modern game. If you need to populate a tavern with interesting NPCs on the fly, this appendix can help.

Need Adventure Plots to Go with Your NPCs?

Masks is the second book produced by Engine Publishing and the authors of Gnome Stew, and if you like this book, chances are you'll also enjoy our first book, *Eureka: 501 Adventure Plots to Inspire Game Masters*. *Eureka* provides 501 complete, system-neutral plots for fantasy, sci-fi, and horror adventures, each of which includes enough material for an evening of gaming. *Eureka* plots are more than adventure seeds but less than complete adventures—they're somewhere in between, providing enough material to cut down on game prep, but not so much that you waste a lot of time altering them to fit your campaign. Like *Masks* NPCs, *Eureka* plots are extensively indexed, and they'll serve you well for years to come. You don't need one book to enjoy the other, but they do complement each other—and when combined, they cover two major components of game mastering: creating NPCs and writing adventures.

Anatomy of a Masks NPC

In creating *Masks*, our goal was to convey as much immediately useful information about an NPC as possible in as little space as possible—and to make the end product vivid, memorable, and fun to play and interact with in the game. Every NPC in *Masks* is described using the same template—a template designed to be used both for roleplaying a character straight out of the book, with no prep at all, and as a foundation for creating fully fleshed-out characters. It looks simple on the surface, and it's easy to use, but there's a lot of design work behind this template.

Most gaming books that focus on NPC descriptions take one of two approaches: They provide "character seeds," brief write-ups just a sentence or two long, designed to spark your imagination; or they provide a page or more of detailed information about each character, generally including game mechanics. Character seeds are great for getting inspiration, but they leave a lot of the details to you to create—too many to really enable you to use those characters on the fly. Long write-ups are excellent when you want as much information about an NPC as possible, but not so hot when you need a character on the spot.

Masks is different. The NPCs in this book are the middle ground between "too long" and "too short," and they're explicitly designed to be used both as a source of inspiration when writing adventures and as a resource at the gaming table. If you need an NPC on the fly, you can flip open *Masks*, read even just one or two elements of an entry, and you'll know enough to improvise from there. But if you want to design the central villain for your entire campaign, you'll find that *Masks* NPCs include enough detail and enough depth to serve as a solid foundation for creating a fully fleshed-out character.

What makes that possible is the template used to describe each NPC—let's take a look at it in detail.

Name

Each NPC has a name, generally including both a given name and a surname. Depending on her background, an NPC may also have a title, a nickname, or a secret identity, which will be listed here as well. Names are genre-appropriate, though they might need a bit of tweaking to fit into your game. You'll also find every name in the book in the "name ribbon" at the bottom of each page in chapters 2, 3, and 4—so if all you need is a name, that's the place to look.

Capsule Description

Every entry includes a brief, two-part description, usually in the form "[adjective] [noun]," as in "Evil Alchemist," "Vengeful Starship Designer," or "Obsessive-Compulsive Priest." As with most other sections of the template, sometimes this will be all you need to get your creative juices flowing. If you're short on time, "Obsessive-Compulsive Priest" actually gives you quite a bit to work with—chances are, you're already visualizing that character.

If you're skimming the book, this section is also a great way to decide whether you should pause to read a particular entry. Lastly, crucial details that aren't explained fully until later in an entry are included here, like "Possessed Cleric"—being possessed is an important detail, and we want you to know about it up front.

Quote

Below the NPC's name is a snippet of dialogue spoken by that NPC, which serves as shorthand for conveying important elements of the character. The quote can also be used to inform the way you roleplay that NPC: Does the character use a lot of slang or jargon? Or does he speak in short, clipped sentences? If you're an experienced GM, you can even pull a whole characterization out of the quote alone.



Artist: Christopher Reach

Number

Every entry is numbered, from 1 to 1,000, for easy reference. You can also use these numbers as shorthand in your notes (if you grab a *Masks* NPC on the fly, for example, and don't want to forget which one you used).

Appearance

When you see this character, what stands out most? Key aspects of the NPC's appearance are noted in this section. Remember that race, gender, ethnicity, and all other aspects of an NPC's appearance can be changed to suit your game, generally without doing too much work.

Roleplaying

This section of the template includes "stage directions" for you to use in portraying the character: mannerisms, quirks, movements, favorite phrases, and other cues. Playing up these mannerisms will help to make the NPC memorable for your players, particularly if you adopt the character's mannerisms every time you're playing that character.

Personality

Personality is one of the core elements of every NPC—in many ways, it's the most important part of the template. Consider your favorite character from a game, movie, or book: What do you remember most about them? Most likely, you remember them because of their unique personality—and the same is true of *Masks* NPCs, and of memorable NPCs in general. It's not a character's job, milieu, or trappings that make them interesting, although each of those elements can contribute to making them stand out—it's who they are and what they're like.

Motivation

If you're using a character on the fly and you only have time to read one section, make it this one. The Motivation section is generally only a sentence or two long, but it gives you a powerful tool for portraying the NPC. If you know what a character wants, what drives them, then you can improvise their response to just about any situation—which is essentially what your players do in every session.

Background

This section describes the character's story, and usually includes two of the following elements (and sometimes all three): past, present, and future. Knowing at least two of those aspects of an NPC's background gives you useful information to work with, as well as engaging hooks to build on. You'll also find GMing notes, tips, or other advice in this section, if applicable. If you're running a *Masks* NPC straight

out of the book, without having read the entry beforehand, you can usually skip this section; if you're fleshing out a character in detail, you'll definitely want to read it.

Traits

Finally, each NPC entry includes two or more traits—short tags like *humorous*, *political*, and *pilot*—as well as a tag denoting the author of that character (in parentheses). Traits convey information in their own right, but they're primarily useful as a tool to find the kind of character you need. Every trait has its own entry in the index (p. 319), so you can easily locate characters that share that trait. Traits are also described in detail in the **Traits** section in this chapter.

Inspiration and Conciseness

Masks was inspired by "The 7-Sentence NPC," an article by C.M. Cline in the August 1992 issue of Dragon® *Magazine*, #184. Two decades on, this remains one of the best Dragon® articles ever published—it's well worth tracking down. As you might guess from the title, it lays out a template for describing NPCs in just seven sentences, using one sentence apiece in categories like Occupation & History, Attributes & Skills, and Distinguishing Feature.

Both our approach and C.M. Cline's share the mission of providing a lot of useful, inspiring information about a character in as little space as possible. Both templates constrain character length, as well—ours by word count, C.M. Cline's by sentences—and that constraint is important. Without a hard limit on how long each entry can be, it's easy to find yourself writing a three-page NPC background that turns out to be all but useless as a reference during play.

Having a constrained length for each entry avoids this problem, forcing you as the GM (and us, as authors) to find efficient, expressive, and concise ways of conveying a lot about a character in a small space. Movies do this all the time: They introduce a new character in such a way that, in one brief scene, you get a pretty complete picture of what that person is like, what they want, and what they're all about.

Combine that with the structure that comes from having to complete every element of the *Masks* template—which forces you to think about the character from multiple angles, and to really consider what makes them stand out—and you have a powerful tool for creating your own NPCs. It might seem difficult to use a template like this at first, since you have to fight the instinct to always write more—but it works. We hope you'll put our template to use when creating characters in your home game.

Adapting and Re-Skinning Characters

Even with 1,000 characters to choose from, it's still possible that you won't find an exact match for your game. We understand that your game is unique, and with a few simple tricks you can alter any of the characters in *Masks* to create a custom character to fit your needs. We like to refer to these tricks as "re-skinning." Much like a video game uses skins over a polygonal wireframe model to create its visuals, you can customize any *Masks* character with the "skin" of your choice.

There are three easy ways to re-skin a *Masks* character:

- Change the character's genre
- Convert the character from human to non-human
- Polarize the character—replace one of the NPC's traits with its polar opposite

These methods take no more than a few minutes to employ, and with enough practice, you will be able to use them on the fly. Let's tackle them in order.

Genre: Explaining the "How"

The three genres that are covered in *Masks*—fantasy, modern, and sci-fi—represent just a few of many possibilities for the setting of your game. Each genre is such a unique and wonderful animal that it may be hard to imagine that a character written for one genre can be used in another with just a few minor tweaks. Yet changing the genre of a character is the easiest of these three tricks to apply. You just need to understand what it is that the genre provides in your game: Genre explains how things are accomplished within the game world.

Let's take a simple premise, like a ranged attack, and modify it to fit each of the three broad genres in *Masks*. In the fantasy genre, a crossbow could explain how a character might have a ranged attack. In a modern game, that same attack could be accomplished using a pistol. The ranged attack might be in the form of a ray gun in a sci-fi adventure. None of these devices need a great deal of explanation as to how they work within their associated genre—each one sufficiently, and simply, explains how a ranged attack can be made in that genre.

Now we need to take a step back and apply that same logic to the characters in a game. Characters fulfill different roles within the game world. To convert a *Masks* character from one genre to another, you just need to identify the role they filled in their original genre, and then re-skin the character with the equivalent role in your game.

For example, "constable" is a common role in the fantasy genre. The constable walks the streets of the town or village to prevent wrongdoing and to protect the locals. The items that the constable uses might be a simple club for intimidation purposes (and actual use against the more lively troublemakers) as well as some rope for restraining people when needed. Swap that club for a police baton and the rope for handcuffs, add a revolver and a badge, and now that fantasy constable character is the local beat cop in a modern game. Upgrade the baton to a stun rod, change the handcuffs to neural inhibitor restraints, and replace the revolver with a plasma pistol (but keep the badge), and that beat cop is now the security enforcer for Space Sector Seven in your sci-fi campaign.

It's that easy to change the genre of a *Masks* character. Identify the role the character was originally written to fill and an equivalent role in your game; then, identify what tools and traits need to be altered to fit the new genre. Change those tools and traits, and you're set.



Artist: Christopher Reach

Species: A Reflection of Human Nature

Fantasy games feature elves, dwarves, orcs, and goblins, just to name a few of the many species that are common to the genre. Sci-fi stories often focus on alien beings and highly advanced robots. Even a modern game can push the envelope with vampires, intelligent chimps that speak in sign language, and artificial intelligence. Obviously, many RPGs feature non-human characters—so why are all of the NPCs in *Masks* written as humans?

They're all written as humans because just as changing the genre of a character is a simple matter, it's also easy to switch a character from human to non-human. It's easy because all characters are reflections of humanity. Think of the non-human characters that are found in books, television, and film and you'll notice that many of them exhibit isolated and exaggerated human qualities.

Elves tend to exemplify human grace, and in some cases, elves also represent the vanity of the human race. Dwarves, on the other hand, display strength and tenacity and embrace labor and craftsmanship, but they also exhibit the stubbornness and close-mindedness found in humans. Orcs are the symbol of our barbaric sides, and goblins are examples of the vile trickery that we are capable of. And those are just a few examples from certain styles of fantasy games—you will find examples of this trend in other genres, as well.

In order to convert a *Masks* character to another species, use the NPC's traits as a starting point and combine them with the genre of your game. Perhaps you are running a sci-fi game and the character that you wish to convert has the *primal* trait. The *primal* trait might suggest an alien that lives on a hostile world where survival of the fittest is the only rule, so you decide to re-skin that NPC as an alien.

The character is described as having exceptional reflexes and athletic abilities, so you decide that the NPC is an alien whose species resembles the large jungle cats of Earth—only humanoid in appearance. They have developed high-tech hunting gear to take down the massive beasts that inhabit their home world.

With just the genre, a keyword—the trait—and a quick read-through of the NPC's entry, we have transformed him from a human being into a member of a powerful feline species with cunning intelligence and a fierce nature. We simply exaggerated certain qualities and then transformed them from human to non-human, while keeping them applicable to the genre. Take a few moments to apply this technique to any of the characters in *Masks* and you will quickly discover just how simple it is to turn them into something no one would recognize as human.

Polarizing: Two Sides of the Same Coin

This book supplies you with 1,000 characters, but upon mastering the art of polarizing a character you will instantly double that number. Polarization is a trick that has an immediate payoff, and it's an easy trick to perform.

Think of polarizing a character as if you were photographing a person with a film camera (not a digital one). The photograph is the fully developed picture that displays the person exactly as she appeared at the time that the picture was taken, but in addition to the photograph you also have the negative from which it was developed. When you look at a negative the qualities of the photo are reversed: The areas that are dark in the photograph appear light in the negative, and vice versa. The negative is in many ways the visual opposite of the photograph.

Polarizing a character is similar: Just replace some of the qualities of the NPC, as written, with their opposites. As with changing the species, we can use the character's listed traits as a tool for polarization. If a character has the *leader* trait, you can re-skin him as a follower incapable of commanding others; a character with the *military* trait can be transformed into an anarchist who despises the very idea of rank.

You can also go beyond traits and apply the trick of polarizing a character to any aspect of a *Masks* NPC. If the character's background describes a lonely childhood, then polarize it: Describe that NPC as always being surrounded by friends and family. If the character's motivation is to get a promotion at work, switch that around so that the character wishes that she could go back to an easier job that she held in the past.

You can even apply this trick to character descriptions. If a character is described as tall, overweight, and having thick hair, change the character to be short, skinny, and bald. Just switching the gender of a character instantly re-skins the character. Polarizing a description is an easy way to recycle a favorite *Masks* character for use in another game.

Master these simple tricks of changing a character's genre, species, and traits, and you will discover that *Masks* offers many more than just 1,000 characters. It might be more accurate to say that *Masks* offers you 1,000 starting points from which you can develop your own custom characters as needed. On top of that, you can use all of these tricks with characters drawn from any source that you can think of, not just the ones found in *Masks*. Like the *Masks* template itself, re-skinning is a powerful tool to add to your GMing toolkit.

Making Your Characters Memorable

Think of your favorite character from any movie or story. I'm betting it wasn't hard to do—memorable characters have a way of connecting with us from the first time we see them on the screen or read their description in print. They capture our attention, and long after the story has ended we still think about them, do imitations of them, and tell stories about them to our friends.

As game masters, we want our NPCs to be memorable, as well. We want to create and portray NPCs that are so memorable that our players can't wait to interact with them again. We want our heroic NPCs to shine and our villainous NPCs to be reviled. We even want our players to remember the shopkeeper in the next town over. Our goal is to make that NPC more than just statistics and flavor text, and breathe life into them in a way that makes a connection with our players.

What makes a character memorable? We know that some characters are more memorable than others. Therefore, those memorable characters must possess one or more qualities which set them apart from every other character in the story. The qualities that make these characters memorable are also qualities that we can apply to NPCs. While there is no single, definitive list of those qualities, some do tend to appear more often in memorable characters.

Attitude

From the street fighter who cracks his neck before a fight to the sultry stare of the femme fatale, attitude is a quality that attracts us to a character. It can run the spectrum from hostile to passionate. In memorable characters, their attitudes stand front and center and permeate their every action. For the viewer, the character's attitude becomes the label for the character: the badass, the scoundrel, etc.

For an NPC, attitude comes through the expression of the GM. You convey it in the way you speak, the way you look at your players, and in the way your NPC acts. The NPC's attitude should be overt, and a memorable NPC will have an abundance of it. If your NPC is a badass, then have her throw a punch when no one would expect it—in other words, remind your players about the NPC's attitude through action.

Style

Handmade silk suits, expensive sports cars, and opulent castles are the hallmarks of characters with style. Similarly, a handmade skirt made from neckties or an old, but carefully patched winter coat can express a sense of style without also conveying wealth. Style is frequently expressed in the way a character is dressed and groomed, the possessions he owns, and the way the character moves.

The style of the NPC is not in action, but in description. Your description of an NPC needs to convey who that character is. When describing the NPC, refer to iconic characters from books, movies, and other media to help evoke those images of style—for example, "He has a Clooney-like smile." Style is something that changes from setting to setting, so at times you will need to be overt with your players about the significance of an NPC's style. For instance, "The Daimyo's kimono is embroidered with gold threads; a sign of his lofty position and his favor from the Shogun." One final point: The best styles are those that are not trendy, but timeless.

Depth

From the scoundrel with a heart of gold to the unfeeling warrior who is great with kids, depth is what makes a character transcend stereotype and become believable. Depth often appears in the form of layered emotions or needs, and it's best when those layers are in conflict with one another, or are opposites of one another.

An NPC's depth comes from what the NPC says, does, and in many cases, what they do not do. Depth comes from presenting an outward persona for an NPC and then creating a different one underneath that exterior. Your players will learn of the exterior persona through their interactions with the NPC. Then, at the right moment, peel back the exterior and for just a moment reveal that second layer. Take the warrior NPC who has just laid waste to an army of enemies, and put her in conflict with one of the PCs. They battle, and the NPC wins the fight; the PC lays at her mercy, awaiting death. Instead of slaying him, the NPC lowers her sword and tells the PC that her soul cannot bear anymore killing this day…and then walks away. That character has depth, and your players will never forget her.

Visuals

Implanted mirror shades, full-body tattoos, a horrific, disfiguring facial scar—these are visual images that memorable characters burn into your mind's eye. Visuals can be tied to style, or they can be interesting or unique features about a character. These visuals can be beautiful or horrific, and they are often on display to the world.

Like an NPC's style, you describe their visuals to your players. When describing the important visual elements of a character, be detailed and graphic in your description. During a scene with an NPC, make references to the visual element several times in order to reinforce the image you're trying to convey to your players. Once the image is set, you can describe the NPC later using only one reference to that visual element and your players will know exactly who you are talking about.

The other trick to visuals is to give an NPC no more than one or two strong visual elements. If you make everything about the NPC visually stunning, you will drown your players with descriptive prose.

Uniqueness

Some characters are truly unique, breaking the mold and inspiring dozens of derivatives. Characters this unique often have some interesting combination of traits that do not go together naturally. The combination of these traits draws us in, as they challenge our stereotypes and force us to imagine the character outside of our comfort zone.

For the NPC, uniqueness is often lightning in a bottle: It happens more often by accident than through careful planning. If you do try to plan for uniqueness, consider the juxtaposition of traits and breaking stereotypes: A barbarian who abstains from all vices, a not-so-bright wizard, and an AI who despises machines are all on the path to becoming unique.

Tagline

The tagline—a catchphrase or snippet of speech associated with a character—is a quality that will often be remembered even if the character himself goes largely unremembered. A strong tagline can sum up an entire character. A good tagline is not only about the words themselves, but also how they are delivered. It is the emotion, the tone, and the delivery that etches the words into our minds and makes us imitate them repeatedly. Conversely, an overused tagline can be cliché, and, said at the wrong time, can be jarring. Taglines are all about the right words said at the right time.

To come up with a tagline for an NPC, you first need to find a "voice" for the NPC. Start with an understanding of who the NPC is and how she speaks. The best taglines are those that match the personality of the NPC. If the NPC is a grim warrior, then his tagline should be about combat or violence. A steampunk engineer, however, should have a tagline associated with inventions and discovery. Unless you running a game set in modern times, avoid trendy slang at all costs.

Tips and Tricks

There is no one formula for creating a memorable character. While focusing on the elements presented so far is one good approach, it's also handy to have a grab bag of techniques for making your NPCs stand out. Pick a technique or two from this section that sounds interesting, try them out, and add the ones that work best for you to your GMing toolkit.

The Hook

A memorable NPC is the bait on the adventure hook—and that means designing the character to be just that. It doesn't matter if the character is an ally, villain, interloper, damsel, or patron; the NPC's purpose—jump-starting or advancing the story—is more vital than her role or any other descriptor.

The trick is to design NPCs like this to appeal to at least one player, if not several. Find out what characters the PCs want to defeat, help, or be aided, taunted, or challenged by and you'll be well on your way. The NPC then becomes the doorway to an encounter, session, or even an entire campaign.

Trademarks

Every memorable character has an element or characteristic you can replicate each time you present him—a trademark. It's all part of giving an NPC a definable "voice," a reminder your players can latch onto and that you can deliver with certainty. Whether it's an accent or speech pattern, a mannerism such as making grand sweeping gestures when talking, or a simple prop like a hat or fake mustache, give each NPC at least one thing to mark them in your players' minds. All are recognizable visual or audio clues that reliably say, "She's back!" One fun payoff from using this technique: Imagine the dramatic impact of a player overhearing a treasonous plot, and recognizing the prince's stutter…

It's worth noting that you don't actually need a prop to use one, either. Props are nice, but it is often not possible to collect the perfect object for every NPC. Pantomime is a perfectly useful tool. If your NPC is nervous and fidgets with her hat while talking, then pretend you are holding a hat and turning the brim in your hands. With a little imagination, you can create all the props you need.

The Feel

Getting a feel for a character is critical to making that NPC memorable—focus on the feel rather than the details. Think of an iconic character from a movie or book, and chances are it's the feel that you remember first. Without knowing the character's occupation, what her father was like, or the name of her childhood dog, you "get" what a memorable, iconic character is just by looking at her. The minutiae are much less important than what the character conveys as a whole. When creating or portraying an NPC, try to get an idea for the feel of the character and let your subconscious bring out the details naturally.



Artist: Matt Morrow

Take Shortcuts

"Cast" your NPCs. Use a celebrity as a template, and your players will automatically know what the NPC looks and sounds like without you needing to provide much description. Even if you're uncomfortable roleplaying the NPC, your players' minds see and hear the celebrity rather than you. Remember that you aren't limited by time or profession, either: A celebrity can be anyone from any point in history.

Names

Whatever you do, choose a name everyone at the table can pronounce. Nothing derails a dramatic moment like stopping to spell an NPC's three times while your players try to write it down…

Looking Like an Idiot

You're going to look like an idiot when you act out an NPC, but do it anyway. The kinds of extreme movements, facial contortions, and unrealistic voices that actors use are necessary to adequately convey the characters they play to the audience. The same thing holds true when you, as the GM, are acting out an NPC for your players. To get players to interact with a NPC, you need to act out the personality of that NPC in extreme ways.

You might look funny playing a character to the hilt, but that's okay. Your friends, the players, won't think twice about the extreme oddity of your actions; they'll only remember the snarky guardsman or benevolent cleric they just interacted with.

Watch Your Players

You know you've succeeded in making a memorable NPC when your players say things like, "Oh, she's going to say X" or "He's totally going to do Y." If you think an NPC is memorable and your players aren't doing that, the NPC probably isn't very memorable—and you need to do more to make them stand out. A memorable NPC is a tremendous asset for your campaign, one that should be nurtured and developed over time.

With that in mind, it's important to note that boring NPCs can be saved. Change things about them that your players don't know yet, give them focal scenes, have them help or hinder the PCs in a specific, over-the-top way, and don't get hung up on the fact that they didn't work right out of the gate. Creating a boring NPC doesn't make you a bad GM. You may also notice that the NPCs your players love (or hate) and care about aren't the ones you wanted them to care about—in which case, trust your players: Put the NPCs they do care about in the foreground, and move the ones they care less about into the background.

Patterns

People have inertia: We get in ruts and we fall into patterns. Give your NPCs patterns and they will feel more realistic—and be more surprising when they break that habit. Ruts can include the stories they tell when a particular subject comes up, the route they take to work, and what they order for dinner on Thursdays. Limited "screen time" can make the line between an NPC with a pattern and stereotype difficult to tell apart. That's okay. Because RPGs are interactive and unpredictable, a barkeep that starts as a stereotype can develop personality, and a fully fleshed-out character can die before she reveals her depth.

Help Yourself Out

NPC screen time is a composite. Most NPCs get limited play time; sometimes even the villain driving the plot only gets a few lines before the stabbing begins. Have friendly NPCs discuss, anticipate, or dread the arrival of other characters, and you can create a more rounded view of the NPC than direct interaction with the PC will allow. Having other NPCs mention flaws and concerns about an ally will help make both NPCs feel more realistic—the ally for having flaws, and the commenting NPC for being opinionated.

Good Villains and Allies

A good villain is more than just a challenge based upon the game's mechanics. Players cannot interact with a collection of statistics, and no one will care what type of gear the NPC is using (apart from wanting to acquire it as loot). Even being attacked by an NPC carries little weight in the long run. However, the NPC that insults the PCs publicly, calls them out over an unfair debt, or betrays them is sure to be remembered. To make it stick, you have to make it personal.

Great allies have something at stake, too, and an NPC who risks her highest priorities in order to help the PCs should make this clearly known. The peasant who risks execution for smuggling food to the PCs, or the nobleman who may become a political outcast for speaking out on the party's behalf should not be wallflowers about the dangers that they face. The players need to know that their PCs' role in the game world is supported by NPCs.

Make Them Matter

Ensure that each NPC has the ability to influence the game world, if only a little bit. An NPC who has no real impact on the game world is just an extra, and extras aren't all that interesting. It's easy to make major characters matter—the big villain is usually out to destroy the world, after all—but the minor ones should matter, too. For example: When your players piss off Trader Jim, the only merchant in town, they'll be without a source of supplies until they can either patch things up with him or find another source.

Don't Fall In Love

Even though your goal should always be to make every character memorable, remember that NPCs exist to support the campaign, not to steal the limelight away from your players and their characters. Focus on what the purpose is for an NPC in a particular scene and, once the purpose is fulfilled, get them off stage. An ally who always outshines the PCs or a villain who always gets away after bloodying the PCs becomes an annoyance rather quickly.

Genres

Masks NPCs are divided into three genres: fantasy, sci-fi, and modern. These are intentionally broad divisions, intended to cover the vast majority of RPGs. Why so broad, though? Why not break down *Masks* NPCs into multiple sub-genres? Because when you get down to it, genre is one of the least important elements of a great character.

It's not unimportant, though—for one thing, it's difficult to write up a character without having a genre in mind. (Don't take our word for it: Try to write a compelling genre-neutral character, and you'll see what we mean!) Genre makes a good foundation or starting point, but the elements that make a character memorable often have nothing to do with genre. They have much more to do with that character's personality, quirks, drives, and background than they do with what genre the character happens to fit into.

From a GMing perspective, this is great: it means that with very little effort, you can move an NPC from one genre to another. *Masks* is designed to take advantage of this, giving you a huge pool of characters that are likely to match your genre of choice as-is while also making it simple to use characters from all three genres in every game you run.

That's why genre matters—because it gives you, the GM, an easy way to get a handle on a character, especially when you're using that character on the fly. With that in mind, let's look at the three genres in *Masks*.

Fantasy

The majority of fantasy RPGs are grounded, at least to some extent, in the Middle Ages—usually an idealized version that includes monsters, magic, and adventurers. But "fantasy" is such a broad term that it covers everything from epic tales of world-altering significance to grim and gritty games where the PCs have to struggle just to survive—and all points between those two extremes. Just as most fantasy RPGs aren't set in our world (though some are), the majority of the fantasy NPCs in *Masks* are assumed to exist in a world other than our own.

Broadly speaking, there are four major sub-genres of fantasy in RPGs: traditional, high fantasy, grim and gritty, and swashbuckling. The lines between those genres tend to blur in most games—and there's even some blurring with the post-apocalyptic sub-genre of sci-fi, which tends to feature what are essentially re-skinned fantasy tropes and characters.

Sci-Fi

If fantasy is a broad genre, sci-fi is doubly so. Science fiction encompasses everything from space opera to cyberpunk to modern-day supernatural thrillers. Sci-fi games often feature futuristic settings, advanced technology, faster-than-light travel, aliens, and psychic abilities—though not always. There's no default setting assumed for sci-fi NPCs, and they can work equally well in sci-fi versions of our world or far-flung visions of the future that have few, if any, connections to the real world.

Within the sci-fi umbrella, most RPGs fall into one of six sub-genres: space opera, cyberpunk, hard sci-fi, post-apocalyptic, steampunk, or supers. Given that cyberpunk games are usually set in the near future, and supers games are most often set in the modern world, there's quite a bit of overlap between some sci-fi sub-genres and some modern sub-genres.

Modern

"Modern" is more of a catch-all category than an actual genre—no one sits down to play a modern game, they play an espionage game, a horror game, or a game about plucky high school students fighting the supernatural. It's a useful catch-all, though, as many RPGs are set in the modern world. Modern NPCs in *Masks* won't look out of place in a game set at any point in the past century or so, or in the near future.

Modern NPCs also have a default setting: our world, or at least a world that looks a lot like ours. That means that they usually won't use magic, have superpowers, or otherwise be more than human (though there are a few exceptions). Those elements tend to be specific to certain kinds of game, and they're often easier to add to a character after the fact than they are to remove.

Traits

trait, and for an exceptionally repugnant villain, you could search for the *abhorrent* trait.

If you're looking for an NPC similar to one you've already selected, find the trait that best captures what you want to duplicate and check the index for other NPCs with that trait. In this way, you can locate copy-cat killers, red herrings, family members, co-workers, or long lost twins.

You can also use traits to lead you to NPCs who can inspire new adventures. Scan the list of traits for one you haven't used recently, and then check the index to find a few examples of NPCs who embody that trait. While the *focal* trait specifically denotes the NPCs who play a dramatic role in the world around them, every NPC holds the potential to inspire a new scene. For example, you might select the *police* trait, pick a law enforcement NPC, and build a scene in which the PCs need to convince the cop to give them a piece of confidential information. From there, answering the questions "What information do the PCs need?" and "Why do they need it?" can easily lead to the premise for an entire adventure.

Trait Categories

Traits are grouped into three categories: description, organization, and skill set. All 47 traits used in *Masks* are described below, and you can search for NPCs by trait in the trait index (p. 319). You'll also find an author's initials listed in the trait section of every NPC entry, and there's an index of NPCs by author (p. 327) that will be useful if you find that a particular author's style closely matches your own.

Description

Traits in this category call out a notable and defining aspect of an NPC. Because it's not possible to provide a trait for every possible feature of all 1,000 characters in *Masks*, we've provided only those that are the most useful, the most frequently applied, and that we believe you're most likely to search for.

ancient: Ancient NPCs are just that—very old.

beautiful: Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, so NPCs with this trait encompass many kinds of beauty, from male models with chiseled abs to plump, curvaceous young women. This trait is used to describe both women and men.

child: These NPCs are literally children, and no older than their late teens. NPCs who are childlike, but not children, will likely have the *eccentric* trait, instead.

eccentric: Eccentric NPCs engage in behavior that is odd but not necessarily offensive or dangerous. They might be insane, or they might just be quirky.

famous: A famous NPC could be a household name throughout the world, or they might be a minor local celebrity—fame is relative, and depends on the nature of your setting and your game. Political figures, celebrities, sports stars, and bored socialites all share this trait.

focal: These NPCs are well-suited to being the focal point of an entire story arc or campaign. An NPC who is focal in one type of game—the mayor of a town in a campaign set in that town, for example—might not even register in another kind of game (like an epic fantasy campaign in which the PCs are all gods), but if an NPC could be focal in their own kind of game, they'll have this trait.

genius: The NPC is exceptionally intelligent—well beyond smart, in most cases. In *Masks*, this trait is shared by brilliant scientists, gifted inventors, and inspired conquerors alike.

hideous: Awful or offensive to look at, hideous NPCs are deformed, twisted, inhuman, or just plain ugly. There's no moral component to this trait—you'll find hideous villains as well as hideous saints.

humorous: NPCs who can easily be used as comic relief are labeled with this trait. They often have funny quirks or amusing backgrounds, but their use isn't limited to comedy games.

impoverished: Impoverished NPCs have little in the way of money or resources, often making it difficult both for them to help themselves and for the PCs to ignore their needs.

mysterious: A classic trope common to many RPGs, mysterious NPCs are perfect for delivering clues, handing out missions, providing red herrings, or just adding suspense to your game.

notorious: Notorious NPCs are well-known for their crimes or heinous behavior—they're famous, but for bad reasons. As with the *famous* trait, a notorious NPC could be known on any scale, from worldwide to local.

power hungry: NPCs with this trait desire more influence, political power, or status—they're after power of some sort, whether on a small scale or on a global or interstellar level.

saintly: These NPCs are exceptionally good, and are often holy, although there isn't always a religious connotation to this trait. The *saintly* trait attests to the goodness of a character's actions, not their affiliation; martyrs and good Samaritans alike can possess this trait. (For religious NPCs, try the *religious* trait.)

wealthy: When you want an NPC with money, the *wealthy* trait is the way to go. Some wealthy NPCs can simply afford to pamper themselves, while others can buy and sell entire worlds.

zealot: The *zealot* trait generally implies an unhealthy, over-the-top, or slavish devotion to an ideal or concept—perfect for when you want an NPC who's unwavering and unreasonable in his beliefs.

Organization

These traits indicate the kind of organization that the NPC works for or belongs to; it can also indicate occupation, and there's a bit of overlap between the Organization and Skill Set categories in this area. Though the majority of NPCs in *Masks* have one of these traits, it's generally easy to "drift" this trait, tweaking a character to fit into a different organization or profession.

academic: These NPCs work in schools, think tanks, or other organizations that are focused primarily on the use and acquisition of knowledge.

adventurer: This trait describes both adventurers proper (and in the RPG sense) and those NPCs who have exciting, fast-paced, high-risk careers.

business: NPCs who are involved with a business, big or small, have the business trait. This includes everyone from mom-and-pop store clerks to multinational CEOs.

criminal: Criminal NPCs are lawbreakers of one stripe or another, and sometimes part of a formal criminal organization. This trait covers everyone from Mafia thugs to talented professionals who steal for the thrill.

entertainment: From actors to movie stars to bards and troubadours, these NPCs make a business of entertaining others.

military: Military NPCs belong to a military or paramilitary organization, at any level. Though most also have the *warrior* trait, many are experts of another type as well.

occult: This trait designates NPCs who deal with the occult, paranormal, or outré. Many NPCs with the occult trait also have another organizational trait—being a cultist or an expert in vampire lore is rarely one's sole occupation.

police: Law enforcement officers, support staff, and specialists are all listed with the *police* trait. This trait is also used for security officers, guards, and the like.

political: Every NPC in the political machine—from the lowliest courtier in a fantasy game to a presidential candidate in a modern campaign—has this trait. Nobles generally have the *royalty* trait instead, though some NPCs have both (and it's easy to drift characters from one to the other).

primal: Members of cultures that exist close to nature and have limited access to technology, as well as other individuals who exhibit these characteristics, have the *primal* trait.

religious: NPCs who belong to a religious organization of any type have the religious trait, regardless of their devotion, faith, or piety. For an especially holy NPC, try the *saintly* trait instead.

royalty: The *royalty* trait applies to all members of the nobility, from dukes to emperors. The *royalty* and *political* traits are different in focus, but drifting NPCs from one to the other is usually quite simple.

Skill Set

A skill set defines the area of a character's expertise and includes the talents, knowledge, and skills associated with it. Often, a given NPC will have more than one skill set trait, denoting several areas of expertise. Skill sets are easy to add or subtract from an NPC, even if the end result seems a bit odd. For example, a professor without the *scholar* trait might be incompetent, with no real mastery of the subject he teaches, or a pacifist with the *soldier* skill set might have seen so much suffering during her last tour of duty that she swore off violence forever.

artist: Artist NPCs create works with aesthetic appeal. *Masks* makes no distinction between material and performance art, though there is occasionally crossover between the *artist* and *crafter* traits.

charming: These NPCs are easy to get along with, and usually possess skills related to persuasion or seduction. This trait is often found enhancing other traits, such as *counselor* or *leader*.

counselor: An NPC whose role is to console, guide, calm, or provide psychological care will have the *counselor* trait.

crafter: Crafter NPCs create or repair goods which primarily provide utility, so both a mechanic and a blacksmith would possess this trait. If these goods also have an aesthetic quality, the NPC may also have the *artist* trait.

dilettante: NPCs with the *dilettante* trait have no significant marketable skill set, or they dabble in many areas without being an expert in any of them.

laborer: Laborer NPCs have jobs requiring physical work and limited specialization and training.

leader: These characters lead, command, and motivate their subordinates. NPCs with this trait can be inspiring beacons or abusive bullies.

magical: NPCs whose primary skills involve spellcasting, rituals, or divination have the *magical* trait. This trait also applies to characters with psychic powers or supernatural abilities, which is why you'll find modern and sci-fi NPCs with this trait, not just fantasy characters.

medic: Medic NPCs are healers skilled at repairing injury, curing disease, and first aid. Their effectiveness may vary by situation and available equipment.

merchant: These NPCs have skills geared towards the sale of goods—on any scale and employing a variety of methods.

outdoorsman: Skilled in hunting, survival, tracking, and a wide range of other wilderness skills, NPCs with the *outdoorsman* trait may be generalists or specialists.

pilot: NPCs whose skill set involves transportation in any of its various forms have the *pilot* trait. If a pilot is skilled in vehicle combat they will usually also have the *warrior* trait. In general, it's easy to drift a pilot from one genre to another just by changing their vehicle (or mount) of choice.

scholar: Scholar NPCs possess skills involved in recalling, researching, and comparing knowledge on a given range of topics. In most cases, scholars deal in raw knowledge, not applied knowledge, which is covered by the *scientist* trait.

scientist: Specializing in applied knowledge, NPCs with the *scientist* trait use knowledge to produce discoveries, inventions, and prototypes. Raw knowledge is covered by the *scholar* trait, and production and maintenance of standard goods is covered by the *crafter* trait. A scholar might have extensive knowledge of automobiles, while a scientist designs the next generation of vehicles, and a crafter maintains those already on the market.

stealthy: The stealthy trait covers a wide range of skills: stealth, assassination, tracking, sleight of hand, etc. Which subset an NPC possesses depends on what is appropriate to their role and the needs of the game.

warrior: An NPC with the warrior trait is skilled in combat. The weapon and fighting style of choice is largely irrelevant and easily tweaked to suit your game.

white collar: White collar NPCs are primarily "desk jockeys," office workers, and the like, dealing with paperwork and employed in jobs that analyze knowledge or facilitate other positions.



Artist: Christopher Reach

The Invisible Keywords

With 10 authors and the goal of writing 1,000 distinctive, memorable characters, we knew we needed a framework to keep ourselves from creating 500 angst-ridden dark elves and 500 erotic bakers (the natural conclusion sans framework, of course!). Splitting the book up into thirds by genre is one element of that framework; further dividing them by role was another—but we felt like something was missing.

When we wrote our first book, *Eureka*, we used the themes from Georges Polti's *The Thirty-Six Dramatic Situations*, a fascinating 1917 book that posits that there are only 36 basic plots for dramatic works—period. The framework provided by those themes gave the book character, forced us to think about plots in a different way, and ensured a diverse mix of plot types. So when we sat down to write *Masks*, we naturally looked for an analog for characters—but we couldn't find one.

The closest we came was *The Characters*, a study of character sketches written by Theophrastus over 2,000 years ago. But while *The Characters* was suitably nerdy, it didn't include the right mix of character types for a book like *Masks*, nor did it have the right feel. So we created our own list of 83 personality keywords, 42 of them positive and 41 of them negative. Now, you might be thinking, "Hey, that means there are only 83 personalities in *Masks*," and you'd be right—sort of. We used these keywords as starting points, as core personality traits that should be visible in the finished NPC—not as rigid constraints.



Artist: Matt Morrow

With 83 keywords split among 1,000 NPCs in three roles within three genres, each keyword was used in the creation of approximately one villain, two neutrals, and one ally in each genre—and those four NPCs were almost always written by four different authors. That ensured that all 12 instances of each keyword (give or take) were spread throughout *Masks*, and because different authors approached the same keyword in different ways, it resulted in 1,000 distinct NPCs—no two *Masks* characters are exactly alike.

This approach also forced us to think more creatively, because positive keywords were used as seeds to write villains, and vice versa. Writing a villain around the personality keyword "bloodthirsty" is easy—but writing one around the keyword "kind" is not, and the result tends to be a deeper character. There's plenty of room for both stereotypical NPCs and NPCs who play against type in every campaign, and you'll find both varieties—and every variation in between—in *Masks*.

We didn't include these keywords in each NPC entry because once the characters were written, they were no longer useful. In the same way that a full-grown plant emerges from a seed, detailed NPCs emerged from these keywords, each one blending its starting keyword with other elements and taking it in a different direction. But up front, these keywords were quite useful to us, and they can be just as useful to you in creating new characters. Writing a compelling character is a lot easier when you know more than one thing about them, and these keywords gave us a third critical piece of information about every NPC. Knowing the genre, role, and core personality element of a character got our creative juices flowing, and you can use this same technique in your own game.

You almost certainly already know the genre to start with, and likely the role (villain, ally, or neutral) as well. Add to that one keyword from the list below, and you have a seed like "calculating sci-fi villain" or "curious modern ally"—a great starting point. We used 83 keywords because it made the math work out for *Masks*, but with 17 more you could roll percentile dice to choose a keyword. You could even just grab a thesaurus (or find a free one online), flip to a page at random, and use the first adjective that grabs you.

Whether you select randomly or by hand, though, don't avoid using a positive keyword to create a villain or a negative one to create an ally—those pairings can lead you to create truly unique characters. To get you started, here are the 83 personality keywords we used in the creation of *Masks*—we hope they're useful to you.

Academic
Ambitious
Anxious
Arrogant
Bitter
Bloodthirsty
Blunt
Bold
Brilliant
Calculating
Callous
Capricious
Cautious
Charming
Clever
Corrupt
Cowardly
Cunning
Curious
Defiant
Devoted
Disturbed
Dogmatic
Enigmatic
Fair
Foolish
Fussy
Garrulous
Greedy
Grim
Hedonistic
Honorable
Hotheaded
Humble
Idealistic
Ignorant
Impish
Impressionable
Incompetent
Intense
Intimidating
Jaded
Jovial
Judgmental
Kind
Kinky
Lecherous
Lively
Macho
Mean
Mild
Miserly
Naïve
Noble
Nonconformist
Nosy
Obedient
Oblivious
Oily
Optimistic
Passionate
Pessimistic
Philosophical
Poised
Proud
Quaint
Quiet
Rakish
Rebellious
Remorseful
Ruthless
Scheming
Sensuous
Shady
Sly
Tactless
Tough
Unlucky
Unpredictable
Unscrupulous
Weak-Willed
Weird
Wise

These Are Your Characters Now

It doesn't matter whether you populate an entire campaign with *Masks* NPCs, use them solely as inspiration, or introduce a few characters a month into your game—there's no wrong way to use this book. *Masks* is a tool for creating amazing, vivid, memorable characters that your players will remember for years to come. We wrote these NPCs, but it's you who will bring them to life for your players. Bend them to suit your needs, make them hateful or lovable, play them to the hilt, tweak them to fit your game—and above all, have fun!



Fantasy

Within this chapter, you'll find 334 characters—83 villains, 168 neutrals, and 83 allies—written for fantasy games but easily adaptable to any RPG and any genre. Among the villains are an assassin who disguises himself as a beggar, a ruthless princess scheming to claim the throne, and a fearsome wilderness guardian; among the allies, you'll find a child oracle, a prissy adventurer, and the folk hero called the Red Sash, to name just a few.

There are as many neutrals—characters with no predisposition to help or harm the PCs—as villains and allies combined, because these NPCs make up the bulk of the population in any campaign world. That doesn't mean that they're uninteresting, though, and with a little tweaking any of them can be recast as blackguards or staunch backers of the party. Among their number are a corrupt harbormaster, a barbarian freedom fighter, a singer plagued by scandals, and a cursed recluse whose skin sprouts small vines.

Whether you run an epic fantasy game or one in which the PCs have to fight tooth and nail for every copper piece, and whether you need a truly vile villain, an ally who the PCs would die to protect, or someone in between, you'll find plenty of NPCs to choose from in this chapter.

Artist: Andrew McIntosh

Villains

From characters so abhorrent that they might make you cringe to humorously misguided wizards, this section is packed with villains for your fantasy campaign. Some are major antagonists, while others are better-suited to threatening inexperienced adventurers—and some won't look like villains at all until the PCs get to know them better. Many of these villains have redeeming qualities, as well, making them that much more interesting for you to roleplay and for your players to interact with. A villain you can empathize with becomes that much more believable.

Erissa Darlee 1

Possessed Cleric

"That is...most generous, great lord...but, that reward is better spent on the poor."

Appearance: Erissa is a hard fighting woman with traces of curves, shoulders that confidently bear plate armor, and eyes of chocolate brown. Her hands are scarred white where she once wrestled a great evil.

Roleplaying: There are pauses and hesitations in her speech as the dark power ransacks Erissa's memories, straining to keep up a veneer of humility and charity.

Personality: By day, the dark power pretends to be Erissa of old, serving in the town's poor districts, selecting its prey. When unobserved, it preys on the weak and helpless, leaving a trail of bodies and magically breaching the walls of Erissa's heart, where it is bound.

Motivation: Though Erissa is well known as a healer, and still praised in several popular songs, the dark power, cloaked in her reputation, is building a conspiracy within her church.

Background: Erissa was part of a famed adventuring company that fought its way into the deepest strongholds of evil. In their last adventure, they opened a doorway releasing a terrible power that blighted several kingdoms. As her companions fell one by one, she called upon her god and reached out to imprison it, knowing the terrible cost that would come due. The dark power dissolved into shadows and through her skin, binding itself to her. It became imprisoned within her flesh, and her eyes darkened as her mind was swallowed.

Traits: *(SM) Adventurer, medic, saintly*

Lord Luiras Lashvale 2

Abhorrent Lordling

"Hold him down, Laurense. I'm going to cut off another finger—maybe he'll make that priceless face again!"

Appearance: With his flawless complexion, golden locks, and aquiline nose, Luiras is a heartbreaker. He dresses to the nines, usually in silks and brocades, and carries a bejeweled sword and a barbed whip.

Roleplaying: Luiras is cocky, cruel, and hotheaded. He doesn't know the meaning of the words "compassion" or "caution," and it shows. He sneers like it's going out of style.

Personality: A spoiled brat who has power and wealth but lacks morals or common sense, Luiras sees the world as a playground for himself and his friends.

Motivation: Lacking a moral compass, Luiras is motivated by the desire to feel pleasure—usually at someone else's expense. He also wants to impress his friends, becoming much, much worse with an audience.

Background: Born with a silver spoon in his mouth, Lord Lashvale has always gotten his way. Spoiled rotten as a child, he's just as rotten in his late teens. What he wants, he takes—and he doesn't care if he shouldn't want it, or if it's not his to take. He's attracted a retinue of like-minded brats who venture out into the countryside to torture itinerant beggars, rape peasants, and generally act with reckless abandon. His equally unwholesome family shields him from the consequences of his actions, bribing people to look the other way as needed.

Traits: *(MR) Abhorrent, aggressive, child, leader, notorious, royalty, wealthy*

Aasiyah • Abel • Abrum • Adamus • Adari • Adelina • Adell • Adelta

Kale Rodale

3

Eccentric Wizard

"Forgive the gloves, but my order does not permit contact of the flesh. Now tell me where the relic is located, or I will demonstrate my vast knowledge in the ways of agony."

Appearance: Kale is always seen fully clothed with a high collar and gloves. Other than his face, no exposed flesh can be seen.

Roleplaying: His voice is smooth, and he smiles too much. He never touches anyone and refuses handshakes or other types of physical contact.

Personality: Kale is oily and unscrupulous. He doesn't establish contact, physically or emotionally, with anyone or anything. He plays this off, often with a smile and joke, but cutting off all physical contact has left him completely dead emotionally.

Motivation: Kale is an adventurer in search of money, artifacts, and power. He desperately seeks satisfaction for all he has sacrificed physically and emotionally. Those who disrupt his drive are often dealt with harshly.

Background: Kale was born the son of tavern owner, and was far more charming than smart, with desires to leave the town where he grew up. His charm gained him entry into a lesser-known school of magic whose order required a prohibition of physical contact. He entered the school and became a proficient wizard. After leaving this school, he traveled with several less than scrupulous adventurers. Today Kale is an established wizard with some wealth and power, always looking for more.

Traits: *(PV) Adventurer, eccentric, magical*

Brynhild Skaldmeier

4

Honorable Mercenary

"Gold will buy my services, but it will not buy my honor. My company will not kill the unarmed, nor take what is unearned, nor destroy homes and farms."

Appearance: Standing tall and proud, she is one of the most attractive warrior-maidens most have ever seen.

Roleplaying: She is honorable and professional, and sneers at cowardice or treachery.

Personality: Brynhild is the leader of a mercenary company, and her first loyalty is to her troops. She has a strong sense of duty and integrity.

Motivation: She pledges her life to fulfilling her contracts and to honoring her responsibility to her troops.

Background: Brynhild fled home when faced with the expectation of marriage to a pig farmer. She took up service in the military, and worked her way up the ranks. After a particularly nasty campaign where she was ordered to burn peasants' homes and slaughter their livestock, she resigned her commission. She started her own mercenary company, only taking troops who would serve with honor (with clauses to that effect in her contracts). While many of her employers have balked at her adherence to such a strict moral code, the company is earning a reputation for effectiveness and integrity. Brynhild may respect her enemies, but she will not betray an employer nor break a contract. Brynhild is in the service of a villain, and while she is still an honorable opponent who is difficult to dislike, that makes her a villain by extension.

Traits: *(KS) Aggressive, beautiful, leader, military, warrior*

Colin Kern

5

Political Construct-Maker

"Machines aren't always perfect but, unlike society, machines can be repaired."

Appearance: Strong, commanding, and dressed in expertly tailored clothes, Colin's only visible flaws are a slight limp and an unusually heavy tread.

Roleplaying: Colin speaks in an authoritarian voice and uses his size to remind others that he's in charge. In his arrogance, he talks over others and is visibly surprised when anyone offers dissent.

Personality: Extremely intelligent, smugly superior, and used to being surrounded by toadies and constructs, Colin finds intellectual challenges, particularly in the workshop, irresistible. He holds little regard for anything or anyone, especially the unwashed masses. Faced with opposition, Colin relies on his position, power, and wealth to cow any who oppose him. If that approach fails, his minions are always available to show out unwanted visitors.

Motivation: Already a member of the ruling caste and commanding exorbitant resources, Colin now seeks political power and advancements in the crafting of his constructs.

Background: Colin holds a powerful political office and the constructs he has designed, though expensive, are widely used among the wealthy as guards and servants. By making his product indispensable and pervasive, he solidifies his political hold. When the moment is right, his golems will rise at his command and make him a major power.

Traits: *(MN) Crafter, focal, genius, leader, political, power hungry, wealthy*

Peri Anolgrim

6

Sadistic Planner

"Don't worry. The numbness will pass in a moment and give way to a rather unique burning sensation."

Appearance: She is a raven-haired woman in her mid-twenties, wearing a purple silk overbust corset with silver stays, a black skirt, and dark boots. A dark hooded cloak trimmed in silver surrounds her petite frame. Her fragrance is entrancing.

Roleplaying: Peri has a twinkle in her eye and drives conversation. She is polite and brilliant, adept at discussing seemingly unrelated topics. She seeks out those who are intellectual equals and ignores the rest.

Personality: A braggart who enjoys the game, she feeds her foes just enough information to remain one step ahead. Villainy is delightfully satisfying but she requires a muse. Subtlety is not in her playbook.

Motivation: Peri seeks a Sherlock Holmes to her Moriarty—someone equal to her brilliance. To that end, she will take risks and seek out worthy foes. If her plans go too well, she will deliberately sabotage them; the foreplay of the hunt is what matters most.

Background: Once an herbalist, Peri had a fondness for experimentation that went awry. Her brilliance led to a formula that she experimented with on herself, not only increasing her genius but her psychosis as well. She flutters on the edge of madness and is overwhelmed with a goddess complex. Her elixirs and potions can create all manner of effects, from mind-altering suggestive states to paralytic death (during which she taunts her victims incessantly).

Traits: *(DM) Aggressive, charming, scientist*

Carissa Lawbringer 7

Iron-Fisted Guard Captain

"To the stocks for disrespect; overnight should cure him."

Appearance: She sways in beautifully polished boots, an ermine-trimmed half-cape hinting at soft curves...and wears the badge of a guard captain. Classically beautiful, her pale features and ruby lips excite strangers and terrify the people of her district.

Roleplaying: Carissa loves to provoke people and make them jump. She slaps gloves into her hand and sensuously teases before cracking a club against a desk or wagon, always watching the eyes. Is this one prey or a fellow predator?

Personality: She revels in control, pushing ruthlessly when she has the advantage. If she lacks the edge, she quips a one-liner and exits, arranging for the next meeting to be on her terms. Unpredictability keeps her foes wary and on their back foot. An advantage must be exploited to its limit before it's spent.

Motivation: Carissa burns to eradicate criminals, who are barely better than beasts.

Background: A highwayman killed her father. Her mother was abused by the whoremonger she turned to for bread to feed her family. Carissa swore to end vice and enlisted with the guard, garnered respect for her determination, and rocketed up to the position of captain over the city's poor district. Lacking the funding and men to keep her rough district in order, Carissa uses fear to make up the difference.

Traits: *(SM) Beautiful, notorious, police*

Thaddeus Quickmire 8

Evil Alchemist

"Here you go, lad! Drink up, it's on the house!"

Appearance: A short, stout elderly man with a bald scalp and full white beard, Thaddeus wears a number of charms around his neck for various travel deities, all gifts from travelers. Thaddeus wears an apron and, when not serving patrons, is constantly wiping glasses.

Roleplaying: Thaddeus acts as if every patron is an old friend, even if meeting one for the first time. He is always cheery and upbeat, consoling hurting patrons that nothing is as bad as it seems.

Personality: He is almost giddy, but that's because of what he's secretly doing to transient patrons.

Motivation: Thaddeus wants to create monsters in order to make his tavern a more popular destination for adventurers.

Background: Thaddeus is a frustrated alchemist who was unappreciated by his previous employers due to his lack of ethics. He settled down as an innkeeper in a new land. His inn is located in a quiet village that did not sit on any main roads. Thaddeus has decided to drum up business by poisoning travelers with magical beverages, turning them into monsters. The monsters have attracted adventurers from all around and have made the inn quite popular. Thaddeus' drinks are harmless unless the second component, a morning beverage, is taken the next day. As the two drinks are inert otherwise, Thaddeus has managed to fool the few investigators who took notice of the drinks.

Traits: *(WC) Abhorrent, business, criminal, magical, merchant*

High Priest Cyron 9

Unholy Priest

"The gods demand your penance. I give you a path to achieve it. Come with me, either as part of my crew or as part of the vessel itself."

Appearance: His black velvet cloak covers his brilliant crimson robes. His profile is angelic, but his eyes are cold and distant.

Roleplaying: Cyron listens to his surroundings with his eyes closed, as if he were meditating. When he addresses someone, he will turn towards the sound of that person's voice, open his eyes calmly, and will proceed to speak softly and gently of the horrible fates awaiting all sinners.

Personality: He is a sociopath. Guilt and remorse are unknown to him. He will kill without hesitation and believes that all of his actions are divine providence; he can do no wrong.

Motivation: Cyron's ship is his only concern, and its crew is composed only of souls loyal to Cyron. The ship itself is built from the corpses of his victims, bound and shaped by dark magicks. Like all ships, though, it requires regular maintenance.

Background: As a young man, he was a sailor who was shipwrecked upon a rocky and desolate island. For days, he languished under the hot sun with no fresh water. Feeling his life and his mind slipping away, he offered his soul to any god that would save him. At that moment his ghastly ship rose from the sea, shattering his psyche and beginning his journey.

Traits: *(PB) Abhorrent, beautiful, pilot, religious*

Amina Fawneye 10

Social Chameleon

"That necklace she wears? See how beautifully it catches the light? It will be mine."

Appearance: Her large, innocent-looking eyes project integrity and honesty.

Roleplaying: She will say or do whatever it takes to build trust in her target.

Personality: She doesn't care for others; they exist to be manipulated.

Motivation: Amina gets her thrills from both a successful theft and the pretty baubles that are her reward.

Background: Born into a moderately wealthy merchant family, Amina always appreciated the pretty trinkets her father brought home from his travels. When her father's return trips became less and less frequent and the flow of gifts halted altogether, Amina decided to steal them for herself. When she was caught trying to steal from one of her father's clients—a scandal that nearly destroyed the family business—she was disowned, and she's been working the streets ever since. She's quite stealthy, and competent with traps and locks, but her real talent is her social grace. A natural chameleon, she's able to blend into nearly any situation and expertly manipulate others. She could go far in politics, espionage, or business, but Amina doesn't want success or money. She's content with her modest lifestyle, but occasionally will fixate on a piece of jewelry and use her considerable abilities to take it. Afraid that selling her trophies will get her caught, she either melts them down or keeps them well-hidden. She only wears them in private.

Traits: *(KS) Charming, criminal, stealthy*

Najir Matrell 11

Inspired Tracker

"Don't hold back your fear, it makes everything sweeter."

Appearance: Bulky and strong, Najir bears the scars of many battles and carries many cruel looking weapons. The cold and calculating look on his face is enough to intimidate most of his targets. His wild and dirty appearance belies his intelligence, another of his strengths.

Roleplaying: Najir will track anything for anyone, so long as they are paying. Those who get on the wrong side of his deductive mind and cruel, calculating ways rarely escape.

Personality: Born to a life of cruelty, he has little sympathy for his quarry and remains focused on his work at all times. Any close interaction with Najir quickly reveals his sharp mind.

Motivation: Najir loves the thrill of the hunt, seeing it like a fatal chess game for his body and mind. He would love to find an adversary who could outwit and outfight him.

Background: There was no love for Najir in his filthy hovel and there was rarely enough food for the entire family—until Najir started hunting, that is. In the woods, Najir learned to watch and learn the patterns of his prey before striking. He studied animals and other hunters, picking up techniques and developing incredible new ones. He quickly got bored hunting animals and moved to hunting people. He never cares who he hunts, just that they provide challenge and he gets paid. Najir studies his quarry for many days before striking.

Traits: *(JA) Criminal, focal, genius, outdoorsman, warrior*

The Reverend Icabod Fraimd 12

Puritanical Priest

"Why can't you harlots get a decent job like respectable folk?"

Appearance: Even the most recently pressed black frock hangs disheveled on his pudgy frame. His oval face is sweaty and some part of his greasy hair is always askew.

Roleplaying: He will harangue, accuse, insult, and badger anyone he thinks is giving in to their vices.

Personality: Bluntly put, he is an idealist. Reverend Fraimd envisions a day when his district is no longer assailed by ills that result from the corruption of indulgence. He is indignant and confrontational in the face of these ills. He doesn't hate people in unfortunate circumstances; he just hates what they do.

Motivation: He would save his section of the city by shutting down all the brothels, breweries, and gambling dens. He makes trouble for anyone who frequents the red-lantern district for its many "charms."

Background: A second son born to privilege, he sought a clerical education when it was clear he wouldn't inherit a title. He was an astute student of religious theory, whose superiors thought he needed to experience pastoral ministry before receiving an appointment in the church hierarchy. Confronted by the poverty, misery, and depravity in the area of his assignment, he accepted his calling with zeal. However, he was ill-equipped to serve his parish, with his righteous judgment winning out over any impulse for compassion and understanding.

Traits: *(TT) Aggressive, religious*



Najir Matrell

Artist: Matt Morrow

Collector Yezra Darkmourne 13

Sadistic Priest

"The Goddess blessed you with a good yield and you fall short in your tithe? I assure you that she'll repay you in kind when the plague comes."

Appearance: A tall, imposing woman, Yezra prefers dark clothes, usually with a leather jerkin and wide brimmed hat. She wears her red hair long in a single triple-knotted braid, typical of her order. She has a scar "tattoo" of the Goddess on her right cheek. Yezra rarely smiles.

Roleplaying: Yezra is blunt and to the point. She imposes punishments on those that haven't paid their full tithe to the Church of the Goddess. She dismisses sob stories with a wave of her hand and tells her victims what punishments await them.

Personality: She acts the part of the cold arbitrator, meting out proper punishments. Secretly, however, she enjoys inflicting pain, and often adds additional charges to her victims just for the opportunity to dole out more punishment.

Motivation: Yezra is a sadist and enjoys watching people suffer.

Background: The Goddess grants miracles in return for tithes. If a member fails to pay the tithe then she sends a Collector. Collectors are given autonomous authority to make delinquent worshipers pay. If they can't, the Collector punishes them with an anti-miracle. Yezra particularly enjoys her work, especially when it causes others to suffer. Those closest to her speculate that Yezra was a victim of the Goddess before she became a Collector.

Traits: *(WC) Abhorrent, magical, religious*

Samael Pendergras 14

Embittered Assistant

"I am through suffering the mayor's bloody whims—who is with me?"

Appearance: Samael is a vibrant young man with bright teeth, blond hair, and a dazzling smile. He wears his house colors of crimson and navy prominently beneath his inspector's cloak.

Roleplaying: Laugh and transition to a new topic—that's Samael's way of dealing with difficult questions. He trained as an orator, so his voice is perfectly controlled—booming through crowds or perfectly clear, but intimately quiet, among confidants.

Personality: Everyone wants Samael to be their slave, spending his effort on their petty problems. Fie on that!

Motivation: Samael hates being chained to another's will. He bristles at orders and subverts their intent whenever he can, but overachieves when given latitude.

Background: He grew up under his father's constant scrutiny and manipulation. At 14, he'd had enough and fled to the nearest free city, where he joined the guard. Taking orders was difficult to endure, but he persevered and solved a few hopeless cases with sheer effort. A few years ago, Samael came across a dark book that whispered promises of power and independence. Using the fell rituals contained within, obstacles to promotion were swept away until he stood at the mayor's right hand as captain of the watch. Now that the mayor's interference grows heavy, Samael's knowledge will allow him to garner terrific power through sacrifices and ensure that the atrocities are blamed on the mayor.

Traits: *(SM) Abhorrent, magical, police, scholar*

Hartzell Preston 15

Bitter Huntsman

"I do not fear pain, only the amount of it."

Appearance: Hartzell rarely grooms his brown, shaggy hair and badly cut goatee.

Roleplaying: His voice is commanding when talking to inferiors, but Hartzell is shifty in other matters.

Personality: A victim of circumstance, Hartzell is also a survivor. He does not like what he does, but prefers it to death or pain.

Motivation: He only wants to survive; the promises of wealth and power seem too far off to matter, but he might one day achieve them if he lives long enough.

Background: Hartzell has always been ground under the boot of one dictator or another. First it was his commandeering mother; then it was the lord of his land, always demanding more game for his table; and most recently it was the mysterious stranger who offered Hartzell great power and wealth in exchange for help in corrupting his village into a life of banditry. Hartzell is now the leader of the bandits, but still under the boot of his master and well aware of it. Hartzell fears the strange powers his master wields, and he will not disobey an order. When things are not going Hartzell's way in a fight or encounter, he will abandon his comrades to ensure his own escape. He is ever aware of what failure means and is always ready to pin the blame on someone else, even if it means eliminating witnesses amongst his own men.

Traits: *(JA) Criminal, impoverished, outdoorsman*

Ursula Batal 16

Bitter Sculptor

"You really don't like this piece? I guess I could improve upon it…or maybe you are just blind. What? Oh, I said that your knowledge of art is very fine! "

Appearance: She wears a simple tunic stained from working with clay. She is utterly ordinary in physique and facial features and is neither ugly nor pretty. She always carries a small amount of clay to work with.

Roleplaying: She tends to avoid eye contact and mutters to herself. Her hands are always busy molding a small piece of clay into various shapes. She will occasionally fall to fits of rage which, while rare, are frightening and explosive.

Personality: Ursula is forever frustrated by her lack of social skills, but she also despises others for not suffering as she does.

Motivation: She wants to be recognized as a great sculptor by her peers.

Background: Ursula has wallowed in mediocrity her whole life and has never made an impression on anyone. She hoped that one day, her sculptures would be her voice, but even they are ordinary and dull compared to what others produce. Desperately tired of being common, Ursula sought out and employed the use of magical clay said to bring an artist's vision to life. The recent reports of creatures made of clay attacking people must be mere coincidence…

Traits: *(PB) Academic, aggressive, artist*

Marla Erets 17

Jaded Nepotist

"Ugh…whips are so last week."

Appearance: A beanpole of a woman with wide-set fishy eyes and sharp features, Marla isn't much to look at. She often wears tight gowns that emphasize her androgynous figure.

Roleplaying: Marla fancies herself a vamp and isn't particular about who she cuddles up to. Spurning her affections, or refusing a proffered vice, often sends Marla into a tantrum.

Personality: Though she readily indulges her every whim, old experiences hold little excitement for Marla and she's constantly on the lookout for something new.

Motivation: Marla is petty and childish. She wants to grab and play with any new toy that she sees, and she wants to always get her way.

Background: Spoiled rotten by her rich and influential parents, Marla was handed everything on a silver platter from birth. She eventually became such a nuisance that she was given a position in charge of the city guard to get her out from underfoot. This proved to be an enormous mistake. She immediately began abusing her position, using the guard as her personal goon squad, and turning headquarters into a private hedonists' playground. There's a chance that she just wants acceptance, understanding, or the love of her parents. If so, it's buried so far down that no one ever sees it. Not even Marla.

Traits: *(MN) Dilettante, notorious, police, wealthy*

Lucian the Beggar Prince 18

Humble Assassin

"Spare a copper for a poor sinner, your eminence?"

Appearance: Covered in soot and grime and dressed in beggar's rags, Lucian ambles with the shuffling gait of a man who has spent his life in the streets. Only his hard, flinty eyes hint at his true nature.

Roleplaying: Lucian ducks and bobs his head when he talks, bows to anyone who looks well-off, and reaches out for coins with a quavering hand.

Personality: His humble life belies Lucian's great pride in his talents as a killer—he's unmatched among assassins, and he knows it. He feels no remorse, and views a perfect assassination as a piece of artwork, not murder.

Motivation: Lucian likes pulling the wool over peoples' eyes, and he's always on the lookout for information on potential targets.

Background: A decade ago, Lucian discovered that an assassin who can blend in with the city's poor gains numerous advantages, and he's never looked back. He's amassed a vast fortune, but regards accessing it as a sign of weakness; whenever possible, he works with only the tools at his disposal. No one in the city knows his dual identity, though a few suspect he runs a guild of beggar thieves. He wears a disguise when he needs to move in high society, and when meeting potential clients. Lucian is only truly happy when planning and carrying out an assassination.

Traits: *(MR) Criminal, eccentric, genius, notorious, stealthy*

Mister Rankins 19

Immortal Murderer

"Hello there, darling! So young and pretty, yes you are! Life is precious and must not be wasted. No, no, not one drop of it must be wasted! And if you can spend someone else's, why that's even better, my dear! Come closer…"

Appearance: Mister Rankins is bald with heavy lines on his brow and around his mouth. His clothes are slightly out of date. A bag of sweets can be seen in his coat pocket. If his bare flesh is seen, it is covered with tattoos of archaic symbols.

Roleplaying: He smiles and laughs, even at times most inappropriate. He loves to help young mothers who are in need, and he offers small sweets to their children. When cornered, he transforms into a vicious killer.

Personality: Mister Rankins is eerily cheery at all times. Nothing shocks or startles him. At times, his behavior appears inhuman.

Motivation: His only concern is to find, kidnap, and kill children—draining their vibrant lives from their bodies in order to extend his own.

Background: Rankins was once a miserly sage, pinching every penny so that one day he might call himself wealthy. Before that day came, he fell gravely ill. Lying quiet and alone on death's bed, he realized his life had gone by unlived. Suddenly remembering a text of dark rituals that he had begun translating, he managed to bumble his way through the rite and cast one on himself. Only later did he learn of the consequences.

Traits: *(PB) Abhorrent, charming, focal, occult*

Vallie "Val" Staunton 20

Unscrupulous Treasure Hunter

"A museum? The hell with that. This baby's goin' to the highest bidder."

Appearance: She's a tomboy—short and stocky, but in excellent physical condition. She keeps her flaxen hair cut close and favors trousers and sensible boots.

Roleplaying: She's quick to flash a smile that says: "Trust me." Her gaze turns icy cold if she believes she is being played or betrayed.

Personality: She's a likable traveling companion. While she'd prefer to use guile when snatching an item, she'll use violence if the situation requires it. Though willing to recover artifacts through diligent research and hard work in the field, she's just as willing to lie, cheat, or steal to acquire them. The money in her pocket erases any misgivings she might entertain about her profession. Vallie has one point of honor: She's never double crossed any partners that she's brought in for a particular job.

Motivation: Val likes the travel and adventure that comes from being a treasure hunter.

Background: She never intended to be an unscrupulous treasure hunter. But with each quest, it became easier and easier to bend the rules. The thrill of the hunt and the payoff at the end of every expedition shifted her moral compass. She's proficient with the matching pairs of knives she carries—two visible on her hip belt, two hidden on the inner calves of her boots.

Traits: *(TT) Criminal, notorious, scholar, stealthy*



Ghul-Fan Hraska

Artist: Andrew McIntosh

Ghul-Fan Hraska 21

Crazed Environmentalist

"The Sacred Forest will not brook this violation, maggot. I cast you out, demon!"

Appearance: Dressed in voluminous black robes with an ankle-length sash inscribed with holy runes, Ghul-Fan wears a ceremonial fan of leaves across her back. Her expression is generally cold and intense.

Roleplaying: Cold, unemotional, and disdainful, Ghul-Fan barely seems human. If she found a toddler scratching his initials into a tree, she'd snap his neck without a second thought.

Personality: Beneath her zealous exterior, she's an insecure, small-minded woman. Mistreated her entire life, she found her calling in mistreating others.

Motivation: Ghul-Fan's calling—protecting the forest—could be a noble one, but she's insane. She believes all humans except those of her cult are a blight on the forest, and wants to wipe out humanity.

Background: High Priest of the Sacred Forest, Ghul-Fan leads a cult of crazed environmental zealots that reveres the oldest trees as gods. Intruders into her domain generally smell the incense from her censer just before they find themselves surrounded by the Oaken Wardens, her band of militant cultists. Ghul-Fan wants to preserve the sanctity of the forest at all costs, and her cult is notorious for killing woodcutters, waylaying travelers, and burning down settlements on the outskirts of the woods. On moonless nights, she can command the very trees to do her bidding; few in the area leave their homes when the moon is new.

Traits: *(MR) Abhorrent, leader, magical, notorious, occult, religious, zealot*

Roland Stoutheart 22

Bitter Brigand

"If Marisse can't be mine, then no one else will have her!"

Appearance: Roland is handsome beneath his wild locks. He still attempts to style his hair and wear his clothes proudly, but he looks like a peasant playing at being a knight.

Roleplaying: He is quite polite unless one of the victims is a suitor for Marisse, when he becomes quite ruthless. He speaks with a refined accent that betrays his former position as a knight.

Personality: Roland is as honorable and polite as a brigand can be. He is apologetic if things get too nasty and he'll leave his victims with enough to finish their journey. When a suitor is involved, Roland is quite ruthless and leaves no person alive.

Motivation: He wants to ensure that Marisse never marries.

Background: As captain of the guard, Roland fell in love with the beautiful Marisse and mistook her flirtations and dalliances with him as returning his love. Unfortunately, once a noble came courting her, Marisse reminded Roland of his place. He responded by plunging his blade into the suitor and vowing that Marisse would never marry. He fought his way out of the castle and hid in the wilderness. Since then, Roland has joined a band of brigands, quickly becoming their leader. He also keeps an ear in the castle. Whenever a new suitor attempts to call on Marisse, Roland ensures he never arrives.

Traits: *(WC) Criminal, notorious, outdoorsman, stealthy*

Janus Benedict 23

Famous Adventurer

"I'm looking for adventurers much like yourself, to help me recover a treasure. Equal share to all survivors!"

Appearance: He is a handsome adventurer whose friendly smile shows through his scruffy beard. He wears well-used but functional gear.

Roleplaying: Friendly and gregarious about the upcoming adventure, he doesn't talk much of previous exploits.

Personality: A true sociopath, Janus is not hampered by a conscience. He will say or do whatever he thinks is necessary to get his way, even if it means occasionally contradicting himself.

Motivation: Janus is addicted to the good life, and makes money by taking parties out on adventures, but coming back alone.

Background: Janus learned early on to hide his lack of conscience, and has been manipulating his way through life ever since. Once, in a hurry to flee a town after getting overly friendly with the mayor's daughter, he joined an adventuring party and managed to kill them all off before they reached their goal. Their treasure lasted long enough to give him a taste of true wealth. Since discovering his skill at this adventuring con, he's done very well. He has agreements with many monstrous clans to do his dirty work in return for a cut of the profits. He's actually a talented warrior and rogue, and has kept some of his victims' best equipment for himself. If he joins the PCs, your players will enjoy taking out their frustrations on him once they discover his true plan.

Traits: *(KS) Abhorrent, adventurer, charming, famous*

Miss Iona Blunn 24

Tough Con Artist

"You are correct, milady. The ability to remain charming, polite, and engaging while making a point is an admirable trait in a trusted companion. So is simply being… reassuringly pleasant. Now, how long did you say that your lately departed husband was an officer with the bank?"

Appearance: Makeup and good grooming help hide the passing years. Mostly, it's her bearing and close attention to finery that maintain her attractive appearance.

Roleplaying: In manner, she mostly appears deferential to her lady. From time-to-time, Iona lets an exasperated expression slip.

Personality: In spite of a demure exterior, Iona's a tough-as-nails operator more than willing to endure even the most disagreeable employer to get what she wants. She can effectively charm, wheedle, cajole, bully, or intimidate others when she needs to.

Motivation: Iona likes to gain a position as a lady's companion, earn her trust, and eventually find a way to help herself to a portion of the lady's wealth without being caught.

Background: She was born to a well-to-do family and received a finishing school education, but has been on her own after a scandalous divorce. With a partner (usually one of a series of lovers), she travels about seeking positions as a lady's companion to run her con. Outwardly, she serves that role competently. Privately, she is always probing, trying to learn her employer's secrets.

Traits: *(TT) Charming, criminal, wealthy*

Asteralla Sperrick 25

Disturbed Torturer

"Ha, hah, ha, hah, ha. Silly. You don't get to hide secrets from me."

Appearance: Wrinkled and portly, Asteralla wears a thick leather apron.

Roleplaying: Asteralla cocks her head to the left when speaking, and peppers her speech with pauses and disturbing laughter.

Personality: Slightly insane, Asteralla is obsessed with knowing people's secrets. She conveys the most twisted concept of a kindly grandmother that one can imagine.

Motivation: She cannot leave a secret unknown.

Background: Asteralla is a torturer of the highest class. Once an apothecary's wife, few know how she got to the place she is now. However, she came to embrace the cruelty required by her position, and became very good at her job. To her, uncovering the secrets people hold is a life mission. Even her employers are wary of her, for if she believes they are hiding something from her, she will do her best to turn her tools upon them. When presented with a new subject, Asteralla employs many methods to get the information out, but rarely resorts to direct, painful torture. "Pain does not bring results: fear and uncertainty do" is one of her favorite sayings. Asteralla's tortures often involve the most subtle and carefully crafted manipulations of a person's psyche. Combined with the drugs she employs, few can withstand her tender touch.

Traits: *(JA) Abhorrent, criminal, eccentric, medic*

Lana the Peace Bringer 26

Deluded Crime Lord

"War is death. Violence is pain. Renounce such ways and follow me. It isn't as if you have a choice."

Appearance: She is tall and buxom with brilliant red hair and emerald green eyes. Her ivory skin is complimented by a fur cloak and bronze armor. She carries a matching bronze spear.

Roleplaying: She speaks kindly to people until they dare question her. When confronted, she will verbally or even physically assault her perceived adversary.

Personality: Lana is warm with words but cold in actions. She promises to lead people to a better life, but is oblivious to how she hurts others. She has no tolerance for anyone who opposes her or her organization.

Motivation: Lana is a crime lord with delusions of grandeur. She wants love from those she protects; if they don't love her, she will kill them.

Background: Lana's father was a notorious crime lord, but wanted a better, more honest life for her. She was sent to the finest academies and excelled in all subjects. Upon returning home, she learned her father had been assassinated by a rival. With her father's passion and the knowledge afforded by her schooling, Lana easily took control of the organization and eliminated her competitors. In her mind, she had delivered peace. She realized there were many territories that needed "protection." Fooled by her own lies, what she began for revenge and continued for profit has become a self-righteous crusade.

Traits: *(PB) Beautiful, criminal, scholar*

Hubert the Indomitable 27

Arrogant Rebel

"Royal blood? Bah! I've learned more in a week than you'll likely learn your entire life!"

Appearance: Hubert is tall and lanky, with his long hair in cornrows and braids that run to his shoulders. He has a peculiar fascination with crescent moons, which make up the bulk of the ornamentation on his blue and silver robes. He always holds himself high, as if he is above everyone else in the room.

Roleplaying: He acts as if he has nothing to learn, at least from those with whom he is speaking. He is dismissive of any opinion other than his own and congratulates anyone who agrees with him.

Personality: Hubert is haughty and actually does believe that he is one of the smartest people in the world.

Motivation: He wants to conquer the world, ostensibly for egalitarian reasons, but he intends to be at the top. He is also a voracious seeker of knowledge.

Background: Born in poverty and envious of the nobility, Hubert thought he'd be treated like them when he discovered an affinity for magic. He was sorely disappointed when the aristocracy still rejected him for not having noble blood. Enraged, Hubert went to the peasants and organized a revolt against the nobility. Since then, Hubert has been spreading his fief outward, overthrowing nobles with the aid of their own people. Unfortunately, Hubert often treats his subjects less kindly than their old masters did.

Traits: *(WC) Genius, leader, magical, political, scholar*

Señora Adelina Reyes 28

Unlucky Captain

"Just once, I would like our plans not to be blown off course by hurricanes, our own inept sea captains, or those uncouth privateers!"

Appearance: She is a dark-haired, dark-skinned beauty, resplendent in gowns for formal occasions. As a military governor, though, she more often wears a slightly altered male military uniform for her day-to-day duties and a custom-fitted conquistador's helm and breastplate for military action.

Roleplaying: When beset by instances of bad luck, she slaps a riding crop irritably against her leg.

Personality: She regards attacks by enemy captains, but most especially privateers, as a personal affront. As a member of the aristocracy, she views herself as superior in most respects. She embraces the concept of noblesse oblige.

Motivation: Adelina does not shy away from responsibility, so she is eager to act on behalf of the crown.

Background: As a younger woman, she charmed many men with her stunning beauty. When sickness and war claimed the lives of so many of her family's men, she assumed leadership of the family fortune and lands. Able administration of her property brought her to the attention of the crown and she was chosen to oversee an important military outpost in colonial waters. Her main duty is to ensure that treasure ships reach their destination along the main sea trade route from the colonial islands to the mainland.

Traits: *(TT) Military, notorious, pilot, political*

Douglas Green 29

Avaricious Merchant

"A sword is precious in a town under siege. Thirty-five drachmas—unless you test my patience by haggling."

Appearance: Douglas is a twig of a man, vibrating with nervous energy and exotic stimulants. He dresses richly, advertising his wealth, and has a hawk's gaze.

Roleplaying: His voice is high and nasal, and he spits out numbers so fast is seems like he's stuttering. He has all the cards and knows it; sly smiles and serious appraisal alternate across his face.

Personality: Profit is all. He's ready for a lifetime of luxury and willing to cut out any obstacle in the way. Money will buy everything he lacks—and those who can't see that don't deserve to be in business.

Motivation: Douglas grew up the son of a tinkerer, spat upon and constantly roving, doing odd jobs for a meal. He's never going back to that! He has to buy friends and companionship, so he'd better have money enough to keep them.

Background: His father made the trade of a lifetime, getting Douglas an apprenticeship in the merchants' guild. Most of the guild shunned his teacher, but he taught Douglas several key theories and let the child read books about trade. Douglas mastered them and noted that crisis makes or breaks a merchant. He orchestrates crises to ensure that his goods are in demand, working with bandits and unsavory sorts to eliminate competition and keep a city desperate.

Traits: *(SM) Academic, aggressive, merchant*

Vester Mosser ("Lady Umbra") 30

Undercover Thief

"Relax. Just remember the plan. Everything has been accounted for. The guard patrol? Don't worry, they have the night off. Everything is accounted for."

Appearance: Vester is of average height, with shoulder-length red hair and an athletic build. She wears her city guard sash nearly everywhere. Lady Umbra wears a dark cloak with black translucent silk over the cowl.

Roleplaying: She is all business, and rarely makes small talk. She looks people in the eye when she speaks and ends questions with the phrase "Do we understand?" As Lady Umbra, she speaks smoothly but never more than needed to convey her instructions.

Personality: Vester is optimistic, always believing that things will work out fine. Coupled with her focus to accomplish tasks, she is rarely wrong.

Motivation: Lady Umbra loves the challenge of planning complex crimes and then thwarting their investigation. The money is nice, but the thrill is committing a perfect crime. Lately, getting that thrill has required more elaborate crimes.

Background: Lady Umbra was a street urchin whose focus and ability to plan crimes helped her survive on the streets. After she had run the gamut of street crimes, she decided to pull her greatest caper, created the persona of Vester, and became an administrator in the city guard. From her role in the guard, she uses her knowledge to plan her crimes. She has a crew of thieves who execute her plans; none of them are aware of her alternate identity.

Traits: *(PV) Criminal, focal, police, white collar*

Lissia Quartermaine 31

Hanging Judge

"I shall see that you are beheaded in front of your children, to serve as an example to them."

Appearance: With her iron-gray hair, unsettlingly large eyes, and pinched mouth, Lissia's appearance is as harsh as her demeanor.

Roleplaying: Lissia addresses everyone like a naughty child. She mentions "the good of the community" at every opportunity.

Personality: Lissia is an idealist, but her idealism is tested on a daily basis by the evils of the world. She believes that everyone is fundamentally good, but that people are easily induced to bad behavior—and just as easily convinced to behave.

Motivation: She wants to see people do what she thinks is right, regardless of the human cost. She's absolutely convinced that her way is the best way.

Background: Lissia's not evil, nor even malicious; she just believes that more people would be good, and would behave, if examples were made of some of them. Her twisted philosophy is expressed through her judicial decisions, and as the highest-ranked judge in the region, her word is law. She hands down harsh sentences as she sees fit, from public humiliation for minor offenses to torture (rehabilitation) or execution for major crimes. If someone commits a minor crime but would make a great example to the rest of the sheep, she'll punish them as if they'd committed murder. She's immune to bribery and threats, and would die to preserve her beliefs.

Traits: *(MR) Notorious, police, white collar, zealot*

Chamberlain Martain Capella 32

Royal Puppet-Master

"Sir, if I may be so bold…"

Appearance: He wears a gold and blue doublet with matching breeches and the symbol of the chamberlain's office adorns his neck. He has well-manicured brown hair with a matching goatee. A silver earring hangs from one ear, a style which is all the rage in court these days.

Roleplaying: He looks down upon others with a bored expression. Martain speaks slowly and deliberately but doesn't hide his disinterest in what others have to say, picking and pruning himself while they talk.

Personality: He lacks regard for anyone not of his station or who doesn't respect the weighty responsibilities of being the true ruler. The chamberlain knows that he is the power behind the throne.

Motivation: Martain endeavors to keep control of as much government as possible. He likes the real power in his own hands and out of the king's: Kings are prone to flights of fancy, fits of melancholy and bouts of rage. Besides, kings come and go.

Background: His inclination for political machinations showed at a young age, and his first taste of power established his unfettered appetite for it. Since then, it's been a series of carefully constructed plans to eliminate his opposition and become the only whisper in the king's ear. Martain wields impressive resources, but they're technically not his. He abhors adventurers and their ilk; they're troublemakers he can't control. His plots are far-reaching and are difficult to tie directly to him.

Traits: *(DM) Counselor, genius, political*

Hardy Harr 33

Jesting Puppet Master

"Stop me if you're heard this one. The captain of the guard comes home and finds his wife in bed with the baker..."

Appearance: Hardy is gaunt with greasy blond hair that peeks out from underneath a traditional jester's cap. He wears a flashy jacket covered with bells and dozens of pockets stuffed with toys, novelties, and gewgaws.

Roleplaying: Quick with a tasteless joke or bawdy story, Hardy is constantly "on." He's sleazy and loud, and more popular than he is funny.

Personality: He is magnetic and energetic, and, despite his crude humor, he easily works his way into the confidences of those he entertains.

Motivation: Hardy desires nothing more than to be the voice behind a serious power.

Background: His popularity has been steadily rising for some time. Now he's constantly in demand, and has the ear of quite a few minor politicians, nobles, and merchant princes. As he gains the trust of greater numbers of influential people, Hardy sets himself up as a secret and trusted advisor. He revels in acting as a puppet master, playing those who trust him against one another for his own benefit. Hardy has begun to set his master plan into motion, aiming his advisees against those he perceives as a threat and keeping an eye out for greater opportunities.

Traits: *(MN) Charming, counselor, eccentric, entertainment, famous, focal, humorous, power hungry, wealthy*

Duchess Yoruna Faede 34

Anxious Noble

"We don't have time to wait. If my cousin gets home before we take the valley then we'll never cement my rule!"

Appearance: Just past her prime, Yoruna's body is soft from a comfortable life; she vainly hides her wrinkles under powder. She dresses conservatively and has an aura of command about her.

Roleplaying: She has a nonthreatening demeanor but speaks with a quiet menace. While not impulsive, Yoruna wants to put her plans in motion as quickly as possible. She fears that her cousin will return too soon and ruin her takeover.

Personality: Yoruna is pleasant as long as things are going in her favor. She is constantly brooding over whether she can complete her goals in time.

Motivation: She wants to be queen and isn't afraid to crush anyone that gets in her way.

Background: A cousin of the kingdom's naïve but just ruler, Yoruna was left in care of the kingdom while the ruler went off to war. Yoruna is not content being a duchess; she's decided to steal the kingdom out from under her cousin. She baited lesser lords first, promising them more lands in return for their allegiance. She has had troublesome lords assassinated or removed and is now laying the groundwork for a civil war to take the rest of the country before her cousin can return home and wrest it from her.

Traits: *(WC) Dilettante, leader, political, power hungry*

Eldridge Delmar Hallsman, Esquire 35

Loyal Governor

"There will be law and an orderly collection of taxes in this district! But it doesn't always take a regiment of foot soldiers to achieve your ends. The element of surprise is often enough."

Appearance: Aside from the powdered wig and military-styled coat that is the accepted uniform of his station, he carries a thick walking stick topped with a brass molding of his highness' face for a handle. His face bears a scar, a souvenir of his days in the royal navy when he fought off a corsair boarding party.

Roleplaying: Governor Hallsman is dispassionate but creative in carrying out his duties. He comes at problems sideways. When contemplating his next move, he'll absentmindedly rub his thumb and forefinger together.

Personality: He shows no favor in his administration, with the exception of bowing to the wishes of his sponsor, the duke. He knows that to use the regiment of soldiers at his command as a blunt force weapon is heavy-handed and unnecessary. Eldridge prefers a refined and subtle approach.

Motivation: He believes it's his duty to uphold the laws and policies of the crown.

Background: Eldridge advanced his social standing by serving with distinction, fighting enemy privateers in colonial waters. He saved the life of a young officer, whose father, it turned out, was a duke. This association led to appointments, including governance of this troublesome district, filled with rabble-rousers, political freethinkers, and insurrectionists.

Traits: *(TT) Leader, military, wealthy*

King Ameo Rothir 36

Unholy King

"Hear me this day! The heathens across our border plot the downfall of our great kingdom and will force us to worship their god. I tell you that we will not wait for their plans to finish, for we will strike tonight!"

Appearance: Rothir is slightly overweight. He wears a plain metal crown on his shaved head, and little jewelry. His robes are simple.

Roleplaying: The King is well spoken, and he often quotes religious text. He can be both passionate and long-winded in his religious fervor. He frequently bolts up from his chair and makes wild gestures as he speaks.

Personality: Ameo is very passionate in all he does religiously and as a leader. When he takes an interest in something, it governs his strong emotions. His passion has made him a strict follower of the tenets of his religion, and he has given up most luxuries in pursuit of divine enlightenment.

Motivation: King Rothir's goal is to spread the religion of his god to everyone in his land, and then to the rest of the world.

Background: King Rothir was born to royalty, the fifth in his family line to rule. After his wife died early in his reign, he discovered a new religion from a far away land—a religion of dark doctrine. He quickly embraced it and converted his kingdom by force. Now he is amassing a holy army to bring his religion to the surrounding lands.

Traits: *(PV) Focal, leader, royalty, saintly*

Sagil

37

Insane Cleric

"I merely wish to know what lies beyond reality, even if that means destroying everything."

Appearance: He wears traditional dark purple robes topped with a cobra-shaped helmet. His expression fluctuates between anger and insane curiosity.

Roleplaying: Sagil's insanity is easily visible, but he is still able to influence his minions and keep them in line.

Personality: His mind writhes and fluctuates as he tries to make sense of the incomprehensible things he has seen. He can flip from calm and curious to irate and violent in a moment.

Motivation: He seeks to tear down the walls of reality and see what lies beyond it.

Background: Once a high-ranking cleric of a benevolent and kind deity, Sagil got a glimpse beyond the walls of ordered reality; the things he saw drove him mad. Sagil began to worship a new god, a snake being who gave him great power. He has set about on a new holy mission—to see beyond the walls again, no matter what the cost. He believes that the only way to see beyond reality is to destroy it. He sends his minions out to capture relics of power that will let him do this. Sagil spreads his insanity to his minions, giving them just enough of his madness to believe in him but still be effective in their roles. Encounters with Sagil might lead to him using his power to convert or corrupt a weak-willed PC.

Traits: *(JA) Eccentric, leader, occult, power hungry, religious*



Sagil

Artist: Matt Morrow

Sgt. Johan Belzor, the Hand of Blood

38

Vengeful Warrior

"I was once for king and country, now I am merely for revenge."

Appearance: Strong of build, he carries a large sword effortlessly. His face and body bear horrendous scars. He wears a mockery of his country's armor.

Roleplaying: Uncompromising in his quest for revenge, Johan will hear no logic against it. He only seeks to make the king cower in fear of his fury.

Personality: Johan is harsh, cruel, and uncaring. He has left all kindness and compassion behind.

Motivation: Belzor wishes to see the king as helpless as he was when the royal hunting party left him to die.

Background: While accompanying his king on a hunting party, a monstrous beast fell upon the group. Fighting valiantly to save his liege, Johan slew the beast, but not before it disfigured him terribly. Rather than saving him, the king decided it wasn't worth the effort and left him to die. Saved by a witch and her supernatural spells, Johan gained fearsome abilities and vowed endless torment upon the king. He proceeded to attack the king's villages and holdings, using his fell power to overcome former allies. Though he might have justification for his revenge, Johan does not care who gets in his way and kills indiscriminately. Johan has gained a reputation, and his nickname, for his practice of using his gauntlets and the blood of his victims to write messages to the king.

Traits: *(JA) Abhorrent, focal, notorious, power hungry, warrior*

Balta "The Colonel" Gremmins

39

Immortal Anarchist

"We must have order. How else would we know which throat to cut next?"

Appearance: Balta is unshaven, has long unwashed hair, and reeks of cheap booze. He wears various garments taken from the uniforms of guards and militia members he has killed.

Roleplaying: Although he looks like a scoundrel, he speaks like a member of the nobility. He will bow to those of stature, salute officers, and pay deference to nobles—all with a hint of mockery.

Personality: He is sarcastic, flippant, and insulting. Through his razor wit and courtly charm, however, he wins the laughter and camaraderie of those not on the receiving end of his scorn.

Motivation: The only thing that seems to bring Balta joy is attacking any form of government institution.

Background: Many years ago, Balta was a colonel, loyal and true. He and his men were dispatched on a mission to retrieve a magical orb. He was promised full support from his commanders and provided a native escort to guide them through unfamiliar lands. Upon finding the orb, they were attacked. Balta quickly discerned that they had been sent on a suicide mission and that the escort was a plant. During the battle, Balta destroyed the orb, using it to bash the escort's skull in. The mystical energy of the orb entered Balta's body, granting him immortality. He died that day, and many times since. Now he hides in the wilderness attacking all forms of authority.

Traits: *(PB) Humorous, occult, outdoorsman*

Benedetto 40

Spineless Conspirator

"Someday they'll see that I'm just as good as they are—or even better. Just you wait and see!"

Appearance: Rail-thin from a childhood illness, he always seems to be swimming in his clothes, especially the bulkier fashions favored by the merchant princes.

Roleplaying: He is fidgety, with darting eyes and a twitchy nose.

Personality: His efforts never seem to gain Benedetto the recognition he thinks he deserves. He is easily manipulated by a smooth tongue, and though he's tired of getting pushed around, he cannot seem to muster the will to assert himself. Instead, Benedetto's silently keeping score, and intends to get his revenge against those who have discounted or used him.

Motivation: He will do whatever it takes to gain approval and respect from his family.

Background: Benedetto survived a childhood marked with illness only to be regarded by other family members as too physically frail and too mentally weak to assume a position of leadership within the merchant house. Unable to navigate the waters of commerce legitimately, he hopes to rise within the ranks of a secret society of political freethinkers. The group includes some philosophers, but mostly it's lawless rabble who hate the establishment. Once in a position of influence within the society, he plans to make a power grab for a leadership role in the family business.

Traits: *(TT) Political, power hungry*

Octavia Blund 41

Bizarre Interrogator

"Bloop, bloop. It's time to take a swim, my sweetie."

Appearance: Octavia is extremely heavyset. In her official duties, she favors a form-fitting military-styled uniform that seems to reveal every bulge and roll of fat. She has big, corpulent lips and her heavy-lidded eyes are set deep in her round face. She wears a silver charm in the shape of an octopus around her neck.

Roleplaying: Responsible for a merchant prince's internal house security, she uses fear, intimidation, and torture to enforce loyalty. Octavia sometimes makes bubbling noises, and her ardor is aroused during her interrogations.

Personality: Octavia delights in making people uncomfortable, causing hysterics and inciting fear. She relishes the moment after an interrogation session, when a prisoner will finally agree to cooperate rather than be subjected to another round of her mercies.

Motivation: She wants to extract secrets during interrogation, but also wants to watch prisoners squirm while satisfying her own perversions.

Background: She was raised by a coven of sea hags and ocean druids who taught her the magic needed to assume the form of other animals, including that of an octopus. She developed a colony of wererats to spy for her, which they do in the form of vermin. When Octavia wants to unhinge a prisoner, she has them stripped down and thrown into a water tank. She then jumps in and transforms into a giant octopus, whereupon she embraces them lovingly with her tentacles, leaving sucker marks all over their bodies.

Traits: *(TT) Abhorrent, police, primal*

Oxbar Embari 42

Ignorant Crime Lord

"Do you know who I am? You best calm down before my men gut you like a trout."

Appearance: Oxbar has a heavy brow, beady gray eyes, and a perpetual scowl. He always looks like he's ready to stab someone (which he is).

Roleplaying: Oxbar is narcissistic, petty, and wicked. He came from nothing, but believes he deserves everything; lucking into a huge fortune didn't dissuade him of that belief.

Personality: In too deep to admit that he has no clue what he's doing, Oxbar is a dangerous idiot with money and power. He's clueless, but no one will tell him that to his face.

Motivation: Everything Oxbar does, he does to preserve his pride and reputation.

Background: A year ago, Oxbar happened across a street fight between two smugglers. They killed each other, and he took their cargo—which proved to be wildly valuable. Suddenly wealthy but no less ignorant, Oxbar is a jumped-up thug who's way out of his depth. His criminal empire has all the trappings of success, but none of the substance—it's a house of cards, and Oxbar is just smart enough to know it. He masks his ignorance with brutality, but the day will soon come when his mettle is tested and he will respond in the only way he knows how. When that happens, the collateral damage will be widespread.

Traits: *(MR) Aggressive, criminal, power hungry, wealthy*

Patience Whit 43

Feral Gang Leader

"Quit playing around. Finish him off, grab the goods, and let's get out of here."

Appearance: A young girl smudged with dirt, Patience blends in on the streets or at the textile house where she works. Her long, tangled hair and moth-eaten, oversized men's shirt constantly knock loose items to the floor as she walks. Above her left eye is a vivid scar.

Roleplaying: She is truculent and uncommunicative with anyone she doesn't trust—that is to say, anyone not in her urchin gang.

Personality: Patience is independent, responsible, and tough; she demonstrates extreme maturity for her age. However, she is also savage and merciless, with a passionate belief that might makes right.

Motivation: She is protective of her urchin gang charges. Patience wants the best she can manage for them, so she needs to grab all the power and money she can.

Background: In an urchin gang almost since she was born, Patience knows no other way of life other than their constant struggle. Under her leadership, the gang has expanded rapidly. With her steady hand, the gang has earned many things—among them numerous enemies and a reputation for ruthlessness. After another gang leader put a price on her head, Patience took a job in a textile mill to lie low and avoid suspicion. She uses her wages to supplement the gang's meager income. Viewing this new environment with the eyes of a predator, she has already begun to make future plans...

Traits: *(MN) Aggressive, business, child, criminal, impoverished, laborer, leader, power hungry, primal, stealthy*

Mysterioso 44

Illusionary Enigma

"Not everything is as it seems!"

Appearance: A smoky cloud reveals a nondescript figure who twirls a flowing purple cloak about himself.

Roleplaying: He is confident and larger-than-life, giving evasive answers and misdirection. He speaks with his hands, twirling them on occasion to underscore his statements. Mysterioso is rarely directly interacted with.

Personality: Mysterioso is gregarious and fun but with a honed edge from being so secretive and hunted. Wealth is simply a material gain easily lost—or easily stolen again.

Motivation: The acquisition of wealth is his primary desire, which he does by creating the legend of the Mysterioso persona. It isn't petty thievery when it's done with such style and guile!

Background: His real name is unknown, but the man who calls himself Mysterioso has a great many secrets still to unveil. The first of which is that his "magic" is anything but; he previously studied arcane magic but could not master its properties. Instead, Mysterioso is a master of illusion and, in a world so readily surrounded by "real" magic, his tricks are easily believed. Explosive powder, misdirection, doubles, and mirrors all give the illusion that Mysterioso commands true power. He has two confidants who, under penalty of death, assist with his illusions and occasionally stand in. Thus Mysterioso can be everywhere and anyone. All of this leaves the authorities confused and desperate for assistance in catching the escape artist. His plots are multi-layered and his thefts are works of art.

Traits: *(DM) Criminal, magical, power hungry*

Reballah Irongut 45

Zealous Rebel

"Your toils, your pains, your blood built these roads and these walls! Yet your throats are pinned under their boots! No more! Those who can create can also destroy! Death to these false overlords! Death to all who support them!"

Appearance: Large-framed and slightly overweight, Reballah keeps her hair cut short so that she can she wear wigs to disguise herself during her travels. Her disguises are many and varied, but when she is among allies, she wears a simple tunic and leggings.

Roleplaying: An opportunistic orator, her frequent speeches about how the wealthy have oppressed the workers of the region call for violence and blood.

Personality: She is completely obsessed with her cause and refuses to work within the system out of pure stubbornness.

Motivation: Reballah wants to destroy the upper class: merchants, nobles, artisans, and anyone she does not regard as being one of her own. Her preferred class of people generally includes laborers and tradesfolk, but earning her favor often seems an arbitrary matter.

Background: As a young woman, she served in the military and wanted to be a soldier. Her reluctance to take command, however, ended in her unceremonious dismissal from service. She found work as a stone carver and discovered then that she had a gift for speech-making. Fueled by hatred for authority, she is using that gift to effectively sow the seeds of rebellion.

Traits: *(PB) Laborer, military, zealot*

Preston Wedstone 46

Nosy Blackmailer

"Oh! Hello. What? Oh, this window? Well I just thought… Your wife? In there? Listen, I wouldn't make a big deal of this if I were you. Not unless you'd like for some of you and your wife's illegal dealings to make their way into my next play. Lovely home, by the way. I've admired it for years."

Appearance: In public, he dresses in gaudy, fashionable clothes and carries a quill and a papyrus roll. If he is out on one of his personal errands, he wears dark clothes and a black cloak and gloves.

Roleplaying: He jots down notes on anything of interest and he will ogle any women in his presence.

Personality: Curious and charming, he pries his way into other people's business and keeps records of what he learns.

Motivation: Preston writes bawdy plays and loves blackmailing others by threatening to include their personal scandals in his shows. He also likes to spy on people, especially women. It gives him a thrill and a sense of power.

Background: As a boy, he would regularly hide from his parents in order to eavesdrop on them. When he witnessed his father having an affair, he was confused and immediately confronted his father with the truth. His nervous father offered him a nice sum of silver to never speak of the matter again. High on power and with his pockets full of coins, Preston realized how much fun blackmail could be.

Traits: *(PB) Entertainment, stealthy*

Princess Aria Kensor 47

Ruthless Royal

"Really, brother, the people want a firm hand. If you treat them like chattel, they'll respect you the more for it."

Appearance: Aria is an attractive woman and enhances her natural beauty with cosmetics and fashionable clothes; she also uses magical enhancements if available. She is always smiling.

Roleplaying: She acts the perfect princess to her people. She always appears concerned for their needs and ensures that their demands are met as best she can.

Personality: Aria's generosity towards others is an act. She is coldhearted and simply wants what's best for herself. She has trouble keeping lovers because they feel her coldness towards them.

Motivation: She's plotting her way to the throne and doesn't care who is stepped on or killed along the way.

Background: The youngest of six children, Aria knew that her chances of holding the throne were so remote as to be impossible. Rather than be married off to a duke of a faraway fief, Aria has been plotting to get her siblings out of the way. She pretends to be close, manipulating each of them to make poor decisions that take them out of the running for the throne. Thus far, she's had one brother killed in a duel after she encouraged him to declare his love for a married duchess, and has had a sister locked in a convent after murdering a "cheating" lover who turned out to be innocent.

Traits: *(WC) Abhorrent, beautiful, dilettante, political, power hungry*



Lady Cadronus

Artist: Matt Morrow

Lady Cadronus 49

Hideous Shaman

"Our actions. Our reactions. The elements dictate all, and they demand that you be destroyed."

Appearance: Lady Cadronus is a tall brunette with a thin, rawboned frame. Her nose and ears have been cut off, her lips torn away, and her eyes replaced with two orbs of bleached bone. She wears a robe adorned with alchemical symbols.

Roleplaying: She does not speak directly to a person, but instead seems to be addressing an audience, even though her tone is conversational.

Personality: Driven purely by the logic derived from her research of alchemy, she displays no emotion.

Motivation: She believes that study of the four elements—air, earth, fire, and water—has revealed the destiny of the universe, which begins with the destruction of mankind.

Background: Born into the nobility, Lady Cadronus quickly developed an obsession for alchemy. Though she became well known as an expert on the matter, she was never satisfied and constantly pushed the boundaries of the subject. She discovered an ancient ritual that would "bond" the caster with the very essence of the elements and finally grant her absolute mastery. Though it required disfiguring herself, she performed it eagerly. She butchered her face and replaced her own eyes with smooth shaped bone, but the power she gained dwarfs her sacrifice. She senses the world through the elements, and attacks by summoning their powers.

Traits: *(PB) Academic, hideous, magical, primal, scientist*

Ophelia "The Mask" Dal-Vorn 48

Deformed Burglar

<Eyes narrow and a finger is thrust at you in anger>

Appearance: Her black leather armor is tight-fitting with buckles and ties secured down to prevent noise. A featureless black mask covers her face, with two slits revealing brown eyes and a golden tear.

Roleplaying: The Mask speaks rarely and appears suddenly, striking without warning. She will mime her instructions or simply use hand gestures to communicate in order to avoid using her raspy voice. A steely glare indicates she is about to strike.

Personality: Unpredictability and bold moves are the trademarks of this thief and sometimes-assassin. She never uses the same tactic twice and is loath to speak or show her face.

Motivation: The acquisition of priceless art is her passion and is always part of her crimes. When she kills, she does so only to avenge some offense or to keep her identity secure.

Background: Originally an adventurer and rogue, Ophelia was also a great admirer of beauty and art. Her obsession was magnified during a delve when an acid trap scoured her face, leaving it twisted and deformed. Now she quests for beauty to counter her own hideous visage. The acquisition of knowledge is rarely of interest unless it leads her to a hidden treasure or art. Likewise, her paranoia makes her easily take offense at any mention of her features; more than one dealer who reacted to Ophelia's face has wound up dead shortly thereafter.

Traits: *(DM) Criminal, dilettante, hideous, stealthy*

Roberto Graviani 50

Alchemical Don Juan

"Transcend mortal life and live purified as your core elements!"

Appearance: Roberto stands 5'8", with olive skin and black hair that still shows only traces of gray. He's fit as a farmer with calloused though often ink-stained hands.

Roleplaying: He's impatient with lesser men, supremely confident in his own virtues and magnetism—particularly to women. He charms the most attractive women with a practiced mix of compliments, foreign sayings, and perceptive readings.

Personality: Doctor Graviani loves a good glass of red wine and savors his food; most meetings are over a glass of wine or a meal. Several women keep assignations with him, thrilling at his practiced charms.

Motivation: Competition is eternal and Roberto hates coming in second to anyone. His peers are targets of speculation and rumor, their discoveries diminished by Graviani's telling, and their wives seduced.

Background: As a youth, his foreign heritage marked him as different, leading to taunting and fights. Now he wears his difference proudly, assigning much of his success to his ancestors and upbringing. His exotic features and relative wealth make him popular as a dinner guest—or host. Recent alchemical experimentation bore fruit; his formulae allow him to conjure elementals with the personality and lifespan of host animals—though the process consumes the animal. Human-powered elementals should work even better...

Traits: *(SM) Aggressive, occult, scientist*

Lord-General Shira Crae 51

Brilliant Tactician

"Our chances of taking that keep by tomorrow morning are five to one. If we wait until evening, our chances increase to eight to one."

Appearance: Shira has a mousy appearance and wears glasses, even in full armor. She looks uncomfortable in armor and wears her red, feathered hair long down her back.

Roleplaying: She is a sharp wit and loves to spit out probabilities. She's uncannily accurate and likes to tease her opponents about the futility of facing her armies.

Personality: Shira has a powerful gift, one that she's using for conquest. She is no warrior, though, and she is squeamish at the sight of blood.

Motivation: She wants to prove to herself that she can conquer anyone. It's a game to her.

Background: Shira has always loved games, especially those with minimal chance involved. As an aristocrat, she had plenty of time for such things. When her cousin took the throne, Shira offered advice on how to foil their enemies. While initially dismissive, her cousin soon learned that Shira had a knack for strategy and tactics. Shira was made lord-general of the army and she's been conquering neighboring territories ever since. Some whisper that she plans to take the throne for herself, once the odds have tipped in her favor.

Traits: *(WC) Leader, military, power hungry*

Cassandra Merrill 52

Stealthy Assassin

"I kill for him because he needs me to. I need nothing else."

Appearance: Cassandra has an athletic, toned body. She dresses in street clothes but always carries appropriate disguises.

Roleplaying: She has little concern for anything but her missions. She does not worry about consequences, only cleanly making the kill.

Personality: Focused and uncaring, Cassandra hides emotion in order to perform her job better, only showing it for her savior and master.

Motivation: She lives to serve the master who saved her life.

Background: Cassandra Merrill was orphaned while very young. Wandering out of the woods that her family called home, she found the main road and began walking. Encountering depraved bandits, she was saved by a nobleman who raised her and kept her safe from the world. An enterprising member of the court, and of a secret society, the nobleman sent Cassandra to a special school in a far-off country. There, she learned the arts of stealth and murder. The nobleman visited every month and treated her with kindness, forming an unbreakable bond. Unknown to Cassandra, this was part of a program meant to create perfect, completely loyal assassins for the society. When she graduated, Cassandra happily did her master's bidding and dispatched people at his request. Using a mix of disguise, wit, and stealth, Cassandra is able to infiltrate almost any institution or location. Often, she finds herself backed by the society, though she knows nothing about it.

Traits: *(JA) Criminal, focal, stealthy*

Victoria Silk 53

Anarchic Prankster

"I have no idea who started that fire, sir. Which of his other six houses will the lord have to live in while that one's being rebuilt?"

Appearance: Victoria has short red hair, a large nose, and rarely sits still. She carries a bag of tools and disguises.

Roleplaying: She cocks her head when she speaks, and loves to gesticulate with her hands.

Personality: Victoria has always been a joker, and it's always gotten her in trouble. She's a good person who's frustrated that only the wealthy gain wealth and only the powerful gain power. She can't see that her life is on a destructive path.

Motivation: Victoria wants to do something about the imbalance between rich and poor, weak and powerful—and to embarrass the oppressors in the process.

Background: Victoria is a prankster who can't help but take things too far. While some of her pranks are harmless, others have set buildings ablaze, caused injuries, and led to a handful of deaths. Her aim is to humiliate the powerful, and her pranks always have a social message (like when she painted the courthouse red to symbolize the blood of the innocent). She never sets out to seriously harm anyone, and she feels guilty when her pranks go awry—but not guilty enough to stop. Victoria is an acolyte in a local church. She's not religious, but she views this as the perfect cover.

Traits: *(MR) Criminal, religious*

Kyle Lawson 54

Nightmare Busybody

"You really ought to stop drinking so much. Someday someone's going to get hurt..."

Appearance: Though chubby and seemingly ill at ease most of the time, Kyle's smile is broad and inviting, and he dresses cleanly, if not fashionably.

Roleplaying: Kyle's always ready with a smile, a kind word, whatever help he can provide, and an attentive ear.

Personality: He's pleasant and caring. Due to severe psychosis, he believes he knows what's best for everyone around him, and that he has a duty to help them improve no matter what it takes. Experience has taught him that this works best when no one knows that he's behind their difficult learning experiences.

Motivation: Kyle wants to share his "wisdom" with everyone and teach them the lessons they need to learn.

Background: Kyle's parents were always right, and if he had just listened, they wouldn't have had to punish him so severely. Now that he's learned to be good, it's his turn to teach everyone else the way he was taught. Kyle wishes they'd just listen to him, but that doesn't work. In time he's discovered that people learn best when he arranges "accidents" that teach them the folly of their actions. Most of the time Kyle is completely delusional about himself, but he has dark moments when he realizes that his parents were monsters and he's no better; these moments are incredibly dangerous to those around him.

Traits: *(MN) Abhorrent, genius*

Theressa Vorton 55

Scheming Poisoner

"Little Victor looks worse...it's clearly time for a treatment. You do have your payment?"

Appearance: A sensible businesswoman, Theressa dresses in rich but practical maroon clothing. Her hair is drawn back and coiled in a black cap, emphasizing her pale skin and high cheekbones.

Roleplaying: She is impatient with small talk, ignoring people when they become emotional. She affects a schoolteacher's diction, sharp and precise.

Personality: Theressa cares only for her own comfort, and manufactures crises in order to have the solution in hand. That some are too stupid or poor to buy her services doesn't disturb her.

Motivation: This is the quickest, surest path to wealth for her skills. People don't enjoy coming to her, but they grovel appealingly when they're short on their payment.

Background: Despite learning midwifery, Theressa was shunned for her lack of compassion. She discovered a way to imbue slivers of stone with a poison that leaks out into water slowly. After developing a mastery of the antidote, Theressa packed up and headed to a larger city, leaving a few splinters of poison behind in the stream for spite. After establishing her practice in a city, she slips poison into the well, where the dilute doses sicken children first. She sells her medicine at a good profit, draining families of their savings and watching others die. Then she packs up her cure, journeys to a new city, and poisons its well.

Traits: *(SM) Abhorrent, business, magical, medic*

Agnor Orsh 56

Philosophical Hunter

"Do not be misled by my fine clothes and extensive trappings, for I have hunted the wolves in the wastelands, and learned their secrets as the light of their eyes flickered out of existence by my hands."

Appearance: Agnor is handsome and well groomed. He wears the finest clothes over his powerful frame. His hands are thick and bear scars that a man of his position doesn't often have.

Roleplaying: He is calm and well-spoken unless provoked. Then he becomes aggressive, locking eyes with his quarry.

Personality: At the center of his very nature, Agnor is quite philosophical and enjoys discussions on the nature of living beings. He believes that one can only truly understand a living creature when it dies, when its last moments reveal its true nature.

Motivation: Agnor has a desire to learn about all types of people and creatures through their deaths. He kills simply to experience their true natures. Wealth and power hold no sway over him.

Background: Agnor was born to a wealthy family of merchants. He attended the finest schools and developed a passion for the study of philosophy. He used his family's wealth and their trade routes to experience the world. While traveling in the wastelands he came upon a tribe of hunters and became enthralled with their belief in experiencing creatures through their deaths. Now he travels the world searching for unique individuals and creatures to know, and, eventually, to kill.

Traits: *(PV) Primal, scholar, wealthy*

Edwardo de Castille 57

Vindictive Heir

"Now you will understand my pain."

Appearance: His bright blue eyes shine under darkened lids. Worry lines crease his young face and an impeccably manicured short beard already shows flecks of gray. A gleaming rapier hangs from his side.

Roleplaying: His thick accent cannot be hidden and Edwardo energetically speaks with his hands. He points as if seeking to place the blame on others.

Personality: Edwardo carries a legacy of pain. He is passionate about his cause but extremely careful. His plans include multiple escapes or diversions.

Motivation: The restoration of his family's name is his primary goal, but many smaller goals run parallel to or feed into this. Death is too good for those responsible. Nothing will dissuade him, and woe to those that would seek to interfere.

Background: Centuries ago the proud lineage of de Castille was defamed through acts of heresy and treachery. All were put to death…or so it was believed. Secretly the line has lived on, and the sins of the past passed down to son after son. Only lately have the noble houses of the past become complacent, and Edwardo now seeks to clear the family name. It is not enough to kill those who implicated his family: Edwardo seeks to make them suffer as his family has suffered, destroying their houses and their lives. The lackeys and adventurers that get in the way are necessary casualties in the war to reclaim his honor.

Traits: *(DM) Impoverished, royalty, zealot*

Lydila the Darksayer 58

Mysterious Cult Leader

"These signs are most disturbing; the dark ones are at unrest. All we can do is make more sacrifices. Bring me ten more."

Appearance: Lydila is a pale, thin woman with straight red hair. She is middle aged, with small wrinkles showing around eyes supported by dark circles. She wears long robes, and prefers a hood.

Roleplaying: All of Lydila's words are heavy. She breathes deep and speaks slowly, and peppers her responses to most things with phrases about the unrest of the dark gods.

Personality: She is a pessimist, and rarely sees anything positive around her. Things that are truly positive are just delaying the inevitable darkness that will consume everything. She sees the worst in all signs.

Motivation: Lydila believes that her destiny lies in the hands of the dark gods. She seeks their guidance in all things; seeing signs in everything. She will do anything to please her gods; which, filtered through her pessimism, is always something horrid.

Background: No one knows where the Darksayer came from. She appeared in the city one day citing ill omens of the dark gods and displaying powers that were a gift from them. She shared her powers with a small group and began to teach them the signs. That group formed into a small cult that now follows Lydila without question. They have committed numerous atrocities at her command to please the dark gods.

Traits: *(PV) Leader, mysterious, occult*

Onias of Gartwood 59

Manipulated General

"If we press the attack a third time, I'm sure we'll succeed. What do you think, Jaspir?"

Appearance: With close-set eyes, ruddy cheeks, and a high forehead, Onias reminds one of an eggplant with a face. He wears ostentatious armor bedecked with medals.

Roleplaying: Onias never makes a statement without his eyes darting towards his advisor, Jaspir, seeking approval. Everything he says sounds like a pronouncement.

Personality: Raised on dreams of one day being a storied general, Onias is blind to the fact that, despite the trappings, he isn't one. Bereft of all common sense, he is easily swayed to morally questionable (or reprehensible) actions by Jaspir or anyone with a swift tongue.

Motivation: Onias wants to be the greatest general who ever lived, and he'll willfully ignore evidence that suggests he's not going to succeed.

Background: A scion of the Gartwood line, Onias was convinced by his closest lieutenant, Jaspir Usiel, that he'd make an excellent military commander. The cunning Jaspir had long planned to use the pompous dimwit to his own ends. Impressionable, vain, and enamored with Jaspir's knowledge of war, Onias has embraced his lieutenant's counsel without question. Manipulated by Jaspir, Onias has ridden down peasants (rebels), enforced punishingly high taxes (to fund the great war), and generally made life miserable for the locals—all while certain that he's doing the right thing. Thanks to Jaspir, Onias comes off as an accomplished commander in his own right, blinding him with pride.

Traits: *(MR) Leader, military, royalty, warrior*

Julie Adon 60

Brainwashing Nurse

"Take your medicine. It'll make everything all better."

Appearance: She is shapely, attractive and dresses and accessorizes well. Though she pretends it's accidental, her dress and body language are provocative and suggestive.

Roleplaying: Julie acts vacuous and fawns coquettishly over those she dupes, but is vicious and biting when dealing with anyone she doesn't have a need for.

Personality: Manipulative and conniving, Julie thinks that she's entitled to whatever she can trick people into giving her.

Motivation: She wants to live in the lap of luxury, and for that she needs lots of money, expensive presents, and doting flunkies.

Background: Julie works as a nurse at a large infirmary. There she is able to use her natural charms, addictive will-sapping drugs, and enchantments to enslave wealthy patients. Once in her thrall, she uses her influence to solicit gifts and favors from them. By bringing a large enough group of slaves under her control, she hopes to retire with everything she ever wanted at her fingertips. More than one family has already been broken up by her manipulations, and even those who resist her wiles are often subject to blackmail. Julie keeps a large number of mesmerized slaves to defend her home and perform menial tasks.

Traits: *(MN) Beautiful, humorous, medic, wealthy*

Comtesse Adelta Vintronus 61

Seductive Immortal

"I feel that I've really captured your likeness. <licks lips>"

Appearance: Wearing layers of skirts, a boned bodice and generous makeup, her strawberry blond hair pulled up behind her, Comtesse Vintronus glides with exuberance and grace, ever smiling.

Roleplaying: She speaks in vivid terms using color, texture, and artistic expressions, describing everything as if explaining a painting. She is disarmingly charming and seemingly harmless.

Personality: She is adept at playing people like a musical instrument via flattery, and she engenders a sense of calmness. She yields points to make gains in other areas and seems remarkably well informed.

Motivation: The acquisition of wealth and power—along with the food she requires—drive the comtesse to her sadistic ends.

Background: No records show it, but Comtesse Vintronus is not of noble birth; she was born generations before the first Vintronus. In truth, the "comtesse" has lived for hundreds of years via her nefarious ability to sap the life out of her victims. A skilled artist, she paints her targets with an unusual clarity using magical pigments. This, in turn, binds their life force to her so that she may slowly feed on them, absorbing her victim's knowledge and vitality. She prefers to have many concurrent victims so as to extend the process, but also has drained husks in her dungeon that she's painted overnight when she rapidly required sustenance. Her manor is adorned with hundreds of stunningly lifelike portraits.

Traits: *(DM) Ancient, artist, magical, royalty, wealthy*

Skellos the Cruel 62

Driven Necromancer

"You have failed me for the first and last time. Your animated corpse will do a better job..."

Appearance: A skeletal older man, he wears heavy black robes.

Roleplaying: Driven by his quest, he callously removes any obstacles in his path.

Personality: Skellos has no real personality. Everything revolves around his goal.

Motivation: His quest is to uncover the secrets and power of a distant past.

Background: Skellos was the brilliant student of an eccentric wizard who lived far from civilization. Because help was impossible to find in his isolated locale, his master dabbled in necromancy, using skeletons as servants. Although his master tried to interest him in other disciplines, Skellos took to necromancy like a corpse to dirt. Once Skellos felt he had learned all his master had to teach him, he killed the wizard and reanimated his corpse to keep as a slave. In reading through his former master's hidden scrolls, he discovered hints that a great necromancer once ruled much of the ancient world. Ever since then, his life's goal has been to recreate or discover the source of the ancient necromancer's power.

Traits: *(KS) Abhorrent, magical, occult, power hungry*

Burit Verdum ("The Dark Prince") 63

Vengeful Scion

"Do not beg. You only sully our family name. You chose your side, and you thought you won. Know that you will not be going alone to the afterlife. There is more of our family to come."

Appearance: Burit is tall, with rippling muscles. He has a square head, and doesn't appear to have a neck. He has a groomed beard and shoulder-length hair. His armor is rusted, and his cape is tattered.

Roleplaying: Burit stands straight, with his chin up, and looks everyone in the eye. He breathes deeply and speaks slowly.

Personality: He is a very proud man, and takes neither charity nor help from anyone. Though he maintains courtly manners in any setting, he believes might makes right and will strike out for even the smallest indiscretion.

Motivation: Pride has prevented him from walking away from his fallen kingdom. He burns with the need to take revenge upon the family that exiled him.

Background: Prince Verdum was the son of a vile king who ruled the land in terror. Burit was raised to use force to get what he wanted. Eventually, other members of the royal family rose up, ousted the king, exiled Burit, and ushered in a more just and peaceful era. Burit refused to relinquish his father's kingdom and began to wage a terror spree upon the new rulers and their allies. He slaughters his relatives with a cold, brutal efficiency.

Traits: *(PV) Impoverished, royalty, warrior*

Gaspar Tormogdian 64

Shrewd Theater Owner

"Welcome, welcome one and all! Are you ready to be entertained? Then stamp your feet and clap your hands for the finest damn show in town!"

Appearance: He's balding, with a great handlebar mustache, and often wears a vest embroidered with brightly colored threads. There is a large, garish ring on every finger of his left hand.

Roleplaying: Gaspar commands a room with his booming stage voice. In dealing with his employees, he's gregarious, his harder edge kept in check just below the surface. When provoked, he can let loose with a thunderous, blustering tirade.

Personality: As the shrewd owner of a theater and tavern, he will lure performers to his venue with the promise of a big payout then pad his own wallet at the expense of their dignity. Though other operators are more ruthless, he's got street smarts that are rarely outmatched.

Motivation: He's not interested in art, but in producing outrageous shows that draw the biggest crowds and make him the most money.

Background: As a wandering thespian, Gaspar tired of being a starving artist and always thought he could do a better job of managing the company. So with partners, he bought a tavern and opened a theater. He finds time each night to plot and scheme while smoking and drinking with those partners. He knows that to get a royal charter he may have to tone down the violence and bawdiness of his shows.

Traits: *(TT) Business, entertainment, notorious*

Father William Carson 65

Demon-Ridden Monk

"What possible argument could there be for us to deny ourselves pleasure?"

Appearance: Father Carson has long silken hair and piercing blue eyes. He dresses simply in flowing robes, and a lascivious smile always adorns his face.

Roleplaying: He has little respect for personal space, inappropriately touches people he's not familiar with, and is prone to lecherous stares, often making those around him very uncomfortable.

Personality: Possessed by a lustful demon and driven to hedonism, Father Carson is sly and crafty, using false logic, twisting religious teachings, and applying base animal magnetism to get others to lower their guard against his seduction.

Motivation: Consumed by infernal lusts, Father Carson wants to uses his influence not only to satiate his desires, but also to corrupt the innocent into debauchery. He hopes to use his position as the head of an institute of learning to begin a program of advancement of immoral thought and behaviors in society.

Background: As the head of a scholarly monastery, Father Carson was able to pursue any avenues of research he wished. Unfortunately, his research into demons allowed one to possess him. His monastery, once a famous center of learning, is now known for the delectations practiced within.

Traits: *(MN) Academic, charming, notorious*

Telasha Mel'seurat 66

Possessed Bungler

"I'm the Queen of Darkness! Fear my unholy legions! Wait—where did my army go?"

Appearance: Beneath her golden skull mask and spiked leather robes, Telasha is a mousy woman who looks every inch the milquetoast that she is.

Roleplaying: Under the amulet's control, Telasha is over-the-top evil: villainous laughter, grandiose pronouncements of doom—the whole nine yards.

Personality: The "real" Telasha was born to wealthy merchants and never wanted for anything. She also never learned to think for herself, leaving her mind vulnerable.

Motivation: Telasha wants to crush the world under her bladed boots, and enthusiastically embraces evil. The amulet controlling her wants to get her killed, freeing it to find a master more competent and capable of accessing the depth of its power.

Background: A year ago, Telasha found an intelligent, evil amulet of immense power—and it couldn't be less happy with its master. The amulet warped Telasha's mind easily enough, but soon found she possessed far more wealth than sense. None of Telasha's Sinister Master Plans have ever worked out; she always bungles things, expending part of the amulet's strength in the process. It's focused on goading her to think bigger in the hopes that her next plan will get her killed. Unfortunately, given the enormity of the amulet's power and Telasha's resources, her plots still claim lives—the next one could kill thousands even if it fails.

Traits: *(MR) Focal, humorous, magical, occult, wealthy*

Lord Silus Renzler 67

Faith-Filled Leader

"I only wish to see my people flourish."

Appearance: The dark hair around his face is clean and cropped short.

Roleplaying: Lord Renzler does what is necessary, regardless of the consequences. He rarely budges once he has set his path.

Personality: Renzler has made himself calculating and cold to pursue his mission.

Motivation: He believes his religious goal is to find his people a new land.

Background: The majority of Lord Renzler's people were wiped out over 50 years ago because of their country's strategic position between two larger nations. Many fled, succumbed to plague, or were treated cruelly because of their distinctive appearance and dress in foreign lands. When Renzler was young, he visited the remains of his family's castle, and there he saw the goddess of his people. Being told that he would one day lead his people to glory, Renzler took to his mission with furor. When his father died and left him the title, he began to call back his scattered people. Building a small army, he started taking back territory that once belonged to his kingdom. He has made deals with dark forces in order to gain the power he needs to overcome his country's enemies. Renzler will do much to see his people thrive, and he will make many devil's bargains to acquire that which he needs to wage his wars and restore his kingdom, but there are lines that he will not cross unless pushed.

Traits: *(JA) Leader, magical, religious, royalty*

Sedra Kalhal 68

Elegant Assassin

"Did you not receive my letter? You did. You doubled your guards, and yet you took me to your chambers. It is a common mistake and one that will cost you your life."

Appearance: Elegant and beautiful, she has dark skin and dark flowing hair. She stands straight, and walks with a calm gait. Her clothes will vary, but she prefers lighter cloth and the color red.

Roleplaying: She is calm and confident in all situations. She always has the right comment to say. She never shows fear.

Personality: She is confident no matter what trouble she encounters. Under her poised exterior is a woman with a passion for her work—assassination.

Motivation: Sedra is driven by her commitment to her guild, and is on the fast track to being the guild master. She dreams of the day when she fulfills her mother's wish and leads the guild.

Background: Sedra is the daughter of the former head of the assassins' guild. She was raised by her mother to one day take her place. Before that could occur, fellow assassins killed her mother, and Sedra was forced to the lowest rank within the guild. Never faltering, Sedra became an adept killer, and now has become bolder as she often alerts her targets to their imminent deaths beforehand. She is best known for her ability to exit a location without a trace.

Traits: *(PV) Criminal, stealthy, zealot*



Lord Silus Renzler

Artist: Matt Morrow

Professor Hilda von Tegelmanner

69

Double-Crossing Ghost

"Und so you see, the spirits they remain here, ja? Und they have something they must do, but that something might haf already been done, ja? So they are stuck in this loop of how-you-say, something-doing, ja?"

Appearance: Frumpy and plain-looking, she wears sensible but out-of-date clothes.

Roleplaying: Professor von Tegelmanner speaks in a strong accent, and tends towards long-winded lectures on tangential subjects.

Personality: Although very gregarious, she's also quite nerdy and academic.

Motivation: She is bound to hire and betray adventurers.

Background: Hilda was a professor of the supernatural, specializing in hauntings and ghosts. Having grown bored simply theorizing on her subject of interest, she sought an avenue to its practical application. She settled on hiring adventuring parties from a nearby tavern to guide and protect her as she visited various purportedly haunted sites. She grew too bold after a number of successful trips, however, and acquired the services of con artists. They abandoned her deep within a haunted cave, taking her money and heading off to their next job. Hilda knew enough about hauntings to arrange her own afterlife as a ghost who would take vengeance on her betrayers. But after doing so, she herself was trapped in the cycle of betrayal and revenge, and has hired an endless stream of adventuring parties over the years only to bring them to their doom deep in the haunted cave. She is completely unaware of her metaphysical state.

Traits: *(KS) Academic, eccentric, scholar*

Acolyte Skobb

70

Needy Acolyte

"I heal people. Really! I healed that farmer last week who caught the plague. You know, the one who was trampled by a horse yesterday? I cured him of the plague just like I cured that old woman of her blindness. I know that she died a few days ago in a fire! So? I heal people!"

Appearance: Skobb is a scrawny youth who has such a small frame that he trips over his robes.

Roleplaying: He talks a great deal about his "calling" and expects to be treated with respect. He scratches his chest often.

Personality: A young man unsure of himself, he tries to cover up his self-doubt with bravado.

Motivation: He wants to be respected first and to help others second.

Background: Acolyte Skobb has never truly applied himself to his studies. He is the youngest and smallest of the members of his order, and he hates being treated as such. When he discovered a magical amulet that granted him healing powers, he saw his chance to win the admiration and praise of his peers. He keeps the amulet hidden beneath his tunic, and every time he uses it to heal, it causes small sores to appear on his chest. Those he heals always suffer a tragic death a few days later, but Skobb has not yet made the connection. Lately he has been having nightmares about a demon, which may be connected to the amulet.

Traits: *(PB) Dilettante, mysterious, religious*

Leallia Bellemar

71

Manipulative Charmer

"You may think you have won, but have only done my bidding without knowing it."

Appearance: Leallia is dangerously attractive. She has brown hair and wears a coy, devious smile.

Roleplaying: Leallia works hands-on, but often her true motives go unnoticed. She is a chameleon who molds herself into the best tool to manipulate her current target.

Personality: She is confident, cunning, mysterious, and seductive. However, Leallia's strongest personality trait is her boundless devotion to her hidden goals.

Motivation: Leallia seeks change in the world, but she keeps the true reasons hidden behind layers of obfuscation.

Background: Leallia is a manipulator, working behind the scenes or charming her way into social positions where she can bend the ear and will of the high-ranking. She is often seen on the arms of wealthy royalty or whispering in the ear of politicians. But Leallia's reach is far wider, and her resources seem near limitless. When some treachery of hers has been discovered within a realm and she has been chased out of it, she often appears elsewhere with even bigger plans. She is known to wield many magical devices, but if she is a magic user herself she keeps it well hidden. Many of her schemes revolve around the manipulation of bloodlines, and some who have crossed her speculate that she is immortal or long-lived. These might just be rumors she has seeded herself to obscure her true motives.

Traits: *(JA) Charming, mysterious, power hungry, white collar*

Rodett Atwell

72

Necromancer Con Artist

"I've almost got the spells right for the zombie uprising. Just a few gold and they'll leave your town alone. Act today!"

Appearance: Rodett looks seedy and greasy. Her hair is thin and dirty and she wears brightly patterned clothes which bear a myriad of strange stains.

Roleplaying: Leaning in close, Rodett always applies high-pressure sales tactics and haggles over everything. She's disposed to making outrageous claims that are difficult to disprove.

Personality: Rodett is full of energy and excitement, especially when talking about her newest plan to strike it rich.

Motivation: Though there are numerous ways she could use her sorcerous abilities to make her as wealthy as she's ever hoped for, Rodett only has the attention span for fast-paced get-rich-quick schemes.

Background: Rodett has always been a bit excitable and looked for the easy way out of everything, so when she decided that wizardry was where the big money was made, she let herself be seduced by the dark arts at the first opportunity. With new powers at her command, Rodett immediately started looking for ways to apply her new-found unholy powers to the task of lining her pockets. So far, she's been wildly unsuccessful, but that doesn't faze her one bit.

Traits: *(MN) Business, eccentric, humorous, impoverished, magical*

Field Marshal François Gamelin Nievelle Le Petomane

73

Incompetent Officer

"Your buttons are filthy! FILTHY! How can his highness ever expect to win a war when you filthy stupid grunts can't keep your filthy stupid buttons polished?"

Appearance: Perfectly groomed and fastidiously dressed, he wears an exasperatingly arrogant expression.

Roleplaying: Through and through, Le Petomane is a pretentious, insufferable jerk.

Personality: He's a major jerk with multiple promotions.

Motivation: He wants to run the cleanest, most attractive, and best-maintained military in the world.

Background: Some generals earn their place, while others have such well-connected families that they cannot be fired. An arrogant and incompetent general, Le Petomane is the latter. Granted a military title due strictly to an ancestor's conquests, his family's politics, and his birth order, Le Petomane has never been truly tested in combat. However, due to overwhelming numbers, competent underlings, or sheer luck, he has won enough minor engagements to maintain a reputation as a victorious commander. Utterly lacking in humility or self-awareness, he considers himself a military genius. His arrogance is such that he would rather decimate his own armies than admit to a strategic error. He is also completely unaware that his family's fortunes have been waning for some time and his future position is far from ensured. When the chips are down, his incompetence will truly shine through.

Traits: *(KS) Abhorrent, leader, military, royalty, wealthy*

Ciel Enbura

74

Unscrupulous Relic Hunter

"The Shard of Shalazar? Yeah…you won't find that in the Caves of Ice anymore, but if you were interested in it, I can make you a good price."

Appearance: Ciel is long-legged and athletic, with long, wavy blond hair worn in an old-fashioned style. Her clothes are plain, dated, and understated.

Roleplaying: Ciel is always looking to sell something. As soon as she hears someone with a need, she will pounce on him or her with an offer. When it comes to business dealings, she always gets what she wants, by persuasion or attrition.

Personality: Her looks camouflage an aggressive nature. When she wants something, she gets it. She uses her quaint image to gain the trust of strangers.

Motivation: Ciel loves to have and sell things. She finds a rush in taking something not hers.

Background: She grew up in a remote village, raised by very traditional parents. She was kidnapped from the village as a young woman by a group of bandits. To survive, she had to learn to deal with them aggressively. After a few altercations, the bandits came to respect her and taught her many things about relics, specifically stealing and selling them. Ciel now seeks out relics, steals them, and then sells them. She's not above robbing a party who just completed a quest.

Traits: *(PV) Adventurer, aggressive, merchant*

Captain Tawyna Murr

75

Brutal Enforcer

"This is my town. My rules."

Appearance: An imposing broadsword hangs at her side. Dented armor covers features seemingly chiseled from stone. Her light blue eyes and long blond hair give the briefest illusion of compassion.

Roleplaying: Captain Murr likes being in charge. "Accusations first, proof second" is her modus operandi. She talks loudly and with confidence, her eyes always glaring. She never smiles.

Personality: She rarely shows emotion beyond anger or disgust; her default state of being is that of quiet contemplation. She won't back down from a fight and her soldiers are deathly afraid of her and what she can do to them. She is the law.

Motivation: She wants control of the city and everyone in it.

Background: Corruption ran amok, and Tawyna embraced it, using the chaos to champion the necessity for the guard to stamp out the criminal element. Now the pendulum has swung the other way; the captain and the guard have become the criminal element. Shakedowns are the norm, as is detaining people without reason. Bribery runs rampant amongst her people and the populace lives in fear of her. The nobility ask no questions because crime is at an all-time low and their purses continue to be lined with gold. Many people would be happy to see the captain and the guard meet an unsavory fate, but none are able to stand up to them.

Traits: *(DM) Leader, police, power hungry*

Durgo the Lucky

76

Short-Sighted Gang Leader

"That museum gots stuff against sneaky little buggers, but they ain't countin' on 'splosives like we gots."

Appearance: He has an athletic build, beady little eyes, and a vicious grin.

Roleplaying: His idea of conversation is intimidation using simple words, poorly spoken.

Personality: Durgo has a simple mind and enjoys simple pleasures: violence and money.

Motivation: He wants to fight his way to the top, take what he can while he's there, and get away clean.

Background: Blessed with a powerful build, catlike reflexes, and a lucky streak a mile wide, Durgo could have been successful as a laborer or a warrior. However, he's also cursed by being exceedingly violent, stupid, and greedy. He learned early on that he could intimidate his associates into just about anything, and has instigated any number of dumb and destructive capers. Most of them were committed using excessive amounts of force or some other way of maximizing collateral damage (such as a cattle stampede or burning down a city block). Though destructive, his crimes are surprisingly successful; this could be due to his amazing luck or his unorthodox and brutal approach. Durgo's reputation among the underworld is poor, but there's always new meat to tenderize, and his successful operations are lucrative enough for those who manage to survive and get away.

Traits: *(KS) Aggressive, criminal, notorious, warrior*



Sandra, Marchioness of Lionsbury

Artist: Matt Morrow

Sandra, Marchioness of Lionsbury 78

Scheming Princess

"Our nation, in these days of crisis, deserves her best leader."

Appearance: By nature somewhat plain and heavy, Sandra is always immaculately dressed and made up. Russet hair frames a milky face; in intimate conversations, those around her breathe an intoxicating perfume.

Roleplaying: Sandra recites speeches beautifully, and knows exactly how factions and their representatives will react. She is coolly reserved until she mentally classifies you, and then treats you appropriately. She is reluctant to change her initial impression.

Personality: Sandra acts like an orchestra's conductor, cuing one faction or rival group, then prompting another until the tumult and clamor have a single theme: "Sandra is our hope."

Motivation: Her little brother isn't a bad kid, but he's not the ruler the nation needs. Sandra needs to rule and justifies her actions to herself in many ways.

Background: Long the nation's heir apparent, her brother was born after a string of miscarriages when Sandra was already 11. Sandra watched him grow up, but despite her encouragement and training, he never showed much promise. When father died, Sandra stepped up to keep things running smoothly—and came to enjoy being the power broker. Sandra has been the king's greatest supporter in public, but is ready to step up when the scandal she's designed casts her brother down. She has the first three years of reforms already planned.

Traits: *(SM) Aggressive, leader, royalty*

Nal Den 77

Wilderness Guardian

"A mistake entering these woods. Your last."

Appearance: From a distance, Nal might be mistaken for a bear. He is towering and full framed, with powerful limbs. He wears only leather and fur, and he carries a club of polished hardwood. Tattoos of simple lines and patterns adorn his skin.

Roleplaying: Nal stands and squats; he never sits. He is always looking around, and occasionally sniffing. He rarely speaks, and when he does, he speaks in phrases, not sentences.

Personality: A quiet man, he enjoys the serenity of nature, and its cadence of sounds. What he loathes is civilization and all its cacophony: horses with armored riders, clunky wagons, or noisy adventurers looking for fortune far from home.

Motivation: Nal detests civilization and actively fights against its encroachment. Like a weed, civilization spreads and Nal believes it is his duty to cut it back.

Background: Nal was born to a circle of druids and raised to love nature and to venerate it in all ways. When he was a preteen, a group of adventurers found and attacked the circle, leaving everyone for dead. He was the sole survivor, and slowly nursed himself back to health. He never found the adventurers responsible, but he exacts his revenge on any civilized person who steps into his forest. When he is especially angry, he ventures out to destroy nearby farms. Recently he raided a small village, killing several people.

Traits: *(PV) Focal, primal, outdoorsman, religious*

Rajnish Nagendra 79

False Guru

"Ah yes, the life spirits tell me your mother will recover from her illness quite quickly. Now, be a dear, and bring me some more wine, won't you?"

Appearance: Rajnish is tall, handsome, tan, muscled, dripping with oil, and nearly naked. He spends most of his time lounging on pillows while serving girls attend his every need.

Roleplaying: The day that Rajnish does anything for himself is a rare day indeed. He barely moves, expects others to wait on him hand and foot, and spends most of his time preening and flirting confidently with every woman within range.

Personality: He excels at convincing others to do his bidding—especially women.

Motivation: All he really wants is to be waited on hand-and-foot and to be free to lounge about.

Background: Rajnish is a nobody—a twerp from a tribe that no one's ever heard of. While exploring far from home, Rajnish found himself low on supplies, tired, and hungry. He conned an old woman out of a bed, a meal, and a small purse by pretending to be a great mystic. He's been running the same scam ever since. Currently, Rajnish has set himself up as the leader of a small cult, and he encourages his cultists to recruit actively. Though he's happy with doing nothing, he occasionally puts forth the effort to secure some small reward for his followers so they don't abandon him.

Traits: *(MN) Beautiful, dilettante, mysterious, primal*

Hammill Townsend 80

Corrupt Theater Owner

"Just sign right here, and all your worries will be over."

Appearance: A tall, thin older man with a piercing gaze, he wears exquisite but understated clothes.

Roleplaying: As a trained actor, he speaks deliberately, often pausing for effect.

Personality: Hammill is both terrified of his situation and stalwart about maintaining it.

Motivation: In order to save his soul, he must keep the contracts flooding in.

Background: An unlucky theater owner, Hammill Townsend was on the verge of bankruptcy. After a broken rope turned his classy drama into a cheap slapstick, he swore that he'd do anything to make it big. The next day, a mysterious visitor presented Hammill with a long contract and a lot of smooth talk—promising that everything would change. He signed, and his next show was the essence of dramatic perfection. The stranger returned and demanded Hammill uphold his end of the contract: deliver his clients' souls, or his own. Hammill was in league with the Devil. He desperately began signing acts from all over and the Townsend Theatre quickly became known as a discoverer of "the next big thing." As performers began dying, rumors flew of a "devil's deal." But nobody can prove a thing, and there are always new performers eagerly signing up—Hammill is far from the only one willing to risk everything for success. The only salves to his conscience are that all persons sign of their own free will and he's ready to be bound by every contract he signs. He may have no occult power, but bad things tend to happen to those investigating him.

Traits: *(KS) Counselor, entertainment, notorious, wealthy*

Sebastian Redtail 81

Disguised Assassin

"Salted tea is a northern abomination, agreed. The honeyed drinks of your homeland are far more to my taste."

Appearance: He's a lithe fellow with boots worn with many miles of travel, windblown brown hair, and a merchant's rich clothing. He stands a hair under six feet, and moves with unthinking precision.

Roleplaying: Sebastian studies those he trades with, commenting intelligently about jewelry styles and weaves of cloth, inferring their sources. He plays up the well-traveled merchant angle, and uses small talk to research, note local opinions, and get a lay of the land. Once he dons his mask, he lets his blade do the talking.

Personality: He always has five reasons for what he's doing, most of them concealed. He is a fervent, passionate devotee of his god, and thrills to be trusted with his god's business.

Motivation: Sebastian was indoctrinated while young and believes in his dark calling. He is a good merchant—good enough to make a substantial living at it—but his devotion to his god is true.

Background: Trained as an assassin-priest for many years, Sebastian is loyal to the sect that trained him. His father was a merchant, making it a natural cover for Sebastian as he goes about killing those who have displeased his superiors or his god. He intends to continue his dual life until he ascends to the rank of instructor at the same hidden monastery where he was trained.

Traits: *(SM) Focal, merchant, religious*

Caine the Penultimate 82

Disturbed Loner

"For Zane!"

Appearance: His wild gray eyes peer from behind wisps of disheveled silver hair. Caine has chipped brown teeth and his eyes dart about, taking everything in.

Roleplaying: His eyes large and wild, he rarely blinks for fear of missing something. His movements are swift and small, much like a bird or small animal avoiding detection. Caine comments about reminders of his son around him and chews on a piece of wood. Zane!

Personality: Caine isn't stupid and is constantly taking in the world around him, planning his next move, looking for plans within plans. Sadly, years of doing this have made him paranoid to an extreme.

Motivation: Caine is obsessed with preserving the memories of his son—Zane! Any change in the familiar order of his world is an affront to that.

Background: By trade a woodcrafter, Caine loved carving wooden figures for his son, Zane. Unable to carve out a decent living for his family, Caine took up adventuring. He reluctantly left his family, only to return and find that they had been killed by bandits shortly after his departure. The overwhelming guilt drove Caine mad. He now carves wood with his teeth, leaving small tokens about. He'll murder with little provocation and poison entire towns in order to prevent their children befalling the same fate as his beloved Zane. Caine schemes and prepares for the most unusual contingencies with hand-made traps.

Traits: *(DM) Adventurer, crafter, zealot*

Bloody Jane 83

Bloodthirsty Pirate

"I'd give you the opportunity to surrender, but that would deprive me of the fun of killing you all!"

Appearance: Jane has a wild mane of red hair barely kept in check by a bandana. She wears as little clothing as possible and has a lithe, well-toned body. She has several piercings with gold hoops, as well as the scars of many battles. She's a bit above average in height.

Roleplaying: She's aggressive and loud. She is always itching for a fight, even a friendly one.

Personality: Jane enjoys the rush of battle and is a bit masochistic. She enjoys pain and congratulates opponents who manage to rip out one of her hoops. She gets depressed when there are no potential victims on the horizon.

Motivation: She just loves to fight; being a pirate merely facilitates this.

Background: Now a pirate captain, Jane's been a pirate all her life—ever since she was "adopted" by a pirate crew when the ship on which she was traveling was sunk. She was too young to remember much about her previous life. As a pirate, Jane took naturally to wielding a blade, and she enjoys the thrill of the fight. She wears little clothing not because of the heat, but so she can better feel the warm blood of her enemies spattering against her bare skin. She leads attacks against vessels solely for the thrill of boarding and combat. She cares little for treasure.

Traits: *(WC) Criminal, leader, notorious, outdoorsman, pilot, warrior*

Neutrals

These NPCs aren't neutral in the sense that they don't take a stand, or that they're boring or dull—quite the opposite. From spies and prostitutes to museum curators and sages, and even a messenger girl who rides a giant dog, the characters in this section will enliven any fantasy campaign. Neutrals work well both as side characters and in more important roles, and you'll find that many of them are just a bad year away from becoming a villain, or a helping hand away from becoming a staunch ally.

Porter Shingles

84

Ruthless Thug

"Just tell me what needs doin', and I'll see that it's done. So long as I don't hafta cross my friends and I gets my cut, I'm your man."

Appearance: He has rugged features with a bulbous nose bent to the right after being broken many times. With a patchily whiskered chin, he always looks in need of shave. He walks a bit hunched over and favors his left leg. Even in baggy clothes, his massive arms and fists are evident.

Roleplaying: Just before walloping someone, Porter repeatedly pounds his fist threateningly in his other hand, giving them a last chance to comply.

Personality: On the job, he's always ruthless. With those dearest to him, though, he has a heart of gold. He doesn't think of himself as a criminal. The people who hire him as a leg-breaker might be, but not him. He's turned down a few jobs—not many, just those that involve his friends.

Motivation: Despite the toll of passing years, he still relies on his fists. It's all he knows.

Background: A dock worker in his youth, Porter picked up extra cash as a prize fighter. When he got too old for the ring, he hired himself out as muscle to a dockside gang chieftain needing a collection agent and earned grudging respect for how he worked. His strength beginning to give way to his age, he lets his reputation as a prize fighter do most of the intimidation work for him.

Traits: *(TT) Criminal, laborer, warrior*

Yana Risad

85

Bored Prankster

"Your ale has been salted? How might that have happened? If I hadn't had to nurse the pinches and slaps you have given me all night, I might have been able to pay better attention."

Appearance: Yana is an attractive and petite young woman with shoulder-length black hair and a high forehead. She speaks with a high-pitched voice. Her clothes are always bespoke, but never fancy.

Roleplaying: She feigns paying attention to people, while handling their possessions to find out which ones they care about the most, so that she can target them later in a prank.

Personality: Yana is impish, and loves to play jokes on people to watch them get mad. She can't hide her laughter, which reveals that she is the cause of the prank. She is never serious and, just after the target becomes upset, she will undo what she has done.

Motivation: She is bored and detests that her father has put her to work. Her pranks are her way of entertaining herself while she fulfills her father's wishes.

Background: Yana is the teenage daughter of the head of the merchant guild. She grew up expecting to live a privileged life. Instead, her father insisted that she get a menial job so that she would learn to appreciate her wealth. Now she toils at a job she hates and pulls her pranks knowing that her father's money or influence will get her out of trouble.

Traits: *(PV) Laborer, political, wealthy*

The Domino

86

Enigmatic Symbol

"Hail and well met! I cannot help but notice that you have a group of the king's guards mere minutes behind you. Perhaps I may be of some assistance?"

Appearance: A red half-mask over his eyes and nose conceals the features of this man. He wears dark polished riding boots, leather breeches, and a padded leather doublet. A red-lined black cloak completes the ensemble. A sword and dueling dagger hang from ornate sheaths at his waist.

Roleplaying: He is quick with a greeting and carries on in a carefree manner. His accent is subtle and he shows an interest in protecting those of the fairer sex.

Personality: Underneath this debonair persona is a steely hardness. He's chivalrous to the extreme and prone to take unnecessary—but fanciful—risks for his cause.

Motivation: The Domino is dedicated to protecting the innocent and those without means to protect themselves. Ultimately he seeks to overturn tyranny but requires allies for such lofty goals.

Background: Little is known of the man, but in a few short years the Domino has become a thorn in the side of the local authority. The peasants revere him and speak his name in hushed whispers. It is said that the Domino was previously a for-hire mercenary adventurer who turned his back upon a town desperate for assistance. After their slaughter, the adventurer abandoned his lifestyle and took up the mask of the historical hero, the Domino, as penance.

Traits: *(DM) Adventurer, mysterious*

Janorra of the Glade

87

Cursed Recluse

"My pride cost me more than my beauty. It cost me my freedom as well. Now I serve a will greater than my own, and my soul has discovered peace through that service."

Appearance: She is dressed in the ragged remains of what was once a royal gown. Her skin is covered with sores from which small vines and plants are budding.

Roleplaying: Janorra will not look directly at anyone, and covers her face with her hands so as to hide her disfigurement.

Personality: Timid and shy, she is ashamed of herself, but she has found solace in her role as caretaker of the forest.

Motivation: She lives to nurture the plants and trees of the forest as she has been commanded to do.

Background: Janorra was once a princess, spoiled and cruel. When she heard of a beautiful golden sapling tree in a glade near her palace, she demanded that it be cut down and brought to her. Her servants refused for fear that destroying the sapling would anger the spirits of the forest, so Janorra forced them to take her to the glade, where she chopped down the sapling herself with a hatchet. The sapling began to bleed, and the blood seeped into Janorra. She began to sprout small plants from her flesh and was cursed to be the caretaker of the forest for the rest of her life.

Traits: *(PB) Hideous, occult, outdoorsman*

Melissa Tobin, Queen of Adelmark

88

Defiant Queen

"Take up your bill hooks and form lines. Let us each take a dozen of the enemy with us to eternity!"

Appearance: She normally wears practice gear of beaten iron around the palace; her black hair has been cut short for a helmet, but her eyes are still intensely blue and her famed hawk's beak nose still dominates her face. She's still plump, but her limbs have slimmed down as training has brought out definition.

Roleplaying: Melissa only dresses formally for court; the rest of her day is filled with drills in weapons and battle strategy. Protocol is only for court; she has ordered her instructors to ignore her titles and just teach her as quickly as possible.

Personality: She's resigned that she'll lose the war when the enemy returns, but she intends to make the enemy pay dearly.

Motivation: Her responsibilities to the kingdom drive Melissa. Grief and fear swamp her whenever she loses focus, so she buries herself in military studies.

Background: Her husband's army broke when he died in battle. Everyone expected the enemy to storm the castle and put her family to the sword. Instead, the enemy turned to the south and continued their conquest, ignoring Adelmark. Melissa feels like she's been living on borrowed time ever since. She hopes the armorer will complete her mail before battle comes again.

Traits: *(SM) Eccentric, royalty, warrior*

Jarrod Marriott

89

Charismatic Pretender

"How YOU doin'?"

Appearance: His dazzling smile and long locks of golden brown hair make women weak in the knees. Twinkling green eyes show a hint of amusement. Breeches complement a silken blouse which reveals a manly, hairy chest.

Roleplaying: Jarrod is quick-witted with an easy air about him. A disarming smile is always on his face and nothing seems to bother him.

Personality: Outwardly, he is a flatterer and a smooth-talker. Underneath, Jarrod is playing for his next big score. He gives a good story but is quick to fold under pressure. He has few scruples beyond ensuring his own survival. Apparent lack of intelligence is a play on his part.

Motivation: A swindler and con man, Jarrod will sell anyone into the dungeon if it'll advance his financial position. Lecherous, he uses the affection of others to advance his personal gain.

Background: Charming and handsome, Jarrod has a penchant for being both recognizable and forgettable depending on his needs. He floats from alias to alias with practiced ease, going from one erstwhile lover to the next, all the while cleaning out their purses. His sordid background has made him a jack of all trades; he slides into assumed roles with little difficulty. Underneath it all he's unashamedly a coward and will readily admit it. A lover, not a fighter, Jarrod flinches at the mere mention of violence. He's well connected with the "word on the street."

Traits: *(DM) Beautiful, criminal*



Aasiyah Hotep

Artist: Avery Liell-Kok

Aldus Vaiyle

90

Tragic Former Hero

"Adventurers, huh? They bring nothing but trouble! I bet there's a goblin horde about to overrun us!"

Appearance: An older man, Aldus' thinning hair is just wisps of white, except for his bushy eyebrows and scraggly beard. His armor hangs loosely about his emaciated frame and even the short sword he carries seems too big for him.

Roleplaying: Aldus has a nervous twitch. He's anxious and nervous all the time, believing that danger will come any second. When encountering strangers, he keeps looking past them to see what nastiness is following them.

Personality: When he can calm his nerves, Aldus is pleasant and hospitable. Unfortunately, he is anxious most of the time and refuses to let his guard down, lest the monsters take him without a fight.

Motivation: He wants one last shot at being a hero.

Background: Aldus is a tragic figure. He was once a great warrior, but his glory days are long past. He cares only for his village, but it hasn't seen real trouble in decades. In an effort to keep his combat prowess intact, Aldus sees danger behind every corner and constantly trains for the moment he is needed. Unfortunately, the townsfolk pity him for the insane old man he is, allowing him to think that he is still their steadfast protector.

Traits: *(WC) Humorous, police, warrior*

Aasiyah Hotep

91

Exiled Queen

"My children can never rest at peace until the throne is restored. That task is mine alone to see through."

Appearance: Though a hard life has taken its toll, Aasiyah exudes an air of confidence and true nobility.

Roleplaying: Unbowed by her exile, she seems almost delusional in her confidence that she will return to power.

Personality: Born to rule, she carries herself with an air of nobility. She is smart, confident, and willful, but also gracious and proper.

Motivation: She will do almost anything to return her family to the throne.

Background: Born into nobility, Aasiyah was raised to rule. She was married to the crown prince in her teen years, and trained at his side until he ascended to the throne. But her husband the king was selfish and unstable, and he used his power to indulge his many hungers. Queen Aasiyah did what she could to keep his worst excesses at bay, but a series of economic disasters and his poor handling of them triggered a revolution, which was quickly co-opted by a neighboring country. When the palace was stormed, Queen Aasiyah was popular enough to be granted exile as opposed to execution, but her husband and all of their children were put to death. Upon leaving the country, she had a powerful vision of herself seated on the throne, pregnant. This vision has often recurred, and drives her desire to restore the throne.

Traits: *(KS) Famous, focal, leader, political, power hungry, royalty*

Lady Saundra, Chancellor of the Exchequer

92

Dedicated Noble

"Our nation is harmonious when each of us does our part, striving for individual and common good."

Appearance: Saundra is short and slightly plump, but her staff does a masterful job: Rubies sparkle in her hair, she wears flattering and beautiful dresses, and she is made up with skillfully applied cosmetics.

Roleplaying: Impeccable and precise, Saundra insists on proper titles and forms of address. Any hint that she is not noble, that she toils like a peasant, or that she is not competent at managing the nation's finances will lead to immediate dismissal and utter financial ruination.

Personality: Though born to noble parents, rumor dogged Saundra, slyly naming her bastard just out of hearing. To combat such rumors, Saundra carries herself as noble—showing, by her actions, that such suspicions are utterly baseless.

Motivation: Saundra strives twice as hard to quell the rumors that she imagines still exist. She intends to be the best chancellor ever to serve the nation.

Background: She was hurt by childhood rumor, and focused on mastering noble skills all the quicker. Saundra studied closely at her father's side, ran his manufactories while he was away, and later established herself near court to operate new businesses. After her father's death, another lord served as Chancellor of the Exchequer, but failed miserably. She was gratified when the king defied convention and turned to her to restore the kingdom's finances.

Traits: *(SM) Business, notorious, white collar*

Princess Adari, the Unseen Queen

93

Mysterious Benefactor

"Shhh… Accept this small gift. It is but a few coins, but enough for you to eat well and sleep with a roof over your head."

Appearance: Adari is of average height, and wears long purple robes with a gold-trimmed cowl. She wears a porcelain mask and long gloves.

Roleplaying: She speaks softly and slowly. She will take a person's hand when she gives things away.

Personality: Adari is a kind woman who struggles with the guilt of her privileged life.

Motivation: She started giving to the poor and desperate out of a sense of obligation for her wealth and position. It has grown into a sense of duty.

Background: The Unseen Queen is a legend; the indigent people of the city say she has been around for generations. She appears to the poor out of the shadows and gives them a small amount of coin. The truth is that the Unseen Queen is a role that has been passed from queen to princess for many generations. The purpose is to teach the young princess compassion for the less fortunate, and to keep goodwill among the poor. Currently the Unseen Queen is the princess Adari, who has developed a strong compassion for her wards, and feelings for the young cleric who tends to the poor in the city. She has on more than one occasion almost spoken to him.

Traits: *(PV) Mysterious, royalty, stealthy*

Ezekiel Michaelmas

94

Mercenary Mascot

"That's a deep dent in your helmet. I'll grab the hammers—you can tell me how you got it while I pound it out."

Appearance: At 12 years old, Ezekiel is a scruffy kid with a bright smile. He is clean, dresses in well-patched hand-me-downs, and has tousled brown hair and green eyes.

Roleplaying: He asks childishly innocent or school-logical questions that cut to the moral heart of an issue. Ezekiel is the troop's mascot, like the water boy at a football game; his eyes are bright just being there. He responds instantly to commands and requests, happy to be helping.

Personality: While Ezekiel always longed to be a warrior, he got a solid monastic education first. He tends to ask unintentionally piercing questions using the logic he was taught.

Motivation: His mother always told him that his father was a warrior; he wants to be one too.

Background: He grew up in a monastery as a cast-off child. He learned sums, logic, and proper worship, but he always dreamed of being a warrior. One day a squad of troops marched along the abbey's road; that night he grabbed his things and snuck out to join them. He marched behind them for a day, and then volunteered that night. The captain took him in and put him to work, enjoying the kid's bright spirit. His cheerful enthusiasm brightens the men, too.

Traits: *(SM) Child, military*

Mother Wendy, Keeper of Lost Souls

95

Talkative Philanthropist

"I hope that you enjoyed my story. Who knew an hour could fly by so quickly! What is that? Oh yes! A donation is greatly appreciated for the cause. Thank you! Now, now, don't leave yet! I was just about to tell you about my trip to the dwarven lands…"

Appearance: Mother Wendy is a middle-aged woman with her hair pulled into a tight bun at the top of her head. She wears a proper gown and jacket with white gloves at all times in public.

Roleplaying: She talks constantly, even in her sleep. She tells people about her extensive travels helping war orphans. Even after she has won a person over, she continues talking about her efforts to help children in war-stricken lands.

Personality: She's polite, but relentless. Her passion is evident at all times.

Motivation: She wants every child to have a loving home, and travels the world trying to make it so.

Background: Lady Wendy was born to a privileged life. Pretty, spoiled and self-absorbed, she was naïve and sheltered until she married a young officer. Through the years, her husband rose to the rank of general and would often send for Lady Wendy upon securing victory in a distant land. She saw the cruelty of war and its aftermath when she discovered orphans on both sides – homeless, frightened, and scavenging for food. She became determined to help these children, and has earned the affectionate title of "Mother."

Traits: *(PB) Political, saintly, white collar*

Fattias Carter

96

Unlucky Drover

"The rain I could live with, but this hail is uncalled for. Ah, and now I see what appear to be brigands up ahead."

Appearance: Stout and fat from years of sitting on his cart, Fattias has the deeply lined face of a man who lives outdoors. His expression of resignation rarely changes.

Roleplaying: Fattias is fond of pointing out that things can always get worse. He approaches every situation with dogged acceptance.

Personality: Fattias views the world as part of a vast conspiracy to make him miserable, and has for years. Though he grumbles often, he's a patient, honest man who tries to do his best—and who makes the best of what's thrown at him.

Motivation: Secretly, Fattias is convinced that his bad luck is the result of a magical curse. He soldiers on because he's certain that someday he'll find someone who can identify and break it.

Background: His ill fortune started when his parents named him, and hasn't let up since. Fattias has never missed a day of work despite frequent potential excuses: illness, bad weather, broken wheels, lame horses, traitorous guards, and just plain bad luck. If it's regrettable, it's happened to him. Fattias can add color and excitement to a caravan-based adventure, or he can be used as the perfect cover for transporting something important—because no one in their right mind would ever entrust something of value to him.

Traits: *(MR) Humorous, laborer, notorious*

Amithel Ashtrian 97

Bardic Spy

"Among the willows, standing white and bare, among the willows..."

Appearance: Amithel stands 5'3", with a very thin but still shapely build. Her face is cute, with a small nose framed by long, beautiful hair woven with a dozen small silver bells. Well-calloused fingers normally hold a finely crafted lute.

Roleplaying: When she's being enchanting, Amithel lilts and half sings her responses, making it sound like a tale or song. In private, her vocabulary reflects years of travel at her father's side on the road; the bawdiest phrases slip out when she's angry.

Personality: She's a consummate entertainer, able to complement a court's high tone with precise dress, restraint, and poise.

Motivation: Amithel grew up the daughter of a wandering minstrel; now she wants something more dignified for herself and her future children.

Background: When Amithel approached the duke, asking to be his court bard, she was still rough from her roving youth. Her ambition was obvious; he didn't accept the offer directly, but apprenticed her to his court bard. Between music lessons, she learned observation and ciphers from the duke's seneschal. Several months later, she staged a fight with the duke's bard. Now she travels the halls of power, looking for a new patron—one she can report on to the duke.

Traits: *(SM) Crafter, entertainment, power hungry*

Sophronia "Sophie" Cullen 98

Downtrodden Prostitute

"Get out while you can. This place steals your joy, one day at a time."

Appearance: The smile she offers to customers is a mask. Her heavy-lidded eyes are dark-rimmed and sad. Her hair is tousled. Even wearing the fine lingerie of an upscale escort, her lean figure appears worn out and weary.

Roleplaying: She wastes her days, losing them to intoxication or self-destructive pursuits, and then resigns herself to nights spent whoring.

Personality: Sophie regrets many decisions in her life and yearns for a way to change it, but sees no way to do it. She hovers just above true desperation, not quite reaching bottom or the impetus needed to start over. Filled with guilt over the life she might have led, she now despairs of ever changing her lot.

Motivation: Every day is a struggle to survive bouts of depression and anguished despair.

Background: Sophie was once the toast of the capital city, a courtesan who entertained the powerful and wealthy. Her trust was repeatedly betrayed by false promises. Then, she fell victim to thieves who took her expensive gifts. The thing that grieves her most, however, is her own poor judgment. She had a son, but was unable to provide for him after those misfortunes. Not seeing a way out, she delivered the infant to the orphanage, and then left for this dreary town, joining a bawdy house in its red-lantern district.

Traits: *(TT) Criminal, entertainment*

Izzy Moran 99

Street Hustler

"Hey, you want potions? I got potions, plenty of potions. This one? Heals wounds and makes the next person you see lust after you. Don't drink it now; you ain't my type."

Appearance: A skinny guy in a cheap knock-off of the latest fashion pesters passers-by with his latest pitch.

Roleplaying: He's so eager to impress that he usually uses the wrong words, and often talks himself into a corner. His hand movements and facial expressions are exaggerated.

Personality: A natural-born street hustler, he is always out to make a buck on the latest fad or Next Big Thing.

Motivation: He chases the quick buck and likes staying out of jail.

Background: After a very short career in outright crime, Izzy decided that he'd be better served (and serve less time) working the gray areas of the law. Since then, he's followed an endless string of entrepreneurial opportunities, from baby dire rabbits ("They grow up?") to faux leather armor ("But it didn't chafe, did it?"), usually with disastrous results. Somehow, he always survives his schemes, and manages to find a new one. Because he's always chasing the next opportunity, he's got a very good sense of what's going on in the city's underworld, and can be an excellent source of information on its vices.

Traits: *(KS) Business, charming, humorous, merchant*

Charlotte Morgan 100

Anxious Functionary

"What do you mean the flowers are pale magenta, not soft mauve? The feast will be ruined!"

Appearance: Charlotte is of average height and build, with short blond hair. She dresses impeccably in an understated style. It's common for her to fade into the background until needed. She carries a number of journals, notebooks, inks, and quills, and is constantly making notes.

Roleplaying: It's obvious that Charlotte worries about every detail. Always nervous, she frequently wrings her hands and chews on her lower lip. She often jumps and sends papers flying when startled.

Personality: Charlotte is a perfectionist who is paralyzed by the thought of losing her job. She's always under-valuating her performance, and thus is always trying to nail down a host of final minutiae. She records everything to ensure that everything goes perfectly.

Motivation: More than anything, she would like to regain her former position of importance instead of being stuck pushing papers and planning tiny events of no importance.

Background: For years, Charlotte held a major position with many important duties resting on her shoulders. After making a critical mistake, Charlotte's confidence was so damaged that she couldn't concentrate. She made error after error, until finally her superiors had no choice: they demoted her. With her constant written records, she has managed to turn around her trend of mistakes, but is unwittingly recording a lot of potentially sensitive information.

Traits: *(MN) Business, royalty, white collar*

Annis Stallworth 101

Ruthless Financier

"Two percent? Don't think my lack of a penis makes your offer any less absurd."

Appearance: A short and portly woman, Annis waddles slightly. She's adorned with gaudy jewelry and badges of her station.

Roleplaying: She's gruff and to the point, a businesswoman incarnate. She drives towards the deal and counters everything with a proposal of her own. Annis listens carefully for a sign of weakness to exploit in her dealings.

Personality: A mammoth chip rides on her stout shoulders. Disregarded and taken for granted most of her life, she constantly looks to demonstrate her business acumen. She has a knack for numbers and runs probabilities in her head.

Motivation: She considers the larger picture over the short-term gain. A sizable return on her investment is her ultimate goal and every interaction is an investment of time, money, or information. Annis represents her clients with great zeal...until their portfolio has outlived its usefulness.

Background: The youngest of four siblings, her brothers bought into the family business. Annis was crushed to be excluded due to her gender. This never sat well with her, and, after building her own financial empire, she put her brothers out of business. Thus, her notorious reputation as a cutthroat businesswoman was born. Many have underestimated her to their chagrin. Annis represents a business consortium and seeks to maximize profits—from which she gains a percentage of all deals as a consultant.

Traits: *(DM) Business, leader, notorious*

Ridella Greenbow 102

Forest Guardian

"Honor the gods of these woods, and I will honor your privacy. Dishonor the gods, and you won't have to worry about their vengeance. You'll be too busy dealing with mine."

Appearance: She keeps her blond hair bound tight in a single long braid with small flowers woven into it. Her leather armor has many gashes, and her bow is strung with a thin green vine. She carries neither arrows nor sword, but when she needs either, she reaches into the brush and retrieves one carved of wood.

Roleplaying: Ridella is polite, smiles often, and is very friendly. She occasionally substitutes bird chirps and animal sounds for a spoken word.

Personality: She is in harmony with nature, and that harmony extends to how she treats others. The only time she shows rage is when something threatens her forest home.

Motivation: She lives to protect the wilderness, and she claims to be a protector chosen by the gods themselves. She will not choose sides in other conflicts. Her only concern is the wilderness area that she protects.

Background: In reality, Ridella has no idea how she came to live in the forest and has simply been its defender for as long as she can remember. Her reputation as a fierce warrior is widespread, and outdoorsmen in local villages will warn others not cross swords with the guardian of the woods.

Traits: *(PB) Charming, notorious, outdoorsman, religious*

Drohst the Anvil 103

Rebellious Blacksmith

"Did that guard give me a suspicious look? No? Oh, good. I thought he might know about the armory in my cellar."

Appearance: Built like a barrel on legs, Drohst has bushy black eyebrows, a manly beard, and callused hands.

Roleplaying: Drohst has a gentle manner that belies his size. He jokes often about what might happen if the kingdom were taken over by an evil wizard, and will show off his preparations to anyone he trusts.

Personality: Calm, sensible, and easy to get along with, Drohst loves being a smith, but he knows it's not what destiny has in store for him. He's earnest and naïve, but has the charm of a natural leader.

Motivation: Drohst takes the measure of everyone he meets, trying to see what role they might play in a rebellion. He rarely puts down his hammer.

Background: A skilled blacksmith, Drohst's true calling is uprising: He fancies himself to be a future rebel leader, running a resistance movement out of his smithy. The catch is that he doesn't have anything to rebel against—but he can't get the idea out of his head. He's spent so much time thinking about and planning for his fictitious rebellion that, if a rebellion was warranted, he'd actually make an excellent resistance leader. He's widely respected, has a large cache of weapons, and knows everyone in town.

Traits: *(MR) Business, charming, crafter, humorous, leader, merchant*

Andrea Nichols 104

Hardened Carriage-Driver

"We can cut him off in the market! Too crowded? That's just part of the fun!"

Appearance: Broad-shouldered, tough, and muscular, Andrea has close-cropped dark hair and hardened darting eyes. She stands on her cab when driving, her muscles strained and tensed, leaning into curves and shouting commands to her horses.

Roleplaying: Andrea seems like entirely separate people on and off the job. Usually she is sluggish, lost in her own thoughts and unsure of herself; when she mounts her cab she transforms into an alert, tense predator ready to run down her target.

Personality: Chasing the same people night after night has left Andrea wondering if the work of the guard is doing any good. She still thrills at the high-speed pursuit itself, but questions its effectiveness.

Motivation: Andrea lives for the adrenaline fix she gets on a daily basis from her job.

Background: As a young thief, Andrea found her stolen cab commandeered by the city guard during a citywide pursuit. Forced to drive them after a fleeing suspect through crowded city streets, Andrea discovered that the thrill of the chase far exceeded the excitement of a life of crime. Abandoning the cab in a side street, she joined the guard the next morning and became one of their best rapid response carriage drivers.

Traits: *(MN) Pilot, police*



Ulfgar Bartreson

Artist: Matt Morrow

Amille Sarsis 105

Thrill-Seeking Burglar

"Such a pretty picture! A shame it's hidden away here where no one can see it."

Appearance: She wears trousers, a blouse of bright yellow trimmed in velvet green, and a flowing cloak. Her curly red locks pour down from beneath a large, wide-brimmed hat with a golden feather plume. Shoulder-length velvet gloves mask her dainty hands.

Roleplaying: Always smiling and carefree, Amille rarely seems interested in much of what is discussed around her. She'll faux-yawn to move the conversation along.

Personality: Amille is gregarious and aloof. Easily bored by academics and politics, she is often heard discussing the latest fashions or recent purchase in her painting collection. She'll show signs of interest when it comes to fine arts, but pretends to not know much about the topic.

Motivation: Her passion is the thrill of capture and appreciating the artistry of the crime. She has a fondness for paintings but sees them as a means to ply her tradecraft.

Background: Her adventuring days behind her and her coffers overflowing with the spoils, she's resigned herself to a mostly boring life of luxury. She does engage her one passion: acquiring fine paintings by way of her own roguish skills. Highly valuable paintings will mysteriously disappear—and then reappear—mysteriously within the area. For Amille, it is less to do with the paintings or their value, but the thrill of the crime and the knowledge that she can get away with it.

Traits: *(DM) Criminal, dilettante, notorious, wealthy*

Ulfgar Bartreson 106

Virile Blacksmith

"Of course I can fix it. The blow might have killed the man wearing this, but there's nothing I can't repair."

Appearance: Strong and muscled from working the bellows and hammer, Ulfgar keeps his head shaved but leaves his singed beard intact; it keeps itself short if he gets the fire high enough.

Roleplaying: He fears nothing and never backs down from a challenge. There is little that Ulfgar feels can hurt him, and there are few he feels that can out-drink him.

Personality: Ulfgar is as strong and tough as the metal he bends. If there is a softer side, it has been tempered away.

Motivation: He possesses an alpha male personality and tries to prove his superiority in any way he can.

Background: Ulfgar was smaller than most of the boys in his part of the city. He was always being picked on. Then his growth spurt came early and he gained strength and toughness that the other boys wouldn't get for a few more years. Teaching the other boys a lesson they wouldn't soon forget, Ulfgar set himself out as the leader of the pack. When his father died of pneumonia, Ulfgar had to find work to support his mother. Apprenticed to a local smithy, he put his muscles to good use and bulked up even further. Ulfgar is fairly gruff when dealing with customers, only becoming friendly once he's determined the worth of the other person.

Traits: *(JA) Business, laborer, merchant*

Reena Spidros 107

Arrogant Librarian

"Why, certainly we have the 'Epic of Brightfeather', although I find Durmok's commentary to be far more enlightening. Would you like me to read it to you?"

Appearance: Reena is well dressed for a city librarian, elaborate without being ostentatious. She might be attractive if her face wasn't a permanent scowl and her nose wasn't held quite so high. She wears electrum jewelry, as "any academic knows electrum is the metal of choice for noble jewelry."

Roleplaying: She speaks as if she is the foremost authority on any subject. If indulged, Reena can be very helpful, understanding what a patron really needs rather than what he asks for. If scoffed at, Reena is dismissive. She'll do her duty, but no more.

Personality: She feels that her position sets her apart from other commoners. Her arrogance is a bit of an act, as she can't bear for someone to catch her misinterpreting an ancient scroll or misunderstanding the main point of an essay.

Motivation: Reena is hungry for knowledge.

Background: Reena comes from a wealthy commoner family. Most attention was paid to her older sister, who became a potent mage. Reena's position as the royal librarian is mainly in gratitude for her sister's work. Once at the library, Reena began to soak up knowledge like a sponge. Unfortunately, her hunger for knowledge means that she speed-reads most material, grasping some basics, but never fully understanding what she's read. She enjoys showcasing her knowledge to patrons.

Traits: *(WC) Academic, scholar*

Mr. Abrum Tuncarvit 108

Covetous Miner

"Dungeon to the east? You want me to help you navigate the caves that lead to it? Alright, but I want rights to all mining operations there, and half of all the treasure you find."

Appearance: Abrum is stocky and muscular with bulging biceps. He carries a pickax and a hooded lantern. He is filthy with the dirt and soot of his work.

Roleplaying: He is quiet unless there is talk of treasure or lands fit for mining; then he becomes a ruthless negotiator with a shrewd tongue as he tries to acquire a piece of the action.

Personality: Hard working and honest, he prefers straight talk to silly formalities and patronizing speeches.

Motivation: He wants to be the most successful miner that he can be. He loves his work, and loves profiting from it even more.

Background: Abrum learned how to be a miner from his father. But, unlike his father, Abrum was willing to take more risks by working in dangerous locations. He has helped guide many an adventuring party through dangerous caverns and underground ruins, and charges a tidy sum to do it. He currently has been granted more rights to mine the nearby lands than any of his competitors, and he has a dedicated crew of loyal miners who depend on him to maintain a steady flow of work.

Traits: *(PB) Adventurer, business, laborer, power hungry*

Vikos Kullwood 109

Reformed Thug

"I should kill you, but I'm a nice guy now. We'll be friends, instead."

Appearance: Vikos is seven feet tall and wears his hair in a waist-length braid. His face is heavily tattooed, and his nose has been broken so many times that it's mashed flat.

Roleplaying: Vikos speaks in short, clipped sentences. He always takes the shortest route to his goal, obstacles notwithstanding.

Personality: Vikos is a simple man who takes pleasure in hitting things and who likes to take a direct route through life. He practices meditation, and now has a very long fuse. Until the end of that fuse is reached, he's a gentle giant; set him off, and he's a holy terror.

Motivation: Vikos wants to lead a peaceful, untroubled life, and he tries to help others as a way of atoning for the sins of his past.

Background: Formerly a thug and blackguard through and through, Vikos once sacked a temple and forced the oracle to tell his fortune. He never speaks of what he saw in his vision, but from that day forward he was a changed man. After traveling to a new land, he began trying to wipe out his past by committing good deeds in the present. Every so often, his true nature emerges again—with disastrous consequences. He remains a fighter by trade, and a supreme badass, but now he fights only for causes he believes in, rather than just for money.

Traits: *(MR) Adventurer, outdoorsman, warrior*

Isilmore Baroque 110

Repentant Senator

"I say, what a generous donation to the cause. The people will rally to your name!"

Appearance: Isilmore is a thin man with a dark mustache and slicked-back black hair. He wears a velvet doublet and the golden necklace of the council.

Roleplaying: His accent is subtle and refined. He speaks with honesty and a directness that others find appealing. Isilmore is approachable and gregarious when the situation calls for it.

Personality: Refined and well bred—but not of nobility—he carries himself better than the common man. He seeks to do good with his position and is remarkably well-informed.

Motivation: A former cat burglar, Isilmore legitimately wants to improve others' standing in life. To that end, he champions those without a voice but strives to protect himself from discovery.

Background: Previously a burglar of some notoriety—the Gray Fox—Isilmore reinvented himself after leaving his life of high-end crime. He realized that his previous motivations were entirely self-serving and sought to represent the common man. This led him to a position of public office. He is incredibly popular with the people; they see him as an example of how the common man can rise above. In reality, his background and lineage are a sham. His thievery skills still see occasional use, but only to glean information to better wield his political influence. His ill-gotten gains have mostly been redistributed to the needy.

Traits: *(DM) Famous, political, stealthy*

Doctor Silas Geremtrad 111

Unwholesome Purveyor

"Don't let the skeletons and zombies disturb you. It's the living you can't trust."

Appearance: Silas wears the dark browns and grays of a common laborer. A peddler's cap covers a balding top, but long, dark stringy hair hangs down on all sides. The right side of his face is afflicted with Bell's palsy, making it slack and unexpressive.

Roleplaying: The palsy impedes his speech somewhat, causing slurring. Silas stands impassive in the face of the most gruesome necromancy experiments, and even around the walking undead.

Personality: He's honest if a bit cold. Looking into Silas' eyes, there always seems to be a creeping sense of darkness within.

Motivation: He seeks recognition of his surgical prowess.

Background: A brilliant surgeon in his own right, Doctor Geremtrad was always drawn to the underworld of those who provided cadavers and test subjects on the sly to medical students. When he was afflicted by the palsy, he lost all the patients from his legitimate practice. With few other prospects, he turned to his connections in the seedy world of corpse peddling to sell to necromancers and their ilk. With his medical knowledge giving him a clear advantage over his competitors, Silas now moves freely among practitioners of necromancy and dark magic. He is sometimes used as a mediator or broker involving disputes among gang leaders and practitioners of the dark arts.

Traits: *(TT) Business, hideous, medic*

Kenneth Jackson 112

Faithful Warrior

"This reminds me of the passage where Gerard, confronted by a bear, whispered of paradise and made it a friend."

Appearance: A disturbingly attractive man with dark hair, soulful, deep brown eyes, and a soft gaze, Kenneth is usually clad in travel-worn monk's robes.

Roleplaying: He smiles with an honest ease that makes others feel at peace. He's always bent over a book, reading a scrap of paper, or otherwise captivated by text.

Personality: He serves as a warrior though he yearns to copy books, inspires lust yet remains celibate, and is set apart from his comrades by his sincere faith. Kenneth is always the odd man out.

Motivation: The call of service has led Kenneth along a winding path, but the right one for him. He longs to read and copy the words of the prophets, but that reward will come.

Background: Kenneth was called to serve his deity and joined a monastic order. He found surety and peace in the scriptorium, copying the sacred texts, but his unearthly beauty distracted the other monks. His order pushed him to work with the temple knights, hoping he would fulfill his calling by defending the faithful. There he has met many who enjoy the quality of training, but few whose souls reverberate at the deity's voice.

Traits: *(SM) Beautiful, religious, scholar, warrior*

Olivari Ten-Eyes 113

Unpredictable Rake

"You there, do you want to steal the Eye of Rogash? No? Then how about we stop at that tavern for pastries?"

Appearance: Olivari wears his black hair long and ties it back with a bow. He sports an enormous mustache, suitable for twirling, and has sparkling sea-green eyes.

Roleplaying: Constantly looking around in all directions, Olivari only occasionally focuses his gaze on whomever he's talking to. His mannerisms are outlandish and overblown.

Personality: Named for his habit of looking in all directions at once, Olivari has the attention span of a hyperactive ferret. When persuaded to focus on one task or goal—especially one involving beautiful women—he slows down and can actually be quite capable.

Motivation: Olivari wants to see as much as possible, and live as much as possible, all at once and at high speed.

Background: Seventeenth in line for the throne, Olivari has wealth without responsibilities. A notorious ladies' man, adventurer, and gambler, he's game for anything that sounds like fun. He jumps from one novelty to the next so often that he's never developed strong skills in any area save one: womanizing. Olivari can palm coins, play guitar, hold his own with a rapier, be passably sneaky, and speaks a smattering of four languages. Despite his many glaring faults, he can be tough to dislike as he is charming and surprisingly modest.

Traits: *(MR) Adventurer, charming, dilettante, famous, humorous, royalty, wealthy*

Istan 114

Feral Child

"My pack is my pride. My pack is my family. My pack is my life."

Appearance: He appears to be about ten years old. He wears only a loincloth made from the pelt of a small creature. He carries a hunting knife made from a bone and he shaves his head with it every day.

Roleplaying: Istan behaves like a wolf. He growls at things that displease or threaten him and sniffs at things that rouse his curiosity. Yet, Istan does have basic social skills and can function in a limited manner when in a community.

Personality: He is curious, but cautious. He prefers to hide rather than to fight, but he will defend to the death the pack of wolves that adopted him.

Motivation: He lives for the survival and well being of his pack.

Background: Istan's natural family were merchants who were attacked by bandits when he was just five years old. The bandits slaughtered his family, but Istan escaped unscathed by crawling into a small den. Inside the den was wolf nursing her cubs. Istan feared that he would be mauled by the she-wolf, but for reasons he did not understand, the wolf accepted Istan as one of her own cubs. Under her care, he was brought into a much larger pack of wolves, where he learned how to hide in the forest and to move about unseen until the moment of attack.

Traits: *(PB) Child, primal, stealthy*

Kaye Haduk 115

Rejected Warrior

"Turning me down was their mistake. I'm the best duelist in the land. En garde!"

Appearance: An average-looking woman with a slim, athletic build, Kaye keeps her head shaved for religious reasons. She prefers armor that leaves her arms and legs free, covering them when necessary. She is never without her dueling blades.

Roleplaying: Kaye is very bitter over being rejected for the royal guard. She goads everyone she meets to a duel in order to prove that they made a mistake.

Personality: She is upset and depressed. She fights to prove to herself that the captain of the guard was wrong to reject her. In happier times, Kaye was quite arrogant about her skills.

Motivation: She secretly hopes that the Royal Guard will reverse their decision. In the meantime, she's going to continue to show them what they threw away.

Background: Kaye has been practicing with a sword ever since she was old enough to pick one up. She became a swordswoman in the royal army in order to prove herself worthy to be in the Royal Guard. After many campaigns proving her skill, Kaye was given an opportunity. Unfortunately, for a reason she never discloses, the captain rejected her. Kaye now carries the shame with her and is extremely bitter about the incident.

Traits: *(WC) Aggressive, warrior*

Dimitri Xarot 116

Proud Archivist

"Welcome to knowledge's domain, traveler. Let the world burgeon and swell with our seed."

Appearance: Dimitri has a noble stamp on his features—dark hair, piercing eyes, and a hawkish nose. His features are aristocratic and he's in good shape for a man in his thirties, despite ink-smudged hands.

Roleplaying: He has an air of command, giving clear orders that carry without being loud. He stands with arms folded against each other before him, briefly pointing and returning to a pose of supreme calm.

Personality: Dimitri is still a king's son, proud and prickly about interference. When he speaks, he expects deference and bristles at interruption.

Motivation: Born and trained to rule, Dimitri wants to provide the kingdom with his gift: knowledge.

Background: Third son to the king, Dimitri will never bear the crown. His mother pushed him into the church, where he advanced rapidly. His climb stalled when his lack of true faith surfaced. Unwilling to reject royal blood, the church made him chief archivist. Dimitri quickly realized that most of the books in his care were destined to sit unread on a bishop or pious merchant's shelf. New histories of the kingdom, translations, and treatises on mathematics, logic, and philosophy are coming from his scribes now. Nearly all of them are destined for the marketplace, where the hoi polloi can appreciate them.

Traits: *(SM) Royalty, white collar*

Myra Ales 117

Flighty Sculptor

"I'm so sorry dear, but you're not doing it for me anymore. I'm afraid our session will have to be over."

Appearance: Myra is athletic and wears mud-spattered clothes that won't get in her way while she sculpts. Though not a great beauty, she has an animal magnetism and a seductive grace about her.

Roleplaying: Ever on the lookout for subject material, Myra studies everything with a piercing, almost intimate gaze. She shifts her stance and position often, checking multiple angles.

Personality: Myra is excitable and passionate. She eagerly throws herself into new activities and experiences, even ones that a more prudent person would avoid.

Motivation: Blaming her lack of performance on the quality of her inspiration, Myra searches for her perfect muse, one that will capture and hold her attention forever.

Background: Thanks to a limited ability to concentrate, Myra's love life is full of weeklong flings with new lovers, and her workshop is full of half-finished sculptures of them—both abandoned for newer attractions once someone else catches Myra's eye. This inability to stay on task and finish projects means that, though critics acknowledge her talent, Myra remains forever a minor player in the art world.

Traits: *(MN) Artist, charming, eccentric*

Hannah Sadis 118

Aloof Master of Sacrifices

"Which of the rest of your gods spares your people by smiting your enemies?"

Appearance: A sturdy woman who bears large scars from an old battle with a disfiguring disease, Hannah's advanced age has only intensified her unattractiveness. She wears the crimson robes of her god.

Roleplaying: Hannah is stern and disciplined. She's accustomed to people questioning her god's place in society and her position of chief executioner, but she refuses to justify them or apologize for their necessity.

Personality: Not violent by nature, Hannah appreciates the chance to serve her god and community whether in battle or at the altar.

Motivation: Hannah's faith drives her to bring new converts to the church and to remove threats from the immediate area. She wants this work to lead to increased acceptance of her religion.

Background: As a young girl, Hannah caught a disfiguring, typically fatal disease. Saved from death by a priest of her reviled god, Hannah devoted her life to serving the ominous deity. During her years of service, she rose through the ranks to become an important figure in her cult, and oversees all of the church's sacrifices. Though her god calls for sentient offerings, and thus is usually outlawed, her branch has adopted the practice of sacrificing captured humanoids from raids on nearby dangerous settlements, making them unlikely defenders of the people and enabling them to continue to observe their grisly rites.

Traits: *(MN) Abhorrent, adventurer, hideous, magical, notorious, occult, religious, zealot*

Guardsman Nafor 119

Unshakable Patriot

"I helped to build this wall to protect the kingdom. I'll die on this wall in the defense of the kingdom. It is an honor to do both."

Appearance: Nafor is middle-aged and has a wiry build that gives him a tense look. He wears chain mail and a royal army tunic. His shield and sword are always polished and ready.

Roleplaying: His motions are rigid and precise. He is a soldier to the core, and it shows in his mannerisms.

Personality: Nafor is mindful of his manners and of protocol, and he expects others to be the same. He won't hesitate to point out the shortcomings of those who fail to do so.

Motivation: He has found meaning through military service. He'll do whatever he is asked by his superiors in service of the kingdom.

Background: As a child Nafor was put to work building the huge stone wall that he now watches over. He was an orphan, and the soldiers treated him fairly well, often giving him bits of food in exchange for performing various tasks. Nafor learned how to care for weapons and armor, and by the time the wall was finished, he was ready to become a soldier. If it wasn't for that wall, Nafor believes he would have died young.

Traits: *(PB) Laborer, military, warrior, zealot*



Hannah Sadis

Artist: Avery Liell-Kok

The Oracle 120

Prophetic Manipulator

"The tides of change are rising."

Appearance: The Speakers—the "faces" of the Oracle—dress in plain red robes trimmed in yellow and gold. The distant look in their eyes seems drawn from dreams. Their combined voice has an eerie, resonating quality.

Roleplaying: Speakers are drugged, sluggish to physically respond, and speak slowly and deliberately. Their voice echoes with an otherworldly effect that is disconcerting. They stare blankly into the distance.

Personality: The Speakers lack any individuality, but the Oracle is resilient and defiant in her conviction. She gives no quarter and will not yield. She will recognize gains to be made or a superior idea and seek compromise.

Motivation: She seeks to overthrow the establishment and to restore the natural order. Power corrupts and civilization is a powerful, corrupting force to be disrupted through any means.

Background: The Oracle is a mysterious entity that the characters will never interact with directly. Instead, by virtue of her admiration for Mother Gaia she uses her vessels to communicate. Those initiated into the Order of the Oracle partake of mind-altering potions that open their consciousness to the will of the Oracle. As such, these Speakers serve as her remote voice and her far-reaching hands. She speaks and acts through them. Ultimately the Oracle seeks the restoration of balance and of the natural way, casting aside the trappings of civilization. Thus, many of her machinations may align with those of the PCs; her plans are far-reaching and take years to bear fruit.

Traits: *(DM) Mysterious, political, stealthy*

Mesmora Laceweave 121

Scandalous Widow

"Yes, I married him for the money. Quit acting so shocked. He knew what he wanted and so did I. He died, I'm rich, and there was no foul play. Now go think your small-minded thoughts elsewhere."

Appearance: Fiery red hair, creamy skin, luscious lips, and cold dark eyes set Mesmora apart from all others. Since the death of her husband, she has worn nothing but black gowns—at first in mourning, now because they contrast dramatically with her pale skin and suit her taste for the morbid.

Roleplaying: Mesmora knows she is gorgeous and works it to her advantage. She will flirt with her eyes while scolding with her tongue and tease with her hands while her words remain cold. Keeping others confused is her specialty.

Personality: She finds comfort in the darker things in life. A rainy day lifts her spirits while a sunny one saddens her. She has a strong sense of justice, though, and never compromises it.

Motivation: Mesmora enjoys making others in higher offices uncomfortable with her presence. She also enjoys beating them at their own game: politics.

Background: A wealthy and elderly nobleman married Mesmora for a purely physical relationship. Many underestimated her mind, though, and when he passed away Mesmora ensured that she inherited all of his lands and titles. Now she continues to outwit the ruling class in all manner of politics.

Traits: *(PB) Beautiful, notorious, political, power hungry*

Rak the Wolf-Boy 122

Duped Barbarian

"Ceril says that if I keep killing the animals with my hands, and eating them like I did growing up in the wastelands, we will have enough coin to return home."

Appearance: Rak is a teenage boy with a thin but wiry build. His hair is light brown, thick, and matted. He wears tattered clothes and never wears shoes.

Roleplaying: He walks hunched, never fully standing up. He speaks with a growling voice and clenches his fists when he is excited.

Personality: Rak is a good but impressionable young man. He makes friends quickly and tends to do anything his friends ask.

Motivation: He wishes to make enough money to return home to support his family.

Background: Born in the wastelands and raised by a barbaric and impoverished tribe, Rak is a natural hunter, able to sneak up on most prey. He left the tribe and traveled to the civilized lands hoping to find work to help his family. There, a hustler named Ceril found Rak and created a freak show around the tribesman, wherein he hunts small animals with his bare hands for the amusement of the crowd. Rak acts the part, growling and eating the animals raw. Ceril keeps nearly all the money and has convinced Rak that he will need to keep working, and will need to kill larger animals, if he wants to make the "big money."

Traits: *(PV) Child, entertainment, outdoorsman, primal, stealthy*

Henri Pierce 123

Immortal Entertainer

"'Do I know that one?' Sir, I have played it literally thousands of times."

Appearance: Henri looks like a young man but his eyes betray his true age and his clothing is centuries out of style.

Roleplaying: Henri's mannerisms and expressions are as old as his wardrobe. His eyes scan every detail of both his surroundings and those around him, and he eavesdrops on nearby conversations.

Personality: Though he forces himself to be quick with a kind word and a smile and to perform eagerly for any who ask, Henri is world-weary and constantly exhausted.

Motivation: Henri's quest for death leads him to wander aimlessly, performing for any and all who will listen.

Background: As a young traveling entertainer, Henri sang and played for a stranger at a crossroads, only to discover the man was a god in disguise. Granted immortality for his extraordinary performance, Henri has traveled the world ever since. Under dozens of assumed names, Henri has written dozens of the world's most famous and popular musical pieces, plays, and other performances. After several centuries, Henri began to view his eternal youth as more of a curse than a blessing. Now he searches the world for a cure for his condition.

Traits: *(MN) Ancient, charming, entertainment*

Atellis Noussian 124

Street Preacher

"Listen, brothers and sisters, it is about all of us living together in the light!"

Appearance: His black hair and beard are scraggly, and he wears smudged, worn robes and carries a staff adorned with the symbol of his deity.

Roleplaying: Atellis holds his shoulders high and always has a warm smile on his face.

Personality: He is friendly and loving, without exception.

Motivation: Atellis seeks to spread the love of his deity and help those in need.

Background: Atellis is the first son of a wealthy family. Growing up he had the best and wanted for nothing. His siblings were always jealous, because as first son he stood to inherit everything. When he was 20, he encountered a wounded woman in the streets. She had been set upon by ruffians and left to die. No one else stopped to help her, but Atellis broke from the pack of other wealthy merchants' children, and helped her up. Once she had been attended to, he felt changed. The trappings of his wealthy life wore on him. The more he had, the more he hated himself. One day, he left his family, city, and country and traveled to a poor monastery. There, he learned the ways of his deity and settled down to a monastic life. Many years later, he felt a calling to spread goodwill, and left to travel the world.

Traits: *(JA) Charming, impoverished, religious*

Russell Clifford 125

Grizzled Treasure Hunter

"You're going about that all wrong. Don't you know anything?"

Appearance: Russell is aging and stooped, though still in excellent physical condition. He keeps a fancy pair of gloves with him that he insists are magical.

Roleplaying: No one escapes his observations about what they're doing wrong. He is arrogant and has a quick, often condescending answer for everything.

Personality: Russell has seen it all and has an opinion about most of it. He's old. He's done his share of favors for everyone he knows, and, as far as he's concerned, that gives him the right to be an insufferable ass about pretty much everything.

Motivation: Most days, Russell just wants to get out of his house and stretch his legs with a walk around town. This gives him a chance to fulfill his other burning desire: getting away from his wife. Russell describes her as "an insufferable nag," though most people who've known him any length of time suspect that she's as sick of Russell as he is of her.

Background: Russell was once a highly successful treasure hunter, bringing many objects of value home to his village. Now retired, he wants to enjoy his twilight years in his own way and expects the townsfolk to put up with his eccentricities out of gratitude for their earlier years of economic prosperity.

Traits: *(MN) Adventurer, ancient, eccentric, famous, humorous, stealthy*

Terrin Young 126

Bumbling Successor

"Knock over your apple cart? Well YOU'RE the one who put it here in my way. What did you expect me to do? Go around it?"

Appearance: He wears a shaggy mop of light brown hair and a sharp grin. His stature is slender with freckles and twinkling blue eyes. A small dagger rests at his side and his plain clothes are of exceedingly high quality. A blue sash around his waist flows carelessly in the breeze.

Roleplaying: Terrin talks with his head cocked to the side, chin down slightly. His conversation is marked with expressive eyebrow movements. He leans back comfortably and waves his hand in wistful thought—and then probably falls over from losing his balance.

Personality: He's impulsive and very quick to anger or find offense. Because he's royalty, Terrin rarely considers the consequences of his actions, nor cares about those consequences. As he's a bit of a klutz, this tends to result in all manner of misadventures.

Motivation: He wants to demonstrate that he's not the clueless dolt his father believes him to be. (Unfortunately for Terrin, he is.)

Background: Terrin is a lot of bluster with very little bite. He has spirit, but only threats to back it up. Most tolerate him because of his lineage and wisely choose not to tempt fate. Terrin is quite friendly, and a good companion and resource, but is prone to cause more trouble than he's worth. Companions will frequently find themselves having to bail him—unknowingly—out of trouble.

Traits: *(DM) Humorous, royalty*

Coryn Arana 127

Incompetent Wizard

"Oh yes, that does look quite ancient. Now I have a spell that will identify it, if I could only find my vial of powdered bone, and for that matter, my spell book…"

Appearance: Coryn is stunning. She is tall with flowing blond hair, and a figure that commands attention. She is in her mid-thirties but only appears to have become more beautiful with age.

Roleplaying: She speaks as if she is quite knowledgeable, but is often wrong, and when corrected she will become flustered and then use her looks as a distraction.

Personality: A rather incompetent mage, she knows she doesn't have the discipline to be any good, and that she can use her looks to compensate.

Motivation: Coryn knows she will never be a mage of any notoriety, and her shop is just getting her by. She wishes to marry someone wealthy—like an adventurer.

Background: Born to a typical family, Coryn dreamed of being a mage. She was able to find an apprenticeship with a lecherous older wizard, who took her in because of her beauty. She was able to learn some minor magic, but never enough to take up adventuring. She eventually opened a shop where she sells minor magic items and spell components, and performs simple spells.

Traits: *(PV) Beautiful, business, magical*

Shalla Hearthmoor 128

Unscrupulous Innkeeper

"For that much money, you could buy this place and burn it down, if you liked."

Appearance: In her sixties, Shalla has broad arms, an acne-scarred face, and small ears, making her look somewhat like a toad. She wears a studded leather breastplate under her apron.

Roleplaying: Brusque and matter of fact, Shalla comes across like a no-nonsense grandmother. Her gaze quickly notes anything of value in the vicinity.

Personality: Shalla learned early on in life that scruples don't put food on the table, and discarded all but two of hers: She hates the city watch, and she won't tolerate murder.

Motivation: She looks out for herself and no one else; self-interest is her only true interest. She'll do anything if her cut is large enough.

Background: Shalla runs the Besmirched Ettin inn, a sprawling, ramshackle place well-known as a hangout for thieves, cutthroats, and other ne'er-do-wells. She offers her guests private deal-making rooms, temporary lodging in the inn's many crawlspaces and hidey-holes, and the latest gossip and information on potential jobs. In return, she gets to keep her fingers in numerous pies, taking little pieces of the action herself. Her one unbreakable rule is that anyone who commits murder under her roof is never welcome at the Ettin again. She's not above fleecing or double-crossing adventurers if she thinks she can get away with it, but she's equally happy to help them out if their coin is good.

Traits: *(MR) Business, criminal, merchant, notorious*

Drammin Na Ket 129

Wandering Mage

"Ah yes, just one more stitch and this spell shall be complete."

Appearance: Drammin's burgundy robes hang loosely on his medium frame. His unkempt brown hair swings in loose waves. His spellbook is held in a rope sling at his side.

Roleplaying: He doesn't warm to people easily, but is friendly and kind once he does. He presents himself as a tailor, revealing his magic abilities only when he trusts a person.

Personality: Drammin is quiet and mild. He has found that keeping himself unnoticed keeps him safe.

Motivation: He seeks a relic stolen from his wandering clan many years ago.

Background: Drammin was orphaned as a young boy and remembers very little of his true parents. He was found walking along a road by a wandering caravan, who fed and sheltered him, and made him one of their own. Taking the wanderer surname Na Ket, meaning "The Gathered," Drammin came to live with an old man who had recently joined the wanderers. The old man was a mage who saw talent in Drammin and taught him the mystic arts, bequeathing his spellbook to Drammin on his deathbed. One night, a thief snuck into the camp, slaughtered many of the wanderers, and stole one of their artifacts. Vowing to return the artifact, Drammin set out into the world. He has taken the guise of a traveling tailor, seeking out information wherever he can find it.

Traits: *(JA) Adventurer, magical, mysterious, occult*

Mistress Harmony Whitethorn 130

Informed Madam

"Your wife serves a superior pie, your lordship. I would hate to mar our friendship in any way."

Appearance: A fading rose, Harmony is still attractive and quite capable of seduction—but she normally dresses as a hostess, elegant and unapproachable. Her hand with cosmetics is flawless, subtly emphasizing her gold-flecked green eyes and soft ruby lips.

Roleplaying: Smiles and charm, smiles and charm. Harmony moves with a genteel elegance—think Gone with the Wind, sipping lemonade on the veranda. Her smile is the seal of the confessional.

Personality: Mistress Harmony is the center, the spider collecting information. Her people are loyal to her, even after they move on to better circumstances.

Motivation: She wants security and influence, and works to cultivate a staff that's garnering both. She's protective of her people, knowing that it builds their loyalty and keeps them confiding their secrets to her.

Background: Harmony worked her way through the brothel, beginning young. As her mentor reached retirement age, more of Harmony's days were taken up with learning the business side—and fewer of her nights were assigned. Since she took over, the Cape and Casket has done extremely well, expanding twice and establishing itself as the finest club in the city. She'll do what she must to remain central—blackmail, entice, corrupt, and have girls kidnapped from the countryside for her brothel. She's an information broker, saleswoman, and city booster, all in one.

Traits: *(SM) Counselor, entertainment, focal*

General Calviticus Hara 131

Inspiring Hero

"Mark my words: We will stand with you in this campaign and see it through to the end. Once we begin there is no turning back!"

Appearance: He is a tall, massive man with large hands and an iron grip. His clothing is dirty and a diagonal scar crosses from his right cheek to his jaw. His red beard is flecked with gray.

Roleplaying: Calviticus speaks with a booming baritone voice, using his sizable hands to punctuate his statements. He will slam a fist upon a table or into his open palm to underscore his conviction. He often speaks of prior campaigns to illustrate a point.

Personality: Years of service have taught the general to achieve victory at any cost. He is steadfast in thought and bound to his word by honor. He relishes a good battle but goes to great pains to avoid confrontation.

Motivation: He never leaves a man, woman, or child behind. Victory is righteous, but not at the expense of personal honor.

Background: Forged in steel, General Hara is a great military mind and skilled leader, which is demonstrated both on and off the field. While war does not rage on as it once did, the general finds it hard to disappear into the quiet night. The people and his troops respect him and look to the general for leadership "one more time."

Traits: *(DM) Famous, leader, military*

Elleen Lasondiere 132

Drunken Noblewoman

"What? You've never sheen a drunk woman before? No, you musht have—becaushe your mother'sh a drunken whore."

Appearance: Plain but not unattractive, Elleen has a high forehead and intelligent eyes. With sallow skin and a staggering gait, she's generally tipsy, drunk, or falling-down drunk.

Roleplaying: Elleen is almost always inebriated. She slurs her speech, falls over frequently, and insults everyone around her.

Personality: As a drunk, Elleen is angry, bitter, and never stops feeling sorry for herself. Sober, she's sharp, motivated to help the common folk, and believes in honest government. She's weak-willed, though, and this has proven to be her downfall.

Motivation: Elleen drinks to forget her past, her loneliness, her station, and her responsibilities. She lashes out at those around her because it makes her feel better about herself.

Background: If it weren't for her drinking, Elleen could be a capable courtier and politician. She has a head for intrigue, a knack for spotting alliances that are about to shift, and a deep knowledge of politics. Unfortunately, when her parents and siblings were killed in a tragic riverboat accident, she turned to alcohol for solace—and hasn't looked back. Her wealth and station have shielded her from the consequences thus far, but that won't be true forever. If she were sobered up and convinced to overcome her grief, she could be a capable, conscientious leader again. Her region needs her, and showing her that might just do the trick.

Traits: *(MR) Focal, leader, political, royalty*

Roderic Greenfellow 133

Bloodthirsty Hunter

"Why yes, I can lead you through the forest to…wait, is that a blue unicorn?"

Appearance: Roderic has two faces. One is the scruffy outdoorsman with a wild mane and hunting clothes, the other is a well-groomed country squire. In both cases, his lustrous black hair has streaks of gray and he has piercing blue eyes. He proudly bears the scars of his kills; his left hand and right eye are magical replacements.

Roleplaying: When meeting others in the wilderness, Roderic immediately asks them what they've encountered. He is happiest when discussing hunting and quickly steers other conversations back to killing beasts.

Personality: Roderic enjoys the thrill of the hunt. While not a sadist, he does enjoy seeing them die. Ironically, Roderic's blood thirst does not carry over to humanity, and he'll do everything in his power to save human lives.

Motivation: He wants to kill new exotic beasts and add them to his collection.

Background: Roderic had a comfortable life growing up. His father was a soldier who'd retired on a plot of land that he bought from his spoils. He taught Roderic how to live off the land and hunt. Roderic relished his kills so thoroughly that he wanted to look his beasts in the eyes as they died (as if part of some twisted honor code). He is an excellent outdoorsman and knows the lay of any land; if a party can pull him from his passion, Roderic could provide critical information.

Traits: *(WC) Outdoorsman, stealthy*

Forgrim the Silent 134

Quiet Warrior

"Aye, Forgrim's a right powerful blade. But he dinna speak, not even when he got his arm near tore off. Just dropped his shield, and kept swinging. It was a sight. And right after that battle, he just left."

Appearance: A burly warrior presents quite a sight. He is completely bald, but covered in tattoos and ritualistic scars. His armor and shield are dull gray, and he carries a variety of melee weapons.

Roleplaying: Silent and largely expressionless, he communicates through hand signals and the occasional drawing, but never through speech.

Personality: Fearless in battle, he leads a very spartan life, and shows little interest in anything else.

Motivation: He serves his god through battle.

Background: Call it a curse or call it a blessing, but Forgrim underwent a rare ritual of binding to an obscure warrior deity. The ritual covered him in tattoos and scars and took his voice, but granted him superhuman skill and courage in battle, and bound a spirit of protection to him. The spirit grants him supernatural abilities, and leads him on the righteous path. Because of the spirit's direction, his actions often seem capricious and arbitrary, and he has left allies for no apparent reason. If hired, he expects pay, but nobody knows what he does with it. He may sacrifice it, or just give it to charities, but he definitely doesn't spend it on himself.

Traits: *(KS) Impoverished, magical, mysterious, primal, warrior*

Lurika the Soul-Stealer 135

Deluded Hedge Wizard

"Don't test me, boy, or I'll swallow your soul! <maniacal laughter>"

Appearance: Lurika wears ragged robes covered in sigils, a necklace of animal skulls and talismans, and far more jewelry than necessary.

Roleplaying: She gives everyone the evil eye, squinting with her left eye and widening her right eye into a creepy stare. Lurika hobbles despite being in perfect health, and feigns an ambiguously "foreign" accent.

Personality: Affecting weirdness has made her weird. She's also occasionally convinced that she is actually a powerful wizard—one who chooses not to use her magic because of its possible dangerous consequences. Though a little bit insane, she's mostly harmless.

Motivation: She craves recognition more than power. As long as everyone fears her, and children grow up thinking she's going to eat them, she's happy.

Background: Growing up as a woodworker's daughter, Lurika dreamed of one day becoming a great wizard. Without much talent for magic, she became a hedge wizard instead—but her ambition never dimmed. So she moved out into the woods, built herself a shack on giant wooden chicken-leg stilts, and began cultivating her reputation as a Baba Yaga-like figure. She has most people in the area fooled, but is in for a rude shock the first time a party of capable adventurers comes to remove her as a dire threat to the region—or if the wizards' guild comes knocking.

Traits: *(MR) Crafter, eccentric, humorous, magical, primal*

Suaul Mercatio 136

Shifty Procurer

"The adamantine dove of Shier-al-Khar?
Of course I know of it—and its guardians.
For a price, it can be yours."

Appearance: Short and so skinny he appears to be wasting away, Suaul has a hunched back and walks with a scuttling gait. His right arm is withered and near useless, blackened as if by fire.

Roleplaying: Suaul is always smiling, even while he talks. He often scratches his chin with his withered arm.

Personality: He is a shifty little weasel, always on the lookout for the next caper. He views the world as his personal cabinet of curiosities, and loves nothing more than the challenge of collecting them.

Motivation: Suaul is motivated by curiosity, the rush of acquiring something that should have been impossible to steal, and a fascination with antiques and oddities.

Background: Suaul is a procurer of antiquities, curiosities, and treasures—not a thief, but the man who pays thieves to bring back what his customers are looking for. If you make it worth his while, he'll procure anything, but his specialty is strange and unusual artifacts (magical or otherwise). The greater the challenge, the more his interest is piqued. His peculiar gift lies in ferreting out the location of things that others want, and in connecting buyers with suppliers. Those suppliers are often adventurers. He finds it quaint that people think they can protect their treasures; few can keep them safe from him.

Traits: *(MR) Criminal, merchant, scholar*

Gabriel Shepard 137

Stable-Boy Prince

"That dapple's a real beauty—I'll take good care of her."

Appearance: Gabriel is a blond haired kid with green eyes and an impish smile. He is 14 years old, 5'5", and strong from lifting bales.

Roleplaying: Gabriel is a hard-working kid. He is earnest and occasionally wise by chance. His voice hasn't broken yet, which embarrasses him. Sometimes he shuffles his feet through the straw; he blushes when he's caught doing it.

Personality: He's a good kid, does what he's told, and works hard to earn his keep. He loves his parents openly and doesn't backtalk—but he is curious about who his real parents are.

Motivation: He enjoys being treated as an adult, which usually happens when he works. Gabriel also knows that his parents were really good to take him in—despite reassurances, he worries that if he crosses them, they'll get rid of him.

Background: After a prophecy about a divided country was pronounced at his birth, the king and queen left baby Gabriel exposed in the sacred circle. His nursemaid stole him away after the royal family returned to the palace. She returned to her homeland and turned him over to old friends of her family, the innkeepers, claiming that he was her child. She poses as an aunt and will reveal the truth when he turns eighteen, or when circumstances demand it.

Traits: *(SM) Charming, focal, mysterious, royalty*



Suaul Mercatio

Artist: Christopher Reach

The Oracle of the Sea 138

Disturbed Visionary

"The waters speak to me. Each wave has its own voice. Each tide sings a melody. Each storm is a cry of anguish. It is unfortunate, but it is the storms that speak to me with the most clarity."

Appearance: The Oracle is a young woman of incredible beauty with pure white hair. Her eyes are a very deep blue, and they match the color of the linen toga that she wears.

Roleplaying: The Oracle is shy and avoids contact with people. When someone makes physical contact with her, she sees a vision of their future and it is quite painful for her. If touched by another, she screams and collapses in tears.

Personality: She is frail and always on the verge of a nervous breakdown. She knows she is destined to live a very long life of service to her people, and it has left her lonely and with little hope.

Motivation: The Oracle has seen her future and, so far, every attempt to stray from it has only led her back to her destiny. Still, she is desperate to escape her fate.

Background: Before she was born, her predecessor announced her coming. Her people have always relied on the oracles to foretell when their ships should sail, and by what routes they should travel. She knows that she will have all of her needs attended to until the day she dies, and she hates it. She is imprisoned by fate.

Traits: *(PB) Beautiful, leader, occult*

Dockmaster Abel Thornton 139

Scheming Bureaucrat

"They say a lucky man waits for his ship to come in. Mine comes in twice or three times daily, and each one must pay for the right to load and unload cargo on my dock. That's how you get rich quick."

Appearance: In his thirties, Abel abstains from rum, and he's been rewarded with good health. He prefers to wear a stiff coat with rows of fancy buttons, bright tights and buckled shoes. A tricorn hat rests atop his powered wig.

Roleplaying: He sniffs the air indignantly at anyone who scoffs at the high fees he charges.

Personality: Abel has a plan, and so far, he's stuck with it. He's astute at working the system of bureaucracy to his advantage by gleaning a portion of the dock fees for himself. But he's growing impatient for his investments in privateers to pay off in a big way.

Motivation: He wants to get rich and live like a gentleman—especially in a place far, far from here.

Background: Born in the colonies, Abel wheedled his way into an apprenticeship with the previous dockmaster. He's accumulating a fortune by charging docking fees and by investing in the cleverest and boldest privateer captains. With bribes to key officials, he's maintained his posting over the objections of the ship owners. Keeping informed about privateer prize ships has enabled him to stay abreast of news.

Traits: *(TT) Business, power hungry*

Burnell Dunn 140

Stingy Farmer

"Well, I don't right know what I'd pay ya t'clear the beasties. A copper a head?"

Appearance: A lean older man, dressed in simple worn clothes, Farmer Dunn is usually working on something.

Roleplaying: Though rural and simple on the surface, Burnell is neither ignorant nor stupid.

Personality: Through hard work and a tight purse, Burnell Dunn has built a thriving farm over several decades. He may be simple, but he's honest and a hard worker. And he expects the same of others.

Motivation: Above all else, Burnell wants to hand his farm down to his children.

Background: A late last child of a starry-eyed sharecropper couple, Burnell saw his parents and older siblings waste their lives following unrealistic dreams. He turned his gaze downwards, working the land hard enough to sock away some money. When his landlord had a cash-flow crisis, he bought some of the land he was working and improved it. After a few more productive growing cycles, the landlord offered to let him buy all of the land over time. The land is now paid off, and Burnell and his family tend it. They are protective of their land, and very suspicious of outsiders. Although their trust is not easily gained, they are honest folk, and their word is trusted in the community.

Traits: *(KS) Business, laborer, outdoorsman*

Lady Nysha Hones 141

Naïve Negotiator

"You call them savages, but I believe that they can be reasoned with. I have learned their language, and I am prepared to forge a treaty with these people."

Appearance: Nysha is in her early fifties, with graying hair that falls softly on her alabaster shoulders. Her figure has softened over the years, but retains the curves of her youth.

Roleplaying: She speaks with her head tilted to one side, her hands clasped together.

Personality: Plainspoken, Nysha never softens her words or covers anything up, yet she does so with an infectious charm. She believes everyone speaks as plainly as her. The only defense she has is her keen intellect, which has more than once steered her out of trouble.

Motivation: Nysha believes that she has a gift to help people who are in trouble. She is in a position where she can be effective, and she uses that to get involved wherever she can.

Background: The Lady Hones is from a minor house, but one that has favor with the king. Nysha has always been someone who has helped people through their problems. She has been the intermediary for a number of house squabbles. Now she believes that she has found her role as a mediator, and has charmed the king into letting her negotiate with a savage enemy – an enemy not as naïve as she is, nor as smart.

Traits: *(PV) Charming, genius, royalty*

Lissa Cochrane 142

Disfigured Investigator

"See here? The angle of the bolt suggests that it was fired from up yonder. With some time I can tell you who made the weapon."

Appearance: A deep scar across this young woman's face is immediately apparent. It crosses the bridge of her nose, separating flesh from bone, travels down her cheek, and has torn the corner of her mouth apart. Her face is disfigured, but her light brown eyes and dark hair show something of her original beauty.

Roleplaying: She slurs slightly when she talks and favors her "good side," the left side of her face. Lissa looks down or away quite often, speaking softly.

Personality: She's used to the stares she receives but takes great pride in her work. While working, she's the model of efficiency and talks with confidence. In social situations, Lissa retreats out of fear.

Motivation: She endeavors to apprehend offenders—like the one that disfigured her—and make the streets safer for everyone.

Background: Lissa could have been considered pretty, but a brutal robbery at a young age left her horribly disfigured. Her attacker was never identified. Seeking odd evening tasks for coin, she took up with the local militia, where her near-photographic recollection helped her secure a job reviewing crime scenes. Now, she works as a full-fledged member of the militia, re-creating the execution of crimes through crafting and simple investigative techniques. Her opinion is highly regarded among enforcers of justice.

Traits: *(DM) Crafter, hideous, police*

Chandra Viola 143

Elderly Merchant

"Thirty denari? In my day, a man would be ashamed of taking advantage of an old woman like that! I could see 54..."

Appearance: Chandra is an elderly woman, with a crooked spine and bright blue eyes. She is still quite fit from hauling and driving a team, but her energy is good only for an hour before she needs recovery time.

Roleplaying: Chandra takes advantage of her grandmotherly features, reinforcing them with "my dear" and other quaint phrases. She appears reluctant to part with possessions, but that's only a haggling tool. She brings up her very skilled and recently deceased husband gingerly—usually praising his skills and wondering how his trading is going in the afterlife.

Personality: Chandra is loyal in an old-fashioned, even-death-won't-stop-me way. She is nice—but only when it's going to get her a better deal.

Motivation: Chandra enjoys trading and feels close to her dead husband when she haggles well. She continued trading after his death to fulfill contracts he'd signed, but enjoys the sentimental connection enough to keep going.

Background: Chandra learned salesmanship while at her husband's side for almost 30 years. She has been a devout worshiper of the merchant god since she converted at her wedding, so she's continuing his work after her husband's death. While she could go live with her daughter, she enjoys trading—and how backwater people act so scandalized when a woman haggles them out of their clothes.

Traits: *(SM) Ancient, merchant*

Captain Rose "The Thorn" Etrum 144

Superstitious Pirate

"Aye, we had a deal and to break a deal is bad luck. You get to live accordin' to our bargain. But you lied to me, and for that I'm takin' one of your eyes out of your head. Nothin' personal, but to let a liar double-cross you and then get away unscathed is bad luck, too."

Appearance: Her skin is tanned and leathery. She has bits of bone and silver braided into her graying hair. Her captain's uniform is tattered and worn.

Roleplaying: She has many strange rituals; among them: She kisses one of the pieces of silver in her hair when she needs good fortune, and she wears a finger bone from anyone she kills in her hair to protect herself from their vengeful spirits.

Personality: Despite her profession, Captain Etrum is a very genteel person. She only uses violence when she has to, but she uses it extremely well.

Motivation: She has enough treasure that she could retire, but she keeps sailing and looting ships anyhow. She seems to believe that if she stops, her accumulated bad luck will catch up to her.

Background: Rose Etrum was the daughter of a naval commander. She was taken prisoner when pirates attacked and boarded her father's ship. Years later, she emerged as the captain of her own vessel. She has never explained how that came to be.

Traits: *(PB) Abhorrent, criminal, eccentric, mysterious, pilot*

Bertrand Sardonus 145

Mischievous Guard

"Look, it was only a bit of fun. Don't tell the captain, eh?"

Appearance: Young and stout, he can't help but smirk at his own jokes.

Roleplaying: Bertrand is constantly smiling and laughing. He makes fun of anything and everything.

Personality: Mischievous and capricious, Bertrand makes an odd fit for a town guard.

Motivation: Bertrand only wants to inject a little fun into life.

Background: He didn't want to be one of the gate guards, but it was better than working in the quarry like his dad. Bertrand joined up with a friend, and is constantly goofing off. He is always up for a little joke, and is usually horsing around while on duty. This makes for easy passage through the gates for some, but his jokes often rile and annoy those who might smuggle something into or out of the city. His jokes and curiosity have uncovered illegal goods and weapons more than a few times. These coincidental successes are not enough to keep the guard captain off him, and he is often chastised in front of people entering and leaving the city. A good way to play Bertram is to make him intensely curious about the PCs. He'll joke around and make fun of a cleric's robes, a warrior's battle scars, or anything else he can target. If the PCs take it well, he might provide information; if not, other guards might notice and cause issues for the PCs.

Traits: *(JA) Eccentric, humorous, military, police*



Cassie and Moose

Artist: Avery Liell-Kok

Cassie and Moose 146

Adorable Delivery Team

"Are you sure about this guy, Moose? He looks dangerous to me."

Appearance: Cassie is a tiny girl with dirty blond hair that frizzes at the slightest bit of humidity in the air. She carries a leather satchel almost as big as she is and straddles Moose, her hands clutching the massive dog's plush red fur.

Roleplaying: Cassie is well aware of her position on the food chain and hides behind Moose when she's unsure of others' intentions. She double-checks identities before making deliveries and keeps relationships strictly on a business level.

Personality: Alone and uneasy, Cassie is extra careful but relaxes when Moose seems to trust someone.

Motivation: Cassie and Moose want to perform their jobs well enough for their reputation to keep them fed, but otherwise push to stay beneath the notice of anyone who would make their lives more difficult.

Background: Raised in an orphanage, Cassie found Moose in the street, hid him in her room, and fed him table scraps. Eventually, the administrators discovered her smuggled pet and ordered Cassie to abandon him. Refusing, she ran away; the two of them have been running odd jobs and deliveries ever since. Cassie saves what money she can and keeps it well hidden for the day when she and Moose will be able to rent their own place.

Traits: *(MN) Business, child, humorous, impoverished, pilot*

Dannith Nottingshire 147

Adamant Wanderer

"Repent? Nay! There is no salvation for you, for when the earth is torn asunder and the brog come, a great many will know what it means to purify by fire, I tell you!"

Appearance: Disheveled rags cover a woman who smells of sewage. Wild, unkempt black hair and milky eyes give her an unnerving appearance. Yellowed fingernails and caked-on dirt decorate her hands.

Roleplaying: She leans heavily to the right, giving the appearance of a hunchback. Her neck twists to the left to compensate and she moves with sudden, jerky movements. She blinks and squints frequently, trying to clear the visions from her head.

Personality: Dannith holds a tenuous grasp on reality and speaks fervently of death and salvation. Her portents are generally too vague to be useful, but sometimes just specific enough to give someone pause when they turn out to be right. She's prone to fits of violence.

Motivation: She seeks the absolution of sin from others who reek of it. Dannith pays no mind to taking on the sins of others and rationalizes her faults for the greater good, stooping to killing as necessary.

Background: Previously a roaming acolyte and adventurer, Dannith's fall from grace was particularly swift. Having grievously offended her deity with her hubris, Dannith was so overcome with grief that madness soon followed. In the wasteland of self-pity she sought to "save" others from meeting the same fate.

Traits: *(DM) Adventurer, impoverished, religious*

Patrizia Costa 148

Sensuous Courtier

"You speak of spies and plots and intrigue. Perhaps you think they are mother's milk where I am from. But you are mistaken if you think I am interested in such things. I have come to this country to relax, take in the fresh air, see the highlands, sip wine, and be free of the complications of court. I am on holiday. Surely, you can help me indulge in your local flavor."

Appearance: Her raven hair and olive complexion accent her allure. She is shorter than average, but so exotic-looking that she stands out even in the company of other beautiful women. The more resplendent the gown she wears, the more beguiling she appears.

Roleplaying: She never gives offense and flirts constantly. She has an easy, sensual manner that draws admirers.

Personality: She has a zest for life, and passion for every affair. Intrigue is second nature to her.

Motivation: She is completely loyal to her mother country.

Background: Patrizia is a minor courtier hoping to advance her position by acting as a spy. She plays the role of a foreign emissary on holiday, seeing the sites, sampling local wines and foods. She entertains local nobles with salons and parties, engaging in affairs and dalliances. She is here to make an account of the duke's troop strength and the competency of his local commanders. She is also here to gauge the sentiment of the common folk to the crown and see if she can sow discord.

Traits: *(TT) Beautiful, charming, mysterious*

Gunnick Blackhaven 149

Exiled General

"General Gunnick? No, you must have mistaken me for someone else. I'm Gunnick the hermit."

Appearance: Though 74, Gunnick looks like a rugged man of fifty, with a cleft chin, bushy eyebrows, and a crooked smile.

Roleplaying: Gunnick moves like a soldier but speaks like a sage. He's humble, patient, and helpful to those he meets.

Personality: Still prone to losing his temper, Gunnick has nonetheless mellowed over the years. He feels deep shame over his past, and has embraced his exile as a chance to become a better man. He's happiest with his nose buried in a book or out on long walks in the woods.

Motivation: Gunnick wants to live out his days in peace, and to be remembered as a scholar, not a general. His curiosity about the world is limitless.

Background: Thirty years ago, Gunnick was a decorated general with unlimited career potential, until, in a fit of rage, he murdered an enlisted man. In recognition of his service, the king exiled Gunnick instead of executing him, and he's lived out the past three decades as a hermit. He used his savings to build a modest fortified house far from civilization, and he interacts with others only when he's seeking out new books to add to his library. In addition to being a brilliant tactician, Gunnick has become a scholar of history and the natural world—but he sometimes longs to be back on the battlefield.

Traits: *(MR) Famous, leader, military, scholar, warrior*

Rodus Mosden 150

Aggressive Constable

"Why you did not see me is because you're sloppy and stupid. Now put the sword down and your hands out. Let's see how you do as a prisoner."

Appearance: Rodus is angular in every sense, with sharp shoulders, a hard chin, and a hawkish nose. He is more muscular and imposing than his average height suggests. His hair is short and he has a large, well-groomed mustache.

Roleplaying: He speaks at people, not to them. Rodus looks everyone in the eye with a burning stare.

Personality: With Rodus, everything is done with complete intensity. He is aggressive, and doesn't wait for someone to make a decision or take an action if he can take one first.

Motivation: He is a dedicated individual who loves his city and wishes to defend it against all who threaten it. There are days when he believes that life in the city would be much better if he ruled it all.

Background: Rodus lived in a poor section of the city, and used to be robbed, beaten, and exploited by criminals. He volunteered for the city guard to escape his neighborhood. In the guard, he fully adopted the spirit of the city and duty asked of him. He moved up the ranks of the guard and in time became a senior inspector. He often works alone while sitting in the shadows, hunting criminals, and bringing them to justice—though he is equally comfortable if they wish to resist.

Traits: *(PV) Aggressive, military, police, stealthy*

Lady Corinna, Marquessa of Verdstaat 151

Sharp-Tongued Noble

"You would make a fine lord someday, if only you weren't such a coward."

Appearance: A thick, matronly woman with well-styled raven hair, Corinna wears elegant but tasteful clothes for a noble of her age and stature.

Roleplaying: Corinna is always smiling, no matter what comes out of her mouth. She is a stickler for etiquette and enjoys ritualized greetings that can last several minutes.

Personality: She is a perfect lady with one particular flaw: She's very blunt. She doesn't couch her assessment of someone with platitudes or even diplomatic phrasing. Her blunt assessments do not affect how she treats someone.

Motivation: Having lost her youthful beauty, Corinna enjoys being the belle of the ball with her wicked assessments.

Background: Corinna was a beautiful young noblewoman who had her pick of men after she came of age. She enjoyed the attention and found that young, beautiful women could get away with blunt language. After seeing several suitors, she finally settled on the dashing Marquess of Verdstaat. They made a handsome couple, but he died just after Corinna entered middle age. Corinna discovered that her widowed status and her age enabled her to get away with her blunt assessments just as they did when she was young. Interestingly, the other nobles don't mind and actually respect her candor.

Traits: *(WC) Dilettante, eccentric, political*

Archaea Zareth 152

Wealthy Museum Curator

"I see you noticed the columns. A bit disturbing, admittedly, but their historic importance is not to be overlooked. They are an exact replica of those in the private quarters of Emperor Thot-am-Karil of Orobus, which is modern-day Arberos."

Appearance: A slightly overweight woman, dressed in archaic fashions from a bygone era, Archaea carries a looking-glass to examine scrolls.

Roleplaying: Archaea is verbose and talkative, and shows a real passion for the ancient world, often going off on tangents.

Personality: She's very cerebral and friendly, but has few interests outside her area of expertise.

Motivation: She lives to recover and study ancient historical artifacts.

Background: The daughter of an adventurer, Archaea was surrounded by artifacts from an early age. She often helped her mother identify and sell the goods her father brought back—becoming quite adept at identifying the various items and finding interested buyers for them. Her parents have retired, and Archaea has taken over the family business. She uses her extensive resources to identify likely sites, hires adventuring parties to recover the artifacts therein, and splits the proceeds with them. Because of her ability to identify items and find buyers for them, the parties she hires are willing to let her handle the post-adventure bookkeeping. Between her own wealth and the high standing of many of her clients, her home and museum are extremely well protected.

Traits: *(KS) Academic, eccentric, scholar, wealthy*

Zorian Waymer 153

Scheming Politician

"Ah, the throne. No, no, I have no ambitions to sit upon the throne. Only a fool would desire it."

Appearance: With an enormous pinched nose, small eyes, and a receding hairline, Zorian looks like a scavenger bird. His gray hair is swept back from his face, and he wears gold spectacles.

Roleplaying: Zorian isn't charming, but he's a good listener who turns his full attention to the conversation at hand. He adjusts his spectacles frequently.

Personality: Though not evil, Zorian is unscrupulous, ruthless, and fond of taking the low road. He believes that scheming, and the resulting fallout, is just a part of politics.

Motivation: He wants power for himself and wealth and security for his family, all without getting his hands too dirty.

Background: Zorian is a politician on the rise, and that rise has been fueled by bribery, scheming, intimidation, and skillful maneuvering. Those at court who have crossed Zorian have learned that he's as patient as a serpent, and just as quick to strike when the moment's right. Zorian prefers to stay at least twice removed from any unpleasantness that his schemes require. He'll neither wield the knife, nor pay someone to wield it—he'll manipulate someone else into paying the wielder of the knife. His ultimate goal is to rule the entire region. He could oppose the PCs, aid them, or simply catch them up in one of his schemes.

Traits: *(MR) Political, power hungry, white collar*

Roberto Deriggosa 154

World-Ending Genius

"Repositioning the aleph foundation will increase the mana flow rate sevenfold. These diagrams document the process."

Appearance: Roberto looks unassuming; he's a gaunt man with hollow cheeks and black-rimmed eyes from lack of sleep. His voice is still strong, and he cuts a dashing figure when he resorts to beauty glamours.

Roleplaying: He seems older than his 28 years; so often he loses track of the world outside his books and notes that he has forgotten to eat. He has vision and drive—dangerous and practical motivation always on the verge of accomplishment.

Personality: Roberto has a few friends who listen quietly and convert his plans and theories into action. He has a knack for seeing things and extrapolating patterns, of cutting to the truth beneath the world of façades.

Motivation: Magic is his lifeblood; when he succeeds, everyone will live and breathe magic too. He has no desire for recognition of the change he's making; he's content to rely on his disciples. Nevertheless, when people do encounter him, they're often awestruck by his gravity and calm.

Background: Roberto has long had a tremendous gift, amplified by serving some of the most prestigious mages of the previous generation. After years of small-scale experimentation, he's ready to put his ideas to the test. His allies and disciples travel the world, embedding the land with responsive magic that will leap into action at his summons.

Traits: *(SM) Focal, genius, occult, leader, magical*

Darlah "The Plan" Demier 155

Brilliant Memory Thief

"... and get O'Neil for the vault, Harris to cover your escape. Any questions?"

Appearance: There's usually a reek coming from Darlah's clothing—days of sweat soaked in without a change. Her rust-colored hair is twisted and tangled, and her green eyes are glassy and crazed with red lines.

Roleplaying: Darlah stares off into the middle distance, eyes unfocussed, with a dried trail of drool at the corner of her mouth. When a plan finally clicks, she blinks and looks around as if seeing things for the first time.

Personality: Intensely focused, Darlah lives in her mind, ignoring the world around her. She is brilliant, crafting cunning plans, and is motivated by a good puzzle.

Motivation: She wanted more, so she walked up and negotiated it. Along the way, she got lost in stolen memories and magical backlash, addicted by the rush of adding one more mind to her own.

Background: Darlah grew up an unwanted daughter, one more brat to feed. She figured out how to steal memories quite young, and her brilliance let her interpret and extrapolate, building plans. She deduced who ran the local thieves, snuck in, and volunteered her services when she was nine. She's been the resident scholar for the last dozen years, and has survived two changes in leadership.

Traits: *(SM) Abhorrent, criminal, magical, scholar*

Kimes Pellegrin 156

Energetic Bard

"This next little reel is one I learned in the southern lands. I used it to banish a demon and save my soul. It makes a good dance tune, don't you think?"

Appearance: Kimes' long russet hair and beard are often twirled into small braids with beads in them. He wears his lute and fiddle on each side of his pack and bears daggers on his bracers.

Roleplaying: He's always moving around and jumping from place to place. Even after a long day of walking or a few days without sleep, Kimes seems to be full of energy. He often strikes dramatic poses and pauses to give his words effect.

Personality: Kimes has never met a person who he couldn't befriend and has never found a time when he didn't have energy to try. He likes entertaining people and smiles all the time.

Motivation: Never bored by anything, Kimes can't wait to see what's around the next corner. He feels that if he slows down, he'll miss something around the next bend.

Background: Kimes' family was forced from their home by wildfires, and Kimes became dispirited with his family's misfortune. A traveling bard filled his head with great stories of adventures in far off lands and something triggered within Kimes. Knowing his parents couldn't feed all their starving children, he apprenticed under a bard and set out on his own journey, entertaining people and helping them out when he can.

Traits: *(JA) Adventurer, humorous, outdoorsman*

Livinous Adal 157

Disenfranchised Advisor

"Proof? It's as obvious as the nose upon your face! Forgive me! I was too hasty!"

Appearance: His gray robes are dingy and tattered from long wear, the edges frayed and brown. His hair is receding and he smells as though he were born in a stable.

Roleplaying: Livinous has a small stutter that causes him to pause and collect himself before continuing to speak. He is overconfident in his knowledge and presents opinion as fact, though he's quick to apologize.

Personality: Now persona non grata, Livinous is quite humble and seeks to remain in the good graces of others. He's apologetic and contrite—borderline groveling at times. As such, he's quick to share his considerable knowledge to garner some pity and prove his usefulness.

Motivation: He seeks the restoration of his good name and academic standing, be it through financial means or some discovery that furthers his position.

Background: Livinous was a scholar by trade. He once believed that the acquisition of knowledge was an end in itself and that the dissemination of knowledge should proceed unfettered. Confident in his facts, Livinous would present all his thoughts with pride, paying little heed to the consequences. That is, until he shared too freely the truth about corruption in the barony. A scandal erupted, the baron was disgraced, and Livinous took the fall. His credentials were stripped, his finances seized, and his wife left him. He now sleeps in the stables.

Traits: *(DM) Academic, impoverished*

Iona Drakenthorn 158

Dragon-Crazed Sage

"The music is bright, and the dance fine, though I'd rather be dancing through the air."

Appearance: Iona sways when she walks, trailing her hands in shimmering circles to emphasize her gold painted nails and the slithery sound of her scaled cloak. She stands 5'2" and is thin enough to show ribs and bone everywhere; her green eyes are vivid and accented with kohl.

Roleplaying: She deliberately cultivates an air of the otherworldly, emphasizes her sibilants, and moves with confidence. While she's trying to attract dragons, some men are drawn to the same traits.

Personality: Dragons fascinate Iona; they call to her on a primal level. She wants to seduce and mate with one.

Motivation: She wants to be invited to run wild and free through the sky with dragons, so she listens to all the legends and spends all her money on dragon books to ensure that she's as prepared as possible. She'd happily leave humanity behind, if only the dragons would invite her.

Background: Her mother fed her on tales of dragons, swearing that their sorcerous blood runs in her family. She loved those tales, and read the only book they owned several times over, fascinated by the chapter where dragons danced on the wind. These days Iona works as a scribe, often spending her last coin on a scroll, book, or necklace with properties a dragon might find attractive.

Traits: *(SM) Eccentric, impoverished, scholar, white collar*

Weland Gofannon 159

Child Prodigy

"The steel from my forge is the best. You don't have to take a mere boy's word on it; test it against any other armorer in the land."

Appearance: A young boy works the forge, gripping the tongs with both hands while assistants follow his every command and a priest watches over him.

Roleplaying: At work, he's all business, demanding much from himself and his assistants. Away from work he's just another eight-year old boy, until he has another idea and heads back to the forge.

Personality: Like many prodigies and artists, he's temperamental and driven to get things exactly right.

Motivation: His destiny to be the best armorer in the world conflicts with the knowledge that he should also just be a boy.

Background: Rumors abound of coincidences at his birth: that the king's armorer died the moment he was born, that a meteor shower blessed the skies, or that he was born with a hammer in hand. But the truth is a bit less palatable. For whatever reason (an upcoming war, a priest's request, or a wager), the gods of the forge gifted him to channel the essences of great armorers of legend. Weland simply knows things that even experienced craftsmen don't know. His life will be tumultuous; his weapons are almost legendary, and his skill is still improving. Word is spreading and will soon reach power hungry ears.

Traits: *(KS) Artist, child, crafter, focal, genius, occult*

Deego Spracket 160

Apprentice Librarian

"Did you know that the horn-tailed swallow can hold its breath for up to a minute? And can fly 500 miles without stopping?"

Appearance: Befitting a man who spends every waking moment indoors reading by candlelight, Deego is pale and hunched, with a mop of brown hair, a perpetual squint, and ink-stained fingers. He wears glasses and carries a magnifying glass around his neck.

Roleplaying: Deego peppers his conversation with random facts, goes on at length about trivial topics, and is generally a giant nerd.

Personality: He's happy to go wherever the river of life takes him. He wants nothing more out of life than the chance to spend every waking hour studying books and illuminating manuscripts, and sharing what he knows with others.

Motivation: Completely happy with his lot in life, Deego's only aspiration is to learn absolutely everything about everything.

Background: Deego's parents were both content as quarry workers, but unlike his siblings, Deego wasn't interested in working in the quarry. He wanted to study science, magic, history, heraldry—every topic under the sun. Superstitious and fearful of Deego's evident intelligence, his parents shipped him off to a monastery where he found that the ascetic lifestyle fit him like a glove. A voracious knowledge-sponge, he eventually left the monastery to become an apprentice librarian at the largest library in the world, and found that that fit him even better. In addition to his scholarly talents, Deego is also an expert manuscript illuminator.

Traits: *(MR) Academic, counselor, crafter, genius, religious, scholar*

Kal'yne the Mountain Hermit 161

Enigmatic Shaman

"Oh, you have come far and must be cold. Come, sit, and have some goat's eye stew. I insist. Now sit!"

Appearance: Kal'yne is a strange young woman. She might have once been pretty, but her facial tatoos and wild hair braided with the bones of small animals spoil her comeliness.

Roleplaying: Kal'yne has no social graces. She orders people around rather than offering or making suggestions. She looks at everyone with her head tilted, if anyone makes eyes contact, she will bark, "What?!"

Personality: Kal'yne only understands force of presence, and thus is very intimidating. Years of living alone has skewed her social graces, making her seem very strange to any normal person.

Motivation: She needs very little. She prefers to be left alone and dislikes the company of people for any length of time.

Background: No one knows where Kal'yne came from. She moved to the mountain 10 years ago and built a small house in the mouth of a cave. She practices a form of nature magic and possesses the ability to speak to spirits, both of men and of the elements. People who wish aid from her gifts visit her. She has no need for coin, but rather is interested in the more unique or strange objects that people possess. She will often request that people find her strange items, sending them on difficult and dangerous quests.

Traits: *(PV) Eccentric, magical, occult, primal*

Rachel Ashburry 162

Disenfranchised Noble

"The Sea is a mother who never lets go of her children."

Appearance: Rachel was clearly refined at one point and comes from noble stock, but years of manual labor at the docks have made her lean and hard. Though covered with grime and dust after a day's work, regular bathing keeps her cleaner than her co-workers.

Roleplaying: Distrustful of anyone she doesn't know, Rachel is a recluse who leaves her rooms only for work. She is touchy and cranky when disturbed.

Personality: Rachel's exile from her noble house leaves her annoyed, depressed, and listless. Her work is necessary to survive, but it also serves as an escape from her melancholy.

Motivation: She wants to travel to new and exciting places and leave the memories of her home behind.

Background: Her family arranged a marriage for her older sister to cement an important political agreement, but her sister's fiancée insisted on getting Rachel as a mistress as part of the deal. When Rachel refused, her family disowned her. They forever barred her from her noble heritage and claimed she was dead to save the lucrative arranged marriage. Her new life enables her to save money and learn about shipping. She plans to leverage her superior education into a record-keeping position aboard a trade ship in order to travel the world. Rachel hopes the future will erase the pain of her past.

Traits: *(MN) Impoverished, laborer, mysterious, royalty*

Duke Merkton 163

Religious Laborer

"Wealth can kill a man, but hard work will keep him strong."

Appearance: The duke is a man creeping into his elder years. He is bald with a large thick mustache. He rarely wears his royal attire, and prefers work clothes.

Roleplaying: He listens more than he speaks, and when he does speak, he is a bit vague. This helps him to avoid obligations that are not aligned with his motives.

Personality: He is easily annoyed by people or things that keep him from his work as a master stonemason. He respects the responsibilities that come with his title, but he avoids frivolous events such as royal balls and ceremonies whenever possible. Religious ceremonies are an exception, as he is a man of great faith and devotion.

Motivation: Duke Merkton believes that by building roads, temples, mills, and other structures needed by his people, he is fulfilling his obligation to the gods. He does not merely design the structures, though, as he is hands-on with every project—shaping the stones alongside his workers.

Background: The young duke was a drunk exploiting his great wealth. He fell ill due to his heavy drinking, and his father threw him into a labor camp to correct his attitude and behavior. There, he learned how to shape stones, how to love the holy texts, and the connection between them. The duke emerged from the camp as a man devoted to both his craft and his faith.

Traits: *(PB) Laborer, religious, royalty, wealthy*



Monsieur Cascanon

Artist: Avery Liell-Kok

Monsieur Cascanon 165

Self-Indulgent Intellectual

"Ladies, there is no need to fret. Once I am done addressing the court, I will make the time to address each of you directly and intimately. Or perhaps you would prefer to be addressed as a group?"

Appearance: Ruggedly handsome with long brown hair, he sometimes wears a magical cologne he concocted for seducing women. When a woman smells the cologne, she will see the stars of the cosmos in Cascanon's hair and eyes, and he will appear radiant.

Roleplaying: He winks at women of all types, and he will make no attempt to hide his advances unless he has reason to fear for his well-being.

Personality: When working, he is focused and brilliant. Away from his work, he is interested solely in the physical pleasures that he can give to and receive from a woman.

Motivation: His driving concern is the pleasures of the flesh.

Background: Cascanon at an early age exhibited an intelligence to rival the greatest minds of his time. He was quickly put to work in the king's court to advise on all matters. The only thing that rivals his intellect is his libido. Luckily, he has been smart enough to avoid conquests within the royal family, but many a nobleman prays that one day Cascanon falls out of the king's favor and loses his royal protection. The number of enemies he has is equaled by the number of his lovers.

Traits: *(PB) Beautiful, charming, genius, political*

Rinaldo 164

Crafty Courier

"Yes, m'lord. I shall see that this is delivered promptly and intact."

Appearance: Rinaldo wears the lightly woven garments of a courier in the colors of the house livery. His shoes are a kind of slipper, allowing him to move swiftly and silently. He is lean and long-legged. At rest, though, he appears quite at ease.

Roleplaying: By keeping a neutral, even bored expression, he never divulges that the content of a given message is important. He saves his smile of satisfaction for those moments he breaks a code or unlocks a message vault.

Personality: He might confide that while everyone trusts him to deliver messages, no one actually considers him trustworthy.

Motivation: Rinaldo wants to keep secrets, as well as to uncover them. He knows it's a dangerous game.

Background: He served as an apprentice to an artisan whose hobby was constructing portable message vaults. From this artisan he learned all the tricks of the trade. Once he proved his skill, his master introduced him into a secret society of freethinkers who, in turn, helped him gain employment in the merchant house. Breaking—then reaffixing—wax seals is child's play. Rinaldo is an exceptional forger, knowledgeable of the qualities and properties of various inks and papers. He is adept at unlocking the puzzle boxes, portable vaults, and sealed scroll cases that high priority dispatches come in. Given time and resources, he is equally adept at breaking ciphers.

Traits: *(TT) Crafter, criminal, genius, stealthy*

Bernardo Leuthold 166

Stingy Supply Warden

"What are you whining about? You ate yesterday!"

Appearance: With rolls of fat visible under his loose-fitting clothing, Bernardo has a sneer on his face for anyone who looks at him.

Roleplaying: Tiredness and weariness are the underlying layers of Bernardo's psyche, but he shows only a crusty exterior in order to maintain control over this tough situation.

Personality: Bernardo cares about the people he feeds. However, his job as the supply warden is to make the meager rations last, and if he feeds every starving whelp that isn't going to happen.

Motivation: Bernardo doesn't particularly like being so stingy with the food he is handing out; he doesn't even take rations himself most days, but he has to harden his heart for the good of the war-ravaged refugees.

Background: When the war bypassed their small country, everyone gave a collective sigh of relief. But when the refugees started to pour in, and the queen gave the order that none should be turned away, things turned bad. The refugees washed in like a human tsunami, and Bernardo was drafted into service to keep as many of them fed as possible. With these strict orders in mind, Bernardo made a hard decision. He would single out the ones most likely to survive and make sure they had enough. Developing a complex system of numbered chits, he is able to manipulate things for what he perceives to be the greater good.

Traits: *(JA) Business, merchant, political*

Rondal the Showman 167

Temperamental Artist

"For this act, I need six pears and you brought me six apples! I know I told you six pieces of fruit, but you are supposed to do what I mean and not what I say! How hard is that?"

Appearance: He wears a matching kilt, coat, and hat which are all adorned with costume jewelry and worthless colored glass "gemstones." Tall and lanky, he carries a lute with colored strings.

Roleplaying: He tries to add a bit of flourish to everything that he does, whether dancing, acting, or even eating a bowl of soup. Every gesture he makes is exaggerated for show, even when it shouldn't be.

Personality: A legend in his own mind, Rondal will make outrageous demands and then throw a tantrum when he doesn't get his way.

Motivation: He seeks fame and fortune as a bard and conjurer, and believes that to be a success, he must act like one. Apparently, successes act like arrogant jerks.

Background: Rondal ran away from his peasant family at an early age because he knew that he was destined for greatness. He is very talented as a bard, but his arrogance and ego have hindered his career. He adventures when he needs money, but still believes that one day he will headline the greatest theaters in the entire world.

Traits: *(PB) Adventurer, artist, eccentric*

Shandar the Engineer 168

Brilliant Techno-Magician

"Magic is but one of the laws of the universe. We master them all."

Appearance: Shandar is an austere woman whose bespectacled face is generally covered in grease. She wears overalls and a tool belt. She would probably clean up nicely if she ever bothered.

Roleplaying: She is pleasant but standoffish. Should someone show interest in her work, Shandar becomes much more animated and enthusiastic.

Personality: Shy and bookish in her youth, Shandar is now more confident and ready to share her often strong opinions.

Motivation: She enjoys unlocking the secrets of the universe.

Background: Shandar grew up in a magical city where she was ridiculed for her radical ideas. Shandar had a brilliant mind that enabled her to dream up fantastic machines. She believed that magic, which is expensive and controlled by powerful guilds, could be replaced with cheaper technology. The mages' guild ran her out of the city and tried to kill her, but a few technological tricks and a sympathetic mage saved her life. Shandar joined a group of inventors who incorporate magic into technological designs to create great wonders. She also married the young mage who fled with her. Shandar is suspicious of outsiders, as she still believes the guild is out to get her. She'll only share her designs and other information with those she trusts.

Traits: *(WC) Crafter, eccentric, genius, scientist*

Liende Strand 169

Bored Noblewoman

"It's been a long time since I've met anyone as interesting as you. Won't you join me for the evening?"

Appearance: Liende is the most beautiful woman most people have ever met, with full lips, a stunning figure, and a palpable aura of sensuality.

Roleplaying: Liende knows the effect she has on people, especially men, but pretends not to notice. She's a frighteningly keen observer.

Personality: In a sense, Liende is too smart for her own good. She doesn't have to try all that hard to succeed, so she winds up bored and always on the lookout for something—or someone—to hold her interest.

Motivation: Brains, beauty, wealth, power, charm—Liende Strand has it all. She believes in fully experiencing pleasure in all its forms, but especially the forms that involve other people: verbal sparring, sex, politics.

Background: Famous throughout the region for her grace, style, and wild parties, Liende's greatest asset is her intellect. She uses her sexuality as a weapon when she has to, but she much prefers to keep herself in a position of power that enables her to enjoy life without too much effort. She's succeeded so well at this that she's often bored, and consequently she likes to dally with interesting people. Anyone who catches her eye is of interest, and she's used to getting her way. If she ever turned her mind to the acquisition of power, she would be unstoppable.

Traits: *(MR) Beautiful, charming, dilettante, famous, focal, genius, mysterious, royalty, wealthy*

Chavan Algat 170

Friendly Smuggler

"It'll take time and silver to get that outside the walls, my friend."

Appearance: Dark, slicked-back hair tops a tall, thin man dressed in rumpled velvet pants and a sleek gray shirt. He has an unwavering smile stuck on his face under a pencil thin mustache.

Roleplaying: Chavan agrees reflexively, then backpedals and caveats. He nods to himself, nervously moving his hands from folded in front of himself to draped at his sides, and back again. Every sentence ends with "my friend."

Personality: Chavan's a wheeler and dealer, eager to make friends or profit by his old ones. Given a shortcut, Chavan will take it.

Motivation: He's all about conserving effort, often by foisting his responsibilities off on underlings. Coin spends just as well whether it takes five minutes or five years to earn.

Background: Chavan was raised as a businessman, but found that it takes a lot of effort to do things right. These days, his business smuggles items that are more profitable and greases palms to ensure less-than-thorough inspections. Sometimes he'll take more risk or less profit, just to get one over on the authorities.

Traits: *(SM) Business, eccentric, stealthy*

Amalia Fiorina 171

Aging Socialite

"Oh, now there's a scrumptious morsel."

Appearance: From a distance, it appears Amalia has cultivated the striking good looks of a much younger woman. Up close, the powders and charms can't hide the crow's feet, early wrinkles, and dyed hair that one would expect of a woman in her upper middle years. Her clothes, while fashionable, convey a sense of youthfulness that isn't quite appropriate to her age. Her wedding band holds an extremely large gemstone.

Roleplaying: Amalia has playful—roaming—hands. They are the vanguard of her affectionate intentions: She lightly touches a man's arm, then tries to hold hands, rubs his shoulder and back, or twiddles with his ear.

Personality: Outgoing to a fault, she knows the other women gossip about her "scandalous" and "lewd" behavior. If asked, she likens her pursuits to courtly love, like the knights of old. A target's marital status is no barrier to her affections.

Motivation: She's on the prowl for younger male companions.

Background: She married a merchant prince who seemed to sleepwalk through their relationship. In fact, he seemed oblivious to her affairs, always prattling on about a business deal. She became bored with being a trophy wife. As she grew older, she yearned for conquests of her own and turned her focus to helping young men. Once she's fixed on a target for her affections, she will ply him with gifts and material favors, even promises to help his career, until he relents.

Traits: *(TT) Beautiful, charming, dilettante*

Tanaka Chan 172

Wannabe Adventurer

"I was sparring with myself in the park, and came up with this really awesome move. I just know it'll kill some orcs."

Appearance: Tall for his age, he's easily mistaken for a teenager.

Roleplaying: Childhood eagerness competes with the desire to be taken seriously. Tanaka is alternatively talkative and dour, depending on his self-awareness.

Personality: A dreamer whose sheltered life has kept his fantasies intact, he has very high expectations of life.

Motivation: He wants to be a heroic adventurer, just like in his stories.

Background: As the youngest child of a poor farming family, Tanaka was groomed from the start to become a priest, and was sent to a large temple in a big city. Initially eager to please his parents and teachers as a righteous and noble priest, he quickly grew bored with his studies, and instead began to read lurid tales of daring adventurers. When he failed out of the priesthood, his parents shipped him off to a monastery to become a monk. Despite some talent with physical skills, Tanaka found meditation and rote memorization boring, and failed out again. Because of his extensive knowledge of literature, however, the temple has allowed him to stay on as the librarian's assistant. Recently, Tanaka has begun "borrowing" armor and weapons from the armory, and wearing them into the city in the guise of his fictional heroes.

Traits: *(KS) Child, dilettante, humorous*

Ommor Chak 173

Loyal Quartermaster

"It is of utmost importance that every shield be accounted for before we break camp. If anyone of you thinks of selling your shield for extra coin, I will bring you before our lord for thievery."

Appearance: A plump man with thinning hair and thick sideburns, Ommor walks with a limp that favors his left leg. He carries a simple hardwood cane and wears a worn cloak.

Roleplaying: Ommor huffs after any physical exertion, and rubs his leg often.

Personality: He cares most about being as frugal as possible with his lord's money. He is above reproach, and he follows the law, and orders, without question.

Motivation: Ommor is a dedicated servant to his lord. He relies on the belief that his dedication will be justly rewarded.

Background: He is a second-generation servant to his lord's family. Ommor was raised in the keep and given a decent education. He became friends with the young lord, and the two grew up together, until the young lord took his rightful position. The lord made Ommor his quartermaster, and Ommor proved to be exceptional. Ommor treats his lord's coin as if it is his own, always finding ways to get more mileage out of his lord's money. He has received just compensation for his work, and lives better than most. He has now gotten on in age, and is starting to long for the day when his services will no longer be required.

Traits: *(PV) Military, saintly, white collar*

Justina Sweetblade 174

Enigmatic Thief

"I'm bored. Want to rob the local treasury?"

Appearance: Deeply tanned with short and curly dark hair, she has a small and athletic frame. She wears dark colors and has blackened all of her gear so as to increase her ability to hide from view. Her dark green cloak helps her blend in with the lush forests.

Roleplaying: She keeps her statements short and to the point. She enjoys a good heist, loves a wild party, and everything else is boring to her.

Personality: Justina has absolutely no loyalty to any institution. She plans nothing in advance—one reason the authorities have such difficulty catching her. She is spontaneous to a fault.

Motivation: Justina robs for the thrill of it. She has a treasure horde large enough for her to relocate, assume a new identity, and live in comfort for the rest of her life. She just doesn't care about the treasure, though, and has even given some of it away to strangers.

Background: Justina is a mystery. She does not talk about her past. She has never mentioned a family, and she has no close friends. Some suspect that she is the missing daughter of a noble knight from a nearby land, and others claim that she is actually a refugee from an enemy nation, but there is no evidence to support either story.

Traits: *(PB) Criminal, outdoorsman, wealthy*

Eydis Brynja 175

Foreign Courtier

"Listen to me going on and on; you must be bored to tears! You simply must tell me how your projects have been coming along."

Appearance: Short and voluptuous, Eydis has a luxuriant mane of copper-colored hair. Her sparkling eyes and broad smile display her playful nature. Accustomed to colder temperatures, she usually dons light dresses that show off her curvaceous figure and accessorizes with the fur mufflers common in her northern homeland.

Roleplaying: Eydis is outgoing and keeps a mental catalog of information she has learned about others, which she uses to draw them into conversation. Leaning in close, she uses physical contact to enhance intimacy.

Personality: An artful beguiler, Eydis does her best to endear herself to everyone she meets. In spite of how hard she works convincing others to appreciate her, Eydis is a genuinely amiable person—though difficult to have an even relationship with.

Motivation: Eydis attends court to gain political influence for her homeland.

Background: An envoy from the frozen north, Eydis represents her people in matters of court and policy, but she has few official duties beyond sending and receiving couriers and encouraging goodwill towards her homeland. Because of her exotic beauty and engaging nature, Eydis is often the center of courtly intrigues. She considers these amusing distractions but defuses them before they can interfere with her work. Rumors occasionally surface that portray her as a fey fox maiden; Eydis greets these with helpless giggles.

Traits: *(MN) Beautiful, charming, political*



Eydis Brynja

Artist: Avery Liell-Kok

Sir Lerald Enghon 176

Jaded Nobleman

"Her? No effort. Her? Boring. Hello…now there is one with some potential. Let's hope she does not disappoint."

Appearance: Lerald looks very manly with a hint of boyish charm. He has a touch of gray in his hair, in a way that only enhances his looks. He is clean-shaven, wears well-made clothes, and smells of fine cologne.

Roleplaying: In the presence of women, his manner is charming and forward—flirtatious on the verge of scandalous. With men, he is not as charming and will comment about how he has seen it before, no matter what "it" is.

Personality: Lerald is very jaded; nothing is a surprise to him anymore. He has a compulsion for women and makes his intentions towards them quite clear.

Motivation: He likes nothing more than to find something or someone that he hasn't seen before. When he does, he's driven to possess his new fancy, and will go to great lengths to do so.

Background: Lerald was born into the royal family. His position and wealth allowed him to see and try anything he wished. He has met great heroes, acquired fantastic items of art, and bedded women of many nationalities. He now has a sizable area under his direct rule, but finds all of it boring. He will meet with anyone who has something novel to share.

Traits: *(PV) Aggressive, royalty, white collar*

Alyssa Herzog 177

Bartender's Daughter

"I've never been on an adventure before. Will you take me on one?"

Appearance: Her auburn hair is often tied back behind her head. She wears a typical barmaid's dress.

Roleplaying: Highly contemplative, Alyssa isn't sure exactly where she wants life to lead yet, but she wants to find out.

Personality: She is friendly, determined, and adventurous. Her spunk is undeniable.

Motivation: Alyssa wants to get out and see the world.

Background: Life is boring for Alyssa. She is old enough to crave independence and knows she was never cut out to be a barmaid. She doesn't know what she wants to be, but she definitely wants to find out. Last week, Alyssa was absolutely enchanted with the life of messenger girl who came into the bar. The week before that, Alyssa kept going on about all the herbs she learned about from a traveling apothecary. This week, who knows? Alyssa sees a lot of people come through her father's bar, and any strong female role model instantly catches her eye. Alyssa could excel in a lot of roles. She is smart and willing, and while she might come off as flighty initially, she definitely has the follow-through to carry out a strong decision and won't give up easily. Alyssa might latch onto one of the PCs as her new favorite person, or she might run off following someone more dangerous, necessitating a rescue.

Traits: *(JA) Child, entertainment*

Catherine Yandre 178

Seductive Courtesan

"Mayhaps it be that way, my Lord. I fancy a different position, one with a more…pleasurable resolution."

Appearance: Strawberry blond hair drapes over her fair, pale shoulders framed with a low-cut bodice and matching skirts of green and yellow. A golden hairpin is visible from the side and a cluster of rubies dangles seductively in her décolletage. The faint smell of apples surrounds her.

Roleplaying: She speaks often in double entendre and tactile expression; she will touch another's hand or arm during conversation to initiate a personal connection.

Personality: Catherine is delightfully witty and seductively charming. Under this veneer she is a ruthless purveyor of secrets and is adept in wresting them away. She responds poorly to threats or insinuations and rarely allows another to gain the upper hand. Catherine has an uncanny ability to notice and process the slightest, seemingly innocent, detail.

Motivation: She sells information to the highest bidder for personal gain. She has little concern for king or country and has a more pragmatic approach to life. She's not entirely motivated by money, however, and will allow her feelings to cloud her judgment on occasion, exposing her altruistic side.

Background: Born of humble beginnings, she's elevated herself through wit and guile. Her network of contacts is vast, made possible through greasing palms, but she does pay well to stay informed of any goings-on within her domain.

Traits: *(DM) Business, charming, genius*

"Bratton" (Bryce Kiraly) 179

Discredited General

"I once knew something of integrity and honor. Fates willing, I will again."

Appearance: He's fit for an older man, and carries himself well, but his eyes occasionally have a haunted look about them.

Roleplaying: Although he is using the false name of Bratton, his military bearing is obvious, and the occasional military phrase slips out.

Personality: He's cautious and haunted by his past, but confident in his abilities.

Motivation: Bryce seeks redemption.

Background: Many know about the Massacre at Bullette Run, where General Kiraly ordered his troops to kill thousands of peaceful villagers. Very few know that the villages were also enemy outposts used to smuggle spies and materiel into the country. Only the general and the field marshal know that Kiraly initially refused the order. The field marshal threatened to have him hanged if he didn't proceed as commanded. Even so, General Kiraly was the one blamed for the massacre. The people called for his head to account for the slaughter of innocents, the law came after him, and the general fled. He is plotting to regain his reputation by discrediting the field marshal, and is seeking out trustworthy allies to assist him in that task. He will not tolerate the deaths of any more noncombatants; his reputation is not worth it. The party may first encounter him while they are working for the field marshal.

Traits: *(KS) Leader, military, mysterious*

Viddo Thrak 180

Corrupt Harbormaster

"Of course I can't let that into port. If, however, I was distracted by several small shiny objects…"

Appearance: Viddo was once a strong dockworker, but his body has softened with his promotion to harbormaster. He nurses a large stomach and sports a bulbous, reddened nose. He is fond of good spirits and often has them on his breath.

Roleplaying: While the wine stains on his shirt say otherwise, Viddo always acts as if too busy to talk. He has no time for chitchat while there's coin to be made.

Personality: He looks out for number one. He's a schemer and is only kind to those useful to advancing (or hiding) his schemes. He'll turn on an old friend as soon as it suits him.

Motivation: Viddo is an executive, pure and simple. He's as crooked as they come and always angling to enrich his pockets.

Background: He was a respected dockworker who climbed up the ranks to harbormaster. Having been cut in on a few deals while working the docks, Viddo used this information to ensure his promotions. As harbormaster, Viddo is constantly scheming. He takes bribes to allow contraband in and out of the port. Even so, he's not a villain; Viddo would never allow anything truly dangerous through his watch. Because of his position and schemes, Viddo can be a useful informant if one greases his palm first.

Traits: *(WC) Business, criminal, merchant*

Marissa LaTierson 181

Bored Debutante

"My, what a quaint look. I guess that is the height of fashion where you come from, but it is barely peasant dress around here."

Appearance: Marissa only wears the finest clothing. Her blond hair is always done in the latest style, and she always has a look of bored disinterest on her face.

Roleplaying: Marissa holds her head high and looks down her nose often. She doesn't even bother to use her good looks to play coy or charming to get what she wants, as she was raised to believe she is already superior to everyone.

Personality: She could not care less about much of anything, and she is always derisive of anything others have.

Motivation: Marissa just wants something new and exciting, but she wants to be the first to have it. If she sees something exciting or unique on someone else, she makes sure the rest of high society believes it to be droll and useless.

Background: Being rich gives you access to everything, until eventually nothing seems fun. Marissa has tasted the best food, drunk the best wine, and worn the best clothing. Nothing meets her standards and nothing ever will. In direct line for succession, Marissa doesn't want responsibility, rather only the best and newest things. She might hire an adventuring party to recover unique jewelry, only to pay them double to leave the country and never come back so she doesn't have to share the esteem.

Traits: *(JA) Beautiful, royalty, wealthy, white collar*

Shonda "Shon" Everlasting 182

Itinerant Actress

"Name the play and I guarantee we will fit the bill."

Appearance: Tall and broad-shouldered, with a square jaw and high cheek bones, she is an imposing female presence. She wears her shoulder-length, brown hair beneath a pill hat. She's often seen in men's attire or in a skirt cut for riding. A rapier is always belted at her side.

Roleplaying: She is quick to boast of her company's prowess, then follow with a disarming smile. When threatened, her hand rests reassuringly on her sword hilt.

Personality: She doesn't know the meaning of the word "quit." Her company is her family, and she is as devoted to them as a mother is to a child.

Motivation: Shonda wants to keep her company working, well fed, and curtail their mischief to manageable levels.

Background: Shon has a zest for life and a zeal for performing. Her sword is no mere prop—she is as skilled in three schools of fencing as she is at stage fighting. A former adventurer, she trained with master swordsmen. After discovering a knack for storytelling, she settled into the life of touring with a company of players. She eventually came to lead the group. They approach theaters, offering their services for lead and supporting roles, or to fill out larger productions. Drama is in the company's repertoire, but it excels at farces of mistaken identities and gender. All the players fill male and female roles as required.

Traits: *(TT) Eccentric, entertainment*

Constable Parins 183

Lenient Lawman

"Come now, you've had too many of our ales! They are the finest ales in the world! You behave while in the stocks and I'll take you to the pub upon your release."

Appearance: A large man with a beer belly, his strolling gait conceals how quickly he can move. His long gray hair is braided, and his belt pouch contains leather straps to restrain offenders.

Roleplaying: Parins always tries to get both sides of the story before detaining anyone. If a matter can be settled without him having to take official action, he will allow it.

Personality: He is a mountain of a man with the tenderness of a child. He can get rough if needed, but prefers to use his words to stop a fight instead of his fists.

Motivation: He enjoys his job, but Parins' real passion is ale—specifically the brews of his homeland. It is the one area where he is admittedly biased, but he doesn't care. He brews small batches of ale for himself and friends.

Background: As a child, he traveled with his father, a logger. He remembers fondly how his father worked hard and always enjoyed a pint or two of ale at the end of the day. As he grew older, he saw the town develop out of the forests that his father cleared. He became the constable out of a sense of pride and obligation to the home his father had helped build.

Traits: *(PB) Dilettante, police*

Governor Caoli Florin 184

Insane Ruler

"That was a wonderful pageant; you should all be rewarded for your acting skills... On second thought, I didn't like the caricature of the demon. Guards, please execute them."

Appearance: A rotund middle-aged man whose tunic bears the stains of his sumptuous lifestyle, Caoli always wears a confused expression, as if he's constantly second-guessing his thoughts. He's accompanied by many servants and consorts, all of whom are quite afraid of him.

Roleplaying: He receives every visitor with a grand welcome. Unfortunately, it isn't long before he decides that he doesn't like them, or believes that they are out to assassinate him.

Personality: Caoli is completely bonkers, but he's also a surprisingly capable administrator and his underlings know that once Caoli makes a decision, they should move quickly before he changes his mind.

Motivation: He enjoys being an administrator and dutifully sends taxes back to the Emperor.

Background: The Emperor's cousin, Caoli's sole duty is to collect taxes and protect the borders of his far-flung province. While Caoli does this well, something here has snapped his mind. Caoli can go from loyal governor to absolute hedonist to subversive rebel and back in a matter of hours. Caoli's plotting and shenanigans are mostly harmless, as his underlings ensure that death sentences and tortures are carried out discreetly, so the victims can be released without Caoli knowing. He often changes his mind anyway, so sparing lives generally isn't a problem.

Traits: *(WC) Eccentric, leader, political*

Yav 185

Cursed Pilot

"I know what you are wondering. You are looking at my 'arm' and wondering if I am capable of getting you through the wastelands. I'm the only captain who can, because…I was born there."

Appearance: Yav is a plain-looking woman with short black hair and black, pupil-less eyes. Her right arm is a tentacle.

Roleplaying: Her tentacle writhes slowly as she talks. When she is excited, it begins to flop uncontrollably, causing her to hold it in check with her left hand. She is self-conscious of her appendage when in the company of people.

Personality: Yav is pleasant and easy going. She is a bit uncomfortable in the presence of civilized people, but she internalizes most of it. She is a hard worker and is most happy when she has a job to do.

Motivation: Yav would like to have a normal life making an honest living.

Background: She was born in the wastelands and cursed with strange eyes and a tentacle in place of one arm. Like others in her village, she has an aptitude for magic. As a young adult, she discovered a formation of floating rocks she could control with her magic. She anchored a broken boat to the top of one of the rocks and now captains it in and out of the wasteland, for a price. Her business has not done well, as many potential clients are wary of her looks.

Traits: *(PV) Business, hideous, impoverished, magical, pilot*

Doctor Xavier Trevant 186

Last True Mage

"That's a rare insight; only the smartest dozen of my protégés noticed that in their first year."

Appearance: Doctor Trevant looks ageless—with a relatively young body, few wrinkles, clear eyes, a short-trimmed blond beard and a head bald as an egg.

Roleplaying: His habits are centuries old; dislodging him from routine is an epic task. He moves with caution, uses antiquated vocabulary, and weighs souls with a glance. His perspective doesn't match anyone else's, which makes it hard for Xavier to interact with ordinary people without feeling manipulative.

Personality: His brothers and sisters are long dead; only fierce commitment keeps him going. He picks a few key people to teach each generation; invariably, their insights throw the existing order into chaos.

Motivation: He won't die just because it's convenient for someone else. He sublimates his passions into teaching, hoping to kindle a peer or befriend a young god.

Background: Born in an era long past, Xavier walked with the gods when they were all young. Empires have risen and fallen since then, many begging him to take their side against history's tide. He remains aloof—even from the cult that has dedicated itself to him.

Traits: *(SM) Ancient, occult, magical*

Marcus Hayes 187

Drunken Ex-Soldier

"Get out of my face before I take yours off with my sword!"

Appearance: Marcus looks ragged and worn out. He smells of liquor.

Roleplaying: He slurs his words and often seems mistrustful.

Personality: Paranoid and quick tempered, Marcus harbors many ghosts.

Motivation: Marcus is trying to drink himself into peace.

Background: Marcus Hayes was once a proud soldier in a mercenary company. The pay was good and he was decorated many times by the countries he fought for, but the life of a soldier, even a noble one like Marcus, is never easy. Like many soldiers, his entertainment matched the ferocity of his work, and a good drink always steeled his nerves for the next battle or quelled the rush of images before he slept. When a poison-tipped arrow found its way into his gut, Marcus was paralyzed and forced to watch his comrades get slaughtered and routed. Surviving, but never overcoming the painful wounds, the only medicine that could kill the pain and memories was found at the bottom of a bottle. Marcus has tried to reenlist with other mercenaries, but his wounds make him unemployable. His former friends all dead, he wanders from bar to bar and bottle to bottle, yelling at anyone who gets in his way. Marcus moves from yelling to feeble attacks quickly, and is no stranger to the inside of a jail cell. Marcus is pitiable, but dangerous—one of many sad stories created by the wars.

Traits: *(JA) Abhorrent, outdoorsman, military*

Angakkuq Illuak 188

Native Guide

"And this ship, this house made of many tall bushes, it float on water? How?"

Appearance: When Angakkuq pulls back her white fur hood, she reveals a weathered face. She greets strangers in a pidgin dialect, with a contagious grin on her face.

Roleplaying: Cheerful and talkative despite her poor language skills, she constantly asks questions about those she travels with, and about the outside world.

Personality: Her newfound job as a guide across the tundra has stirred her curiosity about the world outside her lands. Her sense of humor is irreverent and she is endlessly amused.

Motivation: Someday, she wants to see all the lands she has heard about.

Background: Born with an excellent sense of direction, Angakkuq was her tribe's guide across the trackless tundra for many decades. A few years ago, a new tribal leader took power. Offended by her cheeky attitude, he thought that one in such a position should be more stoic and respectful. Because her husband died on a hunt years before, and her eldest daughter had inherited her internal compass and could guide the tribe, Angakkuq decided to leave. She now guides outsiders across the tundra for money that she sends back to the tribe. Mostly she escorts small merchant caravans, but she has guided adventurers, emissaries, and other travelers. She has become enthralled by their tales of places strange and wonderful, and is in awe at how a world she already found massive keeps getting bigger.

Traits: *(KS) Humorous, impoverished, outdoorsman, primal*

Phaedra Grey 189

Hardened Prostitute

"Yes, they are farmers and the bandits will likely slaughter them all. The villagers did not pay me to protect them. What business of it is mine?"

Appearance: Phaedra is a tall woman with stern features and her hair pulled back in a ponytail. Her arms and legs are covered in brown and green runes and patterns. She is never without her longbow.

Roleplaying: She's all business. She'll dismiss anyone not looking to meet her fee.

Personality: Phaedra firmly believes that a person is only worth what they can command. She is a true mercenary.

Motivation: She uses her skills for money.

Background: Phaedra's callousness comes from her upbringing, when her father sold her to a merchant in return for needed goods. Phaedra spent most of her life being sold from one person to the next, until her skill with a bow enabled her to buy her freedom. She now uses her skill to afford a comfortable lifestyle, but has little concept of love, mercy, or charity. On those rare cases when emotion does bubble up inside her, Phaedra runs from it. Having true feelings for someone else would greatly shock and confuse her. She'll initially assume that any overtures are merely a prelude to a negotiation to purchase her for an evening.

Traits: *(WC) Outdoorsman, warrior*

Desa Abani 190

Wise Widow

"Please come in. It's great to meet you. Oh, don't be so stoic. A hug is better. Now come, have a seat and let's talk about what you found in those ruins."

Appearance: Desa is an older woman whose age has enhanced her beauty. She has flowing silver hair, and fine age lines around her eyes and mouth. She's tall, with a figure that rivals women half her age.

Roleplaying: Everything she says is upbeat. She hugs everyone that she meets, and always finds something positive to say about them.

Personality: She is a jovial woman who loves people. Desa is most comfortable when she is able to help someone or make their lives better, often by providing advice from her years as an adventurer.

Motivation: Desa is lonely and works only to be in contact with people. She goes out of her way to made contact, seeking out adventurers especially.

Background: Desa was a barmaid who fell in love with a very successful adventurer and traveled the world living the adventuring life. Eventually the two settled down in semi-retirement, enjoying the treasure they earned over the years. They never had any children. One day, her husband left on an important quest and never returned. Lonely, with no need to work and with a network of friends, Desa decided to help young adventurers by advising them on opportunities and aiding them in selling their finds.

Traits: *(PV) Beautiful, business, counselor*

Barton Thorncroft 191

Ornery Farmer

"Ain't nobody told ye not t'do that? T'ain't gonna work. Leastways, not for long."

Appearance: A crabby-faced middle-aged farmer, Barton scowls at everyone like they just farted in church.

Roleplaying: He delivers his harshly critical judgment in a thick rural accent, occasionally spitting for emphasis.

Personality: Straightforward and borderline bitter, he considers manners and civility to be pointless.

Motivation: Barton wants only to keep his farm running.

Background: A farmer from a long line of farmers, Barton has lived a rough life. He has lost all of the other members of his family to humanoid incursion, disease, accidents, and childbirth. One of his children even ran away. He hasn't taken it well, burying his grief deep inside and working his farm from dawn to dusk, only hiring help when absolutely needed. Despite the setbacks in his life, Barton's farm is very successful—a testament to his work ethic, if not his social skills. He'd even be a good marriage prospect, if anyone could take living with him. (After all, he is younger than he looks.) Hidden behind his brusque exterior is a sharp mind, a strong heart, and a long life of rural experience to draw on. While his advice is usually poorly delivered, it's almost always accurate.

Traits: *(KS) Business, genius, laborer, outdoorsman*

Hortencia Evansen 192

Unlucky Seamstress

"Not to be indelicate, but it is possible you are gaining a little weight. Not to worry, I'll let out the stitching and the dress will be as good as new. Let me call my assistant. Aristo! Get in here now!"

Appearance: Her most striking feature is her eyes: one is green and the other is hazel. She is fairly attractive, with an angular face and thick brown hair.

Roleplaying: She is a pleasant salesperson, attentive to customers and capable of filling their orders.

Personality: Hortencia remains generally cheerful but is starting to fray around the edges as her workload becomes increasingly overwhelming—especially with regard to the color-changing dresses she sells.

Motivation: She wants to maintain the success of her business and keep the true nature of Aristo's involvement a secret.

Background: She was, until recently, a moderately successful but not very imaginative seamstress. Then she met Aristo Kontos, an impish fey creature who made her a bargain. Inspired by her eyes, he agreed to design and create dresses made of an ethereal, color-changing fabric. They were an immediate hit, allowing Hortencia to relocate to a fashionable part of the city. Unfortunately, the stunning visual effects come with a price. The stitches on Aristo's magic dresses slowly tighten, effectively "shrinking" the garment, forcing Hortencia to constantly make alterations.

Traits: *(TT) Business, crafter, magical*

Dame Zaza 193

Outrageous Performer

"I am gaga / I am Zaza / I am you!"

Appearance: Her hooded cloak of silver and white, studded with (fake) diamonds, glitters gaudily. She wears a form-fitting white bodysuit made of leather and a mask of feathers. Her lips and eyes are emphasized with makeup. A troupe of midget acrobats surrounds her at all times.

Roleplaying: Privately, she speaks softly and is quite shy. Rarely does she make eye contact, demurely looking away. Onstage, Zaza is outgoing and her voice resonates while she gyrates aggressively and tumbles about.

Personality: She is flighty and surreal, making just enough sense that her sanity is only rarely questioned. Zaza embodies a persona, and it's difficult to see where the persona ends and the person begins.

Motivation: Her goal in life is to entertain and express the power of performance. Over time, her platform has expanded to peddle her personal agendas: questioning the nobility and animal rights.

Background: Born as Stephanie Duall, the struggling singer and trained actor initially had little success. She found her way to a traveling troupe of actors, and as part of their over-the-top, interlude dancing performance she took the stage name "Dame Zaza" and achieved modest success. She later left the troupe, and began a solo singing and dance act so outrageous that she once climbed inside an animal carcass and was "born" on stage, highlighting animal husbandry rights.

Traits: *(DM) Entertainment, famous*

Norkis Akella 194

Impetuous Surgeon

"Hold still or this will take me longer than it should!"

Appearance: Covered in the blood of botched surgeries, Norkis has a disheveled appearance and a disturbing glower.

Roleplaying: Constantly twitchy and scowling, Norkis is always chomping at the bit to get a surgery over with. He rarely waits for proper sterilization, even by medieval standards.

Personality: Norkis always appears to be inconvenienced by his clients. He never has a kind look or smile, and he seems impatient and dissatisfied with whatever he is doing.

Motivation: He never wanted to be a surgeon, but it was the family trade and he is good at it, when he doesn't rush through the delicate procedures.

Background: Norkis' mother was a cleric and his father was a surgeon in the army. While Norkis never had any care for either of these professions, he was particularly nonreligious. Apprenticed to his father at a young age, he grew distasteful of the job and tried to leave many times. His father kept pulling him back in, partially because it was the family business and that's how things are done, and partially because he was so damn good at it. Many owe their lives and limbs to Norkis' fine work, but age has made him more impatient. If Norkis' impetuousness can be overcome, his skill shines through, but more often than not his rushing worsens conditions or ends lives, something he rarely cares about.

Traits: *(JA) Business, genius, medic*

Yeris Prusun 195

Rotten Acolyte

"While you are older, and yes, you have saved a number of lives through divine power, your knowledge of the sacred scrolls is embarrassing; a clear sign that you should have spent more time in a temple than rooting around some dank dungeon."

Appearance: Yeris is a 10-year-old girl, with long, brown hair in a single long braid that runs the length of her back. Her cheeks are rosy and plump. She wears simple dresses in muted colors.

Roleplaying: She never misses a chance to slight someone by pointing out his or her faults, or correcting a misstep.

Personality: Yeris is a mean girl who is not afraid to harm others, both emotionally and socially, to get the things she wants. She is only interested in her own welfare.

Motivation: One day, she hopes to be the head of her order, because she will be able to command everyone beneath her.

Background: Yeris has always been a disagreeable child. Her parents enrolled her in religious study in hopes that theology might make her a nicer person. This has not been the case. She has come to learn that the church is made up of its own factions, and that she can advance quickly at the expense of her peers. She now works for a cleric as his assistant. When he is around she is quite agreeable, but in his absence, her true self shows.

Traits: *(PV) Child, religious, scholar*



Norkis Akella

Artist: Matt Morrow

Herez Wolfkin 196

Barbarian Freedom Fighter

"Our kin cry out for freedom. Grab your spears and follow me!"

Appearance: Herez is ruggedly masculine, about 5'6" with a lean muscled frame and deeply tanned skin. His fingers are nut-brown and powerful, cording when he makes a fist.

Roleplaying: He moves with efficiency, placing his feet carefully and pausing before taking each step. He speaks gravely in a deep voice, with a quirk of his lips when he's joking or putting one over on strangers.

Personality: Herez believes strongly in right and wrong, and forcefully supports right. While he's not hasty, he's also not one to dismiss his concerns. Oratory doesn't impress him.

Motivation: Too many of his people have given up the old ways, leading them to a life of begging, or slavery for the least fortunate. Herez has sworn that he will right this—that they remain clan, even after they depart.

Background: The second son of the clan leader, Herez and his older brother fought often. Herez was wary of outsiders, which saved him when a wasting disease infected his father and brother after a conference with traders. He led a war party to take vengeance on the traders and found many of his people trapped in the traders' city. They killed a trader and freed a few clansmen—but fled before the steel-clad guards. Now he seeks to reclaim all of his lost brethren.

Traits: *(SM) Charming, eccentric, leader, primal*

Djazzica H'Zollern 197

Idle Noble

"Get married? And become another pawn in the game of thrones? No, I think I'd rather enjoy my life."

Appearance: This young woman is a study in contrasts: very attractive but inappropriately dressed, and well-spoken but tactlessly blunt.

Roleplaying: Djazzica speaks articulately and with a noble accent, but keeps up a running commentary of blunt criticisms.

Personality: She is curious about what makes people tick and what is outside the walls of her palace, but becomes easily distracted.

Motivation: Bored with her sheltered life, Djazzica finds amusement in challenging the assumptions of those around her.

Background: As the youngest daughter of the very large royal family, Djazzica lacks the assigned roles her older siblings have. At an early age, she rejected courtly machinations and focused on learning about the world around her. A natural student, she's studied magic, fencing, performance arts, languages, and history, and has spent time in nearly every corner of the palace (and beyond). She has extensive knowledge of many unexpected subjects, from the hidden areas in the palace to the secret history of her family. Easily bored, she enjoys being a challenge—and occasional thorn in the side—to those around her, and her penchant for mockery is rarely welcomed at any social event. Djazzica may "adopt" a party of adventurers, but may also quickly become bored with them, and lead them into a very inappropriate situation, just to see how they adapt.

Traits: *(KS) Beautiful, eccentric, genius, royalty, wealthy*

Twarra Isker 198

Daring Cat Burglar

"Hmm. 460 feet to the tower, and 200 feet up. Give me…a minute and a half."

Appearance: At 20 years old, Twarra is short and slight, with long fingers and a pointed nose. By day, she dresses brightly in the garb of a foreigner; by night, she dresses for stealth.

Roleplaying: Twarra's fingers are always moving: drumming the table, tapping against her thighs, or manipulating a gold coin.

Personality: Meticulous by nature, Twarra believes that planning is the key to being a successful thief—and she's very successful. She scouts every target at least twice and has a backup plan for her backup plan whenever possible.

Motivation: She likes nothing better than a challenge. Show her something that can't be stolen, and she'll find a way to steal it—and get away clean.

Background: Twarra is a cat burglar: sly, stealthy, and never happier than when she's dangling a hundred feet up on a thin silk rope. She lives to steal, though she rarely keeps her prizes; once the job is done, she loses interest quickly. Twarra never pulls a job without planning it in advance, mapping out escape routes, and then making two—or three—contingency plans. She's unobtrusive and easy to overlook when she wants to be, and pretends to be an itinerant trader in order to gain access to areas near her latest target. A freelancer, she prefers to keep moving in order to avoid the attention of thieves' guilds.

Traits: *(MR) Criminal, stealthy*

Remmy Cadigan 199

Diabolic Researcher

"If you had the capacity to understand what we're doing here, you'd go away and let us get back to work."

Appearance: Remmy is a skinny man of indeterminate age. Despite his constant cold from handling corpses, his rheumy blue eyes sparkle with inner fire.

Roleplaying: Worn down from the tedium of research and constant disturbances from adventurers, Remmy has little time for small talk. He is brusque and impatient, with a habit of rubbing the bridge of his nose when others are wasting his time.

Personality: A cold anger underlies Remmy's drive to discover answers about the body and soul. Often his curiosity pushes him to ask questions about even the smallest details.

Motivation: He searches for the ultimate understanding of the human body and spirit. He wants the skill set that will enable him to save people—including his deceased wife, who he secretly hopes to return from the dead.

Background: Remmy had a promising career as a court wizard when his wife contracted a horrible wasting disease and passed away. Grief-stricken, he quit his job and used his government contacts to obtain building and research permits for a tower outside of town. There, he studies necromancy and the diabolic arts in an effort to understand the human condition. Though he and his assistants are making slow progress, the constant harassment from well-meaning adventurers makes their work all the more difficult.

Traits: *(MN) Abhorrent, genius, notorious, occult, scholar, scientist*

Verelle Franchesco 200

Quirky Milliner

"My latest creation was meant for you. Truly. I can see this hat on no other person. You must trust me on this."

Appearance: Verelle is handsome, if somewhat unremarkable, and favors outlandish costumes.

Roleplaying: He flatters every customer, but rich clients get extra special attention. He affects a foreign accent, cultivating the personality of an "artiste."

Personality: He tries to do the unexpected, such as opening his shop at odd hours, whimsically changing the prices of his wares and shifting his stock around. His personal charisma and charm are hard to resist.

Motivation: He wants to sell as many hats as he can and hopes no one discovers how ordinary he truly is.

Background: Hoping to take advantage of sumptuary laws requiring head coverings, Verelle opened a milliner's shop. Along the way, a magic hat box came into his possession. Putting an unadorned hat and other decorative objects in the box causes the various elements to assemble in a strange and new way. The magic only works once a day, but the results have influenced his other designs. It also inspired him to create his "artiste" personality. Having discovered that people respond favorably to his weird hats and his outlandish persona, he fears the day when the magic of the hat box runs dry.

Traits: *(TT) Business, crafter, magical*

Captain Alvina Ardecorn 201

Cautious Guard

"Perhaps he is the baron's cousin, but I still don't trust him. Keep a guard on watch by his door and have the priest bless the food that Sir Edmund brought before anyone tastes it."

Appearance: Alvina is a comely woman who wears the knightly brand on her shield arm. When not at war she prefers leather jerkin, but changes to half-plate if trouble is brewing. She keeps her blond hair at shoulder length. Alvina is never without her curved, rune-covered long sword.

Roleplaying: She is always suspicious. Every question is a probe for information. She never quite trusts someone and won't hesitate to tell her baron that a traveler is dangerous, even in the traveler's presence.

Personality: Alvina never relaxes completely; she has seen complacency get too many people killed. She is constantly worried that the castle will be attacked when she least expects it—so she always expects it.

Motivation: She wants to keep her lord and his family safe.

Background: Alvina grew up in a knight's house. She lost her parents when a group of bandits came to the baron's castle. Alvina barely escaped. Following her father's example, she attached herself to another baron. Everyone around her thinks she's overly cautious, but Alvina's preparations have saved the castle many times over the years.

Traits: *(WC) Military, warrior*

Elisha Bradon 202

Overeager Reporter

"The guard sergeant is the one responsible for the murders? The Gazette is gonna love this!"

Appearance: Elisha's olive skin is smooth and unblemished. Dark, bouncy hair frames her plump, pudgy face.

Roleplaying: Constantly running after a story, Elisha is often breathless. She is unable to hold still, fidgeting restlessly as the enthusiasm of her youth is barely contained. She asks probing questions regardless of others' feelings, decorum, or potential dangers.

Personality: Elisha is hasty, easily excited, and eager to uncover secrets. She chases after a story without proper consideration for what she knows or potential problems that might crop up.

Motivation: A burning curiosity drives Elisha to find the truth behind the stories she investigates and then to share it with everyone she can.

Background: Consumed by her passion for hunting down stories and selling them to anyone who will publish her work, Elisha is reckless and constantly flirts with danger. She has a special love for pestering adventurers, as they usually have a wealth of juicy information. Because she refuses to grant anonymity, cut deals, or concern herself with the reputation of her informants, she rarely works with the same group more than once or twice. It's only a matter of time before she will annoy someone ruthless enough to come after her. Elisha might (and only might) then discover that it may not have been prudent to irritate so many potential allies.

Traits: *(MN) Entertainment, humorous, white collar, zealot*

Kaduchi 203

Invulnerable Tribesman

"I do not like your tone. If you wish to leave alive, change it."

Appearance: Muscular and intimidating in appearance, Kaduchi is covered in minor scars and tattoos.

Roleplaying: He is uncompromising and coldly fierce.

Personality: Kaduchi is as unyielding as a rock and speaks plainly.

Motivation: He believes his strength exists only for the purpose of protecting the village.

Background: Kaduchi is the strongest warrior in the village that lies in front of the grave of the gods. When he was a toddler, he wandered away from his mother and into the grave. For three days he couldn't be found, but then he appeared in his crib, as joyous as any baby. From that day, Kaduchi showed strength, speed, and stamina beyond the other boys. By the age of 12, he could outdo the village men at any physical task. Kaduchi believes it is his sacred duty to protect the grave of the gods, and that they have granted him power to do so. When outsiders come to the village, he does not let them pass until the shaman has judged them. No outsider, despite the magic or steel they wield, has felled Kaduchi. The strongest blows glance off him, and his strength has never been bested. There are a few who have called upon great powers to damage him, but when this occurs, he calls forth his voice of thunder and dispels them like gnats in a hurricane.

Traits: *(JA) Magical, primal, mysterious*



Senael Dakerin

Artist: Avery Liell-Kok

Senael Dakerin 205

Divine Healer

"I won't leave until you are better. Don't worry. Everything will be alright."

Appearance: She has a soft and kind face, and her clothes are constantly kept clean.

Roleplaying: Sincere caring and compassion flow from Senael's every pore.

Personality: Kind and friendly, Senael always gives her best to her charges.

Motivation: She seeks to soothe the ills of the world.

Background: Senael came to the holy orders when a cleric saved her father from a plague. She was intensely interested in this organization that sought only to help others. She started out as an acolyte, and then became a nun. Eventually, she became a full-fledged cleric and learned the healing arts of her god. Senael then took up a position in the order's healing wing, tending to all manner of injury and illness. She is not nearly as good as others at calling forth the holy powers to aid the wounded, but many prefer Senael's care because of the warmth it brings them. She is never without a kind word for her patients. Those she cares for, despite her lack of mastery, often recover more quickly than those who get greater divine aid. "Senael" means sunlight in an ancient tongue, and some in the order believe Senael may be destined for greater things—a sun yet to have its sunrise, but whose rays spill over the horizon, warming the people.

Traits: *(JA) Beautiful, charming, religious, saintly*

Erik Lemore 204

Cynical Veteran

"Oh, they'll come alright. And when they do, I'll be there to watch them get ya!"

Appearance: This broad-shouldered man has chiseled features and dark stubble underneath dark, sunken eyes. His chest piece is dented and devoid of luster; the nicks upon his sword betray years of use.

Roleplaying: He looks defeated, his head hung and his voice weary. Erik constantly picks at his fingernails, and times of great stress will leave them bleeding. He'll curl his fingers and use the pain to keep himself alert at night.

Personality: Erik has seen enough battle to know how things are going to end. He's dark and brooding, commenting on the worst of things. He's not one to give up, but he sets expectations low with his cynical outlook. He's typically ready for the worst-case scenario.

Motivation: He only hopes to live through the next trial. He hopes he's wrong and things don't go as bad as he expects, but just in case, he's made sure he'll survive.

Background: Years of fighting have dulled his conscience and the gallons of blood he has spilled have dampened his morale. That said, he's a skilled fighter and worthy to have at your side in a pinch, but his constant prattling and cynicism can grate on anyone's nerves. Interestingly enough, his approach does make it easier to plan an opponent's likely path of attack.

Traits: *(DM) Adventurer, aggressive, warrior*

Ravlox Ironface 206

Charitable Noble

"Greetings, I am Ravlox, leader of this band of merry ruffians. To what do I owe the pleasure of meeting one as beautiful as you? Please join us by the fire. Can I get you something warm to drink?"

Appearance: A mess of bandages and sores, Ravlox and his men are suffering from a disease that was cured only after the damage had been done. He walks with a stiff gait but is surprisingly accurate with a crossbow.

Roleplaying: Contrary to his appearance, Ravlox is very charming and personable. He's accommodating and does his best to make people feel welcome. He politely ignores comments about his condition.

Personality: Ravlox decided long ago not to lose his humanity along with his appearance. He is mourning inside, but puts on a happy face so that others won't shun him. He doesn't want to spend the rest of his life alone.

Motivation: He simply wants to be accepted by society.

Background: When the Red Plague ripped through the kingdom, the lucky ones died immediately. Others, like Ravlox, ended up with pus-filled blisters all over them. While a cure was found, it couldn't completely heal Ravlox. A minor noble, Ravlox set up his manor as a community for others like him. Ravlox's band protects the southern border of the kingdom; the border's only breach is a mountain pass that terminates at his manor.

Traits: *(WC) Charming, hideous, leader*

Nattick Newhouse 207

Wandering Minstrel

"Your troupe is truly impressive, especially the beautiful lady. Might I travel in your company for a while, for my protection and your edification?"

Appearance: Nattick is a spry and handsome young man, with a confident smile and a lute over his shoulder.

Roleplaying: Quick with a joke or appropriate phrase, he is full of energy and emotion, and seems to be constantly "on stage."

Personality: Nattick has all of the energy and passion of youth, along with a level of confidence rarely found among the young.

Motivation: Like all performers, he wants his audience to love him. Subconsciously, he's looking for a woman worthy of his love, but his own issues get in the way.

Background: Born into a bordello, Nattick grew up surrounded by women. From a young age, he provided musical entertainment for the customers. As he grew, his work took him to the streets as a crier, singing songs of the various ladies' talents. Upon leaving the bordello, he began his career as a minstrel, wandering from town to town. While he truly wants to find lasting love, his childhood gave him a deep distrust of women. Nattick will fall head over heels in love with a woman, seduce her with his music and considerable charm, and then dump her over some small slight (real or imagined). Even after repeated cycles of this, Nattick is unaware that he is the cause of his failures.

Traits: *(KS) Artist, charming, entertainment*

Princess Sonja 208

Foolish Noblewoman

"We have nothing to fear. The people love royalty, and respect a monarch. None will dare to oppose us."

Appearance: Barely in her teens, she is a frail-framed girl with alabaster skin and raven hair. Her crown is a solid gold band with a single large emerald in the center.

Roleplaying: Princess Sonja is prudish and tries her best to never show any sign of emotion. She is demanding, but not selfish; she just behaves in the manner that she believes royalty should.

Personality: Her only identity is her title. She carefully weighs every word she speaks, action she takes, and decision she makes based upon her royal training. She is actually a very dull and uninteresting person, but no one dares to tell her this.

Motivation: Her motivation is to be perfect. In her mind, to show fear or hesitation to anyone for any reason is a mistake. To be royalty is to be infallible.

Background: Since her birth, she has been protected and sheltered from all outside influences that her parents considered to be improper (playing with other children, for example). Nearly a year ago, her parents were assassinated, and upon reaching adulthood she will take the throne. She steadfastly believes that this is a preordained event, and will not entertain the ridiculous notion that any of her royal subjects would attempt to assassinate her. This causes her security detail substantial grief.

Traits: *(PB) Focal, leader, political*

Zelma 209

Thieving Washerwoman

"A pearl is missing from milady's dress? We'll scour the laundry for it, of course, but a tiny thing like that could have come off anywhere."

Appearance: She is rather ordinary and wears a bland expression. In smock and scarf, Zelma is indistinguishable from the other women who work in the laundry.

Roleplaying: When questioned directly, she is inscrutable. She makes a point of saying—with much conviction—how fortunate she feels to have this job. She even goes so far to say that anyone who would put it in jeopardy by engaging in theft is an ungrateful fool.

Personality: She feels neither guilt nor remorse over helping herself to finery and reselling it.

Motivation: Zelma just wants to take her fair share.

Background: Zelma steals adornments—one bauble and silk-threaded stitch at a time—from the clothes of nobles sent to the laundry. Before taking a job in the castle laundry, Zelma never had an inclination to do anything dishonest. But when she saw first-hand the immense wealth of the nobility compared with the peasantry, she decided that she was entitled to a portion of that wealth, too. She works like a skilled embezzler. Zelma is clever enough to "find" lost items and turn them in to assuage suspicion. She secretly steals from garments that she had no role in handling, and she plants stolen items on servants who work outside the laundry to divert attention.

Traits: *(TT) Criminal, laborer*

Adamus D'Maio 210

Aspiring Bard

"With your heroics and my songs, we could both be famous!"

Appearance: A poor but energetic young man with a lute slung over his shoulder, he is often seen furiously writing down a story being told to him.

Roleplaying: Adamus eagerly asks questions about the party's adventures, and takes notes.

Personality: He's convinced that his big break lies on the other side of a heavily embellished version of an actual event.

Motivation: He wants to get famous, preferably while also getting rich.

Background: Brought up on his grandfather's old heroic songs, Adamus left home at a young age to become a traveling bard and sing his own songs, but his overly fantastic tales were met with scorn or laughter. Realizing that the enduring epics were based in something more than pure fantasy, Adamus decided his songs ought to be inspired by actual events. To that end, he courts adventuring parties—giving generously of drink refills and compliments in order to loosen their tongues—and records their exploits. He then retells their stories through song, amplifying already exciting events into epic sagas. What Adamus hasn't considered is that this technique might have unintended consequences. A tale of heroes who defeat a massive dragon and haul off its mountain of loot might well lead to an ambush or assassination attempt over that loot, and a tale of untold riches in an ancient king's burial chamber may well convince any number of fools to look for it.

Traits: *(KS) Artist, entertainment, impoverished*

Zachary the Phoenix 211

Daring Spy

"If you die on the way out, no one comes looking for you later."

Appearance: Nondescript and average in almost every way, Zachary makes every effort to blend in wherever he goes.

Roleplaying: In both his personal life and on the job, Zachary keeps his voice, actions, and gestures even and measured. He does his best to not stand out for either extreme.

Personality: Crafty, cunning, and always as many steps ahead as he can manage, Zachary is aware of his surroundings, options, and anything that might be useful to him. He's almost impossible to surprise.

Motivation: Zachary tries to be the absolute best spy he can, not only to fill his coffers, but also for the thrill and challenge of making off with others' closely guarded secrets.

Background: Tired of clearing dungeons with groups of loud, clunky, and, worst of all, unprofessional adventurers, Zachary took his skills to the merchant princes. He steals carefully guarded secrets for huge payments by posing as a nondescript, disposable employee, discovering what he needs, and then by covering his escape by faking the death of his assumed personality. He's learned a host of tricks from gadgets to magic to make him a better operative.

Traits: *(MN) Business, criminal, power hungry, stealthy, wealthy*

Tilden 212

Addicted Apothecary

"There's nothing wrong with me. Just a little under the weather, that's all. I'll be right as rain as soon as the weather changes."

Appearance: He is gaunt, wearing clothes clearly made for a beefier figure. Dark circles frame his eyes and he has bad teeth. He wears a skull cap and a necklace emblem denoting his training as an apothecary.

Roleplaying: Tilden feigns suffering from a slight illness, affecting a cough, to explain his rapid weight loss. At other times he exhibits the many symptoms of withdrawal, such as abdominal pain, sweating, irritability, and mood swings. He becomes defensive and offers fierce denials if a customer enters his shop and suggests that he has a drug problem.

Personality: He is smart enough to recognize the addiction in himself, but doesn't have the willpower to free himself of it.

Motivation: He wants to get through the day so he can spend the night in the drug's embrace. Even if presented with a way out, he may not take it.

Background: He was a competent apothecary privileged to set up shop in the castle courtyard. Then a stranger enticed him into indulge in recreational drug use. Now he is addicted to this stranger's power. This blackmailer threatens to tell the authorities of his drug problem unless he continues to be paid off in money and pharmaceutical ingredients.

Traits: *(TT) Criminal, scientist*

Fae Willow 213

Ethereal Spirit

"The rain dampens not the spirit, but the ground, returning the circle of life."

Appearance: She is tall, slender, and exceedingly beautiful. Her long, brown hair is pulled back severely, revealing her angled brown eyes. Her lips are full and flush with a youthful exuberance. A lingering scent of daisies seems to follow her.

Roleplaying: Fae is outgoing and bubbly—perhaps too much so. She can and will ramble incessantly about any subject, from the arcane to the speculative. She'll point out little known facts, ambush conversations with quips, and steer a conversation off course with little effort. She smiles warmly when she speaks.

Personality: Her effervescence belies a wisdom that is without peer. Great knowledge is locked away behind her childish personality. She always sees the good in others and is genuinely intrigued by the world around her.

Motivation: Fae drifts from cause to cause—never settling on one for any great length—but each endeavor is undertaken with the utmost sincerity and enthusiasm. At one point she may seek to encourage love in others, becoming a poet; the next, offer herself for flagellation to absolve the innocent of their sins.

Background: Fae's name is fitting because she is a mystical creature of the Fae, although she does not know this. Absorbing the spirits around her, she is a vessel of renewing wisdom and ideals who flutters about the world. She is a force for good, but her flighty nature could easily put her at odds with the PCs.

Traits: *(DM) Ancient, magical*

Vicar Morkani 214

Meticulous Priest

"Every detail of the temple must be attended to. Nothing can be out of place. There! All done. No, not quite. These candles are…wrong. They must be replaced!"

Appearance: Morkani is a short, plump man with a flushed face and a weak chin. He wears a black suit with polished boots and a large-brimmed hat.

Roleplaying: He constantly adjusts things as if they are never quite in the right spot. He cites religious doctrines regarding proper presentation and protocols for nearly everything. He gives generously to the poor, but uses every opportunity to preach about proper behavior.

Personality: The Vicar is obsessed with details and is never satisfied. He finds fault with everything and does not hesitate to point it out. He doesn't do this to be cruel, but because of a compulsion to correct all things.

Motivation: He lives to help others, and he has founded several successful businesses, operated by the temple, that aid the poor with their profits.

Background: As an apprentice, he served at the high temple. He annoyed his superiors with his constant corrections of even the most trivial things. As a "reward" he was given charge of a temple in one of the poorest parts of the kingdom. To everyone's surprise he soon made a difference by using his attention to detail in matters of business. Many years later, his superiors praise his miraculous work, but they still keep his stays at the high temple brief.

Traits: *(PB) Academic, merchant, saintly*

Belamy Taldiss 215

Tactless Bard

"That's a gorgeous dress! I'll bet it would look even more fetching on a smaller woman."

Appearance: Belamy has high cheekbones, an olive complexion, and she wears her hair plaited into beautiful, complex braids (a different pattern every day).

Roleplaying: Belamy's wit outpaces her manners. She's unintentionally rude, puts her foot in her mouth at every opportunity, and offends most people she meets.

Personality: Oblivious and tactless, Belamy is convinced that she can charm her way through any problem, despite ample evidence to the contrary. People tend to want to like her, but she doesn't make it easy.

Motivation: More than anything, Belamy wants to make a few really good friends.

Background: Most bards are charming and musically talented; Belamy is musically talented. Born without a sense of diplomacy, and seemingly incapable of developing one, she's been run out of a dozen towns in the past six months. Always on the move, she can take care of herself, plays the lute like she was born holding one, and has a keen sense for when the crowd is about to turn ugly—an instinct that's served her well many times. She's a nice person once you get to know her, but her lack of civility often prevents her from making friends. She became a bard to meet more people, but that's backfired on her. She finds traveling a lonely affair, but has little choice but to keep moving.

Traits: *(MR) Artist, entertainment, humorous*

Calla Startrella 216

Peculiar Fortune Teller

"The future is knowable. Maybe."

Appearance: Calla is a young, fair-haired woman in her mid-twenties. She often wears an expression of wide-eyed innocence, appearing neither particularly wise nor insightful.

Roleplaying: In addition to unorthodox fortune-telling methods, she has conversations with her pet porcupine. She will stop to listen to what the porcupine is supposedly saying, which observers take as silence, then respond as if the conversation has taken a new direction.

Personality: She often seems detached from the swirl of excitement around current events and she likes that people wonder about her.

Motivation: She genuinely wants to help people who come for advice or to have their future read. She doesn't think her methods are strange.

Background: Calla doesn't talk about her past. She came to the castle in her middle teens. It's whispered she was raised by a witch coven in the dark forest. The accuracy of her foretelling is hotly debated. Instead of a crystal ball, she "reads" the future from the glass chimney of a lit oil lamp. She reads palms by examining the backs of hands, and divines the future from tarot cards that are placed faced down. Before she conducts any reading, she pricks the subject with a porcupine needle to get a spot of blood.

Traits: *(TT) Eccentric, occult*

Rosalyn Tesera 217

Cuckolded Noblewoman

"I know my husband is faithful, there is no way he would not be…right?"

Appearance: Rosalyn is an attractive middle-aged woman; her beauty has only just begun to fade, and her hair has barely begun to gray.

Roleplaying: Though composed at most times, wistful looks and small quivers betray her sadness and nervousness.

Personality: Rosalyn is trusting and naïve, rationalizing away her husband's flings.

Motivation: She seeks to be a devoted wife and please her husband.

Background: Rosalyn is a dutiful wife who has yet to see through her husband's lies about his whereabouts at late hours of the night. He has told her that he attends to secret business for the king, but in reality he is philandering with any maiden he can find. Rosalyn was raised to believe that marriage was a sacred institution, blessed by the hearth gods. She doesn't believe her sweet devoted man would ever do her wrong, but there are so many times when he doesn't come home. Since Rosalyn and her husband hold a position of minor nobility, the tales he spins have been plausible enough, but they have begun to grow too grand. There are holes in his tales, and Rosalyn believes there is much her husband keeps from her. Though he is working for the king and holding secrets, some things are not meeting up. When she unravels the truth, she may remain mild and meek, or she may explode in fury.

Traits: *(JA) Dilettante, royalty, white collar*

Ustan Oughmoskim 218

Judgmental Boatman

"There's only one way down the river without being killed, and I am sure that there is no way you would figure it out. A few coins is all I ask, and I will take you."

Appearance: Ustan is short, hairy, and rather unattractive. His looks hint at his upbringing in the wastelands. He has several noticeable scars, and more hide beneath his clothes.

Roleplaying: He always calls people out for their actions, especially if it they do it poorly. Given a choice, people are always in the wrong.

Personality: No one does anything to Ustan's satisfaction, and he isn't afraid to let people know it. Because of his judgmental attitude, he has a terrible time making a living; people only work with him once. His skill intimidates them—or so Ustan has convinced himself.

Motivation: He enjoys showing people how smart and talented he is. He loves to point out the bad decisions people make, and the foolish things they do.

Background: Ustan grew up in the wastelands. He is an excellent guide and hunter. He moved towards more civilized lands but was unable to find any work, blaming it on prejudice. He was able to get enough coin to purchase a small but meager boat, and is able to make a little coin by ferrying people to the wastelands. The boat is always in need of repair, making him more desperate for work.

Traits: *(PV) Impoverished, outdoorsman, pilot, primal*

Tanserus Balkanor 219

Boisterous Merchant

"My table is your table! My food is your food! My wives are my own, though!"

Appearance: Tanserus is large and bulky. He dresses in fine clothing and surrounds himself with luxury.

Roleplaying: He is constantly smiling and his laughter is deep and boisterous.

Personality: One can't help but feel the friendliness and generosity pouring out of Tanserus.

Motivation: He only wants to share and enjoy the riches he has gained.

Background: Traveling long trade routes between remote areas, dealing in rare goods, and carefully managing his resources, Tanserus quickly increased his wealth and made many friends. Always generous, Tanserus sometimes succumbed to misfortune, but more often developed strong bonds that helped him prosper. His friendliness, size, and generosity have only grown with his fortune. Tanserus has married many times, each marriage adding to the number of wives constantly surrounding him. Also in his entourage are the many servants and merchants who work for him, carrying out his business and walking his old trade routes. A good judge of character, Tanserus rarely succumbs to the wiles of those who would trick him. He is constantly traveling with his huge caravan of goods, and, through a complex system of messages, his merchants always know where to find him. While this often attracts bandits, he deftly defuses the situation and the bandits leave with bellies full of wine and food, vowing that no harm shall ever come to Tanserus' men or friends.

Traits: *(JA) Charming, merchant, saintly, wealthy*

Mortissa Deigja 220

Undead Magician

"As you wish, highness."

Appearance: An ancient and shriveled old woman, dressed in faded clothes of a bygone era, she looks through people with cold, lifeless eyes.

Roleplaying: Mortissa speaks in a slow, strained whisper, using archaic phrases, but when casting a spell or protecting the throne she moves with preternatural swiftness.

Personality: She is cursed to serve the whim of the current monarch and has no wants of her own.

Motivation: She will protect and serve the monarch at all costs.

Background: Over a century ago, the young, power hungry enchantress sought the title of court magician, intending to ensorcel the monarch and thus rule the kingdom. She charmed her way into an apprenticeship with the sitting court magician with a façade of selfless service. When she felt the time was right, Mortissa stabbed the magician with a cursed dagger, and began a ritual to enchant the king and bind her soul to the throne forever. Her master's final act was to sacrifice himself to bind her soul not in power, but in service. Ever since, she has been cursed to use her considerable magical talents as the eternal servant and guardian of the rightful monarch, even as her body wastes away. She is now in a grotesque state, though the curse is still in effect. An unknown (but suspected) aspect of her curse applies when there is no rightful monarch; she then serves and guards whoever was last seated upon the throne.

Traits: *(KS) Ancient, hideous, magical, occult*

Bree Willowpatch 221

Fearful Witch

"I can't get involved. If the Hierophant knew, he'd burn my whole family."

Appearance: Bree is waif-like in appearance and looks a few years younger than her actual age (she's just turned twenty). She has hidden pockets sewn into her peasant dress that contain the ingredients she needs for magic.

Roleplaying: She is suspicious of outsiders and tries to ascertain whether they are church agents. She never entirely trusts anyone unless they can perform magic, too.

Personality: When allowed to be herself, Bree is full of wonder and dreams of a better life. Unfortunately, church policy against sorcery makes her afraid of herself; it consumes her with fear that she might put everyone in jeopardy.

Motivation: She wants to help others, but she's afraid to get involved in affairs that don't concern her village.

Background: Bree was born with a natural gift for magic. Unfortunately, the church considers such children "born with sin" and expects them to be sent to the Hall of Righteousness for training. Her parents hid her gift so that she could remain with them. As Bree grew older, her mother revealed that she was also a "witch" and trained Bree both how to use her powers and how to hide them. With the village's remote location, the villagers can't get ready assistance from church sorcerers. Without local witchcraft, life would be much harder for them.

Traits: *(WC) Magical, medic, mysterious, stealthy*

Raish Blackspine 222

Ruthless Druid

"I've killed harder men than you. Step aside."

Appearance: Though only 30 years old, Raish looks like a man of 70. He has straggly gray hair and sunken eyes that blaze with anger. His gaunt frame is covered in whip scars and war wounds, and he hobbles like an old man.

Roleplaying: Raish's voice is almost a growl, and he always sees the worst in people. Around those who've suffered as he has, he becomes remarkably tender.

Personality: Raish is ruthless, single-minded, and largely amoral. He feels great remorse for whatever sins he committed during his "lost years," but also believes the best way to atone is to kill slavers, strike at nobles who abuse their vassals, and hunt down anyone who uses mind control on human beings.

Motivation: Revenge is Raish's lifeblood. It will take more than a lifetime to make up for his dark years as a slave, but he means to try.

Background: The last of the Blackspine druid sect, Raish spent 15 hard years as a mind-controlled slave, and he has no memory of what he did during that time—though periodic, haunting dreams have made it clear that he committed atrocities in the name of his masters. Now free, though ravaged, he crusades against those who would oppress their fellow men. The rest of the Blackspines were wiped out while he was a slave, and he dreams of rebuilding the sect.

Traits: *(MR) Aggressive, magical, outdoorsman, primal, zealot*



Raish Blackspine

Artist: Matt Morrow

Brianne Martine 223

Incomprehensible Carpenter

"If it doesn't make you think, it's not worth building."

Appearance: Brianne is getting on in years. She walks with a stoop and her white hair is thinning. Her clothes and hair are constantly covered in a thin layer of sawdust; her pockets contain a myriad of badly stained handkerchiefs, and she smells of wood and chemicals.

Roleplaying: Despite her age, Brianne's voice is steady and her eyes are clear. She's pleasant and playful, and enjoys treating young people like her own children.

Personality: Brianne is clever and likes to outsmart people, especially those who are full of themselves.

Motivation: Though already acknowledged as a master, Brianne is never satisfied with her carpentry skills and seeks to learn new techniques and work with new materials.

Background: Brianne has been a master craftsman building ornate furniture for the rich and powerful for decades. In that time she's trained dozens of apprentices, spawned her own school of style, and created central pieces for almost every family who could afford her work. Her true love is hiding subtle messages, symbols, and secrets in her works. She has inserted clever commentary, secret panels, and hidden puzzles into dozens, if not hundreds of pieces. Rumor has it that a trickster god was so impressed with Brianne's work he bestowed upon her a divine secret that now lies hidden in a complex web of puzzles within puzzles, scattered across the limits of the known world.

Traits: *(MN) Crafter, religious, wealthy*

Brother Angul Tordok 224

Corrupt Priest

"The gods do favor your daughter. Perhaps if she spent a night in church…to pray, of course…you might find a few coins returning with her in the morning?"

Appearance: Angul is a short man who's constantly sweating and out of breath. He wears the vestments of a local priest and carries a short sword for protection. He has a holy symbol painted on his forehead.

Roleplaying: He's always out of breath from constantly moving around the rough terrain of the remote town, using his position to obtain free meals, free wine, and free services. He is also willing to bargain for what he wants, and he's used his position to absolve sins for ever-increasing fees.

Personality: Angul revels in his position and uses it to satisfy his many vices. When he first meets someone, he assesses their potential worth to him and treats them accordingly.

Motivation: He cares only for his own comforts.

Background: Angul entered the priesthood because he saw an opportunity for a carefree lifestyle. Once he graduated, he was assigned to a parish that had to feed and clothe him in return for acting as a pastor. Angul does not take his duties very seriously and looks for ways to streamline ceremonies so he can dispense with them more quickly. He is always angling to make his own life more comfortable and is loath to involve himself in anything that could threaten his current situation.

Traits: *(WC) Notorious, religious*

Darl the Beast 225

Feral Gladiator

"After this many years, most think that I fight for the adoration of the crowds. They are wrong. I fight for spirits of the animals, and that is why I have survived."

Appearance: Darl is of average height with rippling muscles, and is covered in thick black hair. His long hair is gathered into five thick braids. His face is scarred, and his left eye is only a blackened socket.

Roleplaying: Darl has no manners. He snorts and growls, and he will flash with anger at the slightest insult.

Personality: He is the alpha male. He never passes a chance to make that fact clear or to defend his position from those who wish to usurp it.

Motivation: Darl's motivation is to maintain his alpha male position and to honor the nature spirits. His sense of worth derives from these things.

Background: Sold into slavery as a child, Darl was raised in captivity. In his adolescence, his captors trained him for gladiatorial combat. Darl's earliest combats were not glorious; his second fight cost him his left eye. Despite his many wounds, he did not die, and he continued to fight. He credits is long life and his success in combat to the spirits of the animals, which he venerates before each fight; after each victory, he presents them with a part of his kills. Today, Darl has no interest in being free; he lives now to fight.

Traits: *(PV) Hideous, famous, occult, outdoorsman, primal*

Griffon Undertoe 226

Passionate Diviner

"Look closely at this detail work. See? Representative of the second generation, I've no doubt! You've quite the find, my friend!"

Appearance: Griffon is a smallish, stocky man with short, curling black hair and large, dopy eyes. He dresses in a simple white cotton shirt and with a black, leather waistcoat and breeches.

Roleplaying: Griffon is an accomplished liar, but his largest tell is when he inadvertently scratches or rubs his nose. He has a fake accent and discusses items using broad generalities.

Personality: He has a knack for identifying antiquities and an equal knack of falsifying them to make quick coin. Griffon does have a weak spot for those who are down on their luck, and has been known to show generosity or help right a wrong. He has a heart of gold (that he'd sell, if he could) but he'll never admit it.

Motivation: Like a moth to the flame, he's helpless against the draw of an antique or a mysterious object. Their secrets must be discovered.

Background: A semi-skilled artisan by trade, Griffon soon found that he had an innate ability to identify valuable antiques. Unfortunately, his poor financial decisions rarely allowed him much to show for this talent. He's often on the wrong side of the law, perhaps in an antique scam, or falsifying the providence of a 300-year-old vase he just helped craft, to swindling a bullying noble who stole a similar antique from a gentry's death estate.

Traits: *(DM) Crafter, criminal*

Albertus Fergessen 227

Absent-Minded Naturalist

"I must say, I have never seen an immature specimen like this in the field. The colors are so vibrant! I can easily approach it, you see, because they are docile when young. Which is why the adults are so extremely protective."

Appearance: A slim, sloppily dressed older man wearing spectacles, he is usually reading, writing, or simply staring off into space.

Roleplaying: Prone to prattling on, he can be easily distracted by anything he finds fascinating, often to the point of forgetting about more important things.

Personality: Albertus has a childlike fascination for the natural world, and studies it endlessly, sometimes forgetting about food, sleep, or other things in the process.

Motivation: He wants to learn as much about the natural world as possible.

Background: City born and bred, Albertus was a poor and bookish child with a fascination for learning how various animals lived in the city. Spending hours watching animals may not be good for one's social life, but when Albertus used his considerable knowledge of the structure of rat colonies to rid a bakery of its infestation, it won him a wealthy widow's patronage. Albertus solved a few more vermin issues before his patron passed away, leaving him a tidy sum. Using his newfound wealth to hire adventuring parties as guides, he's studied many more creatures in their natural habitat, although his insistence that they not be harmed has frustrated and endangered more than a few of his guides.

Traits: *(KS) Academic, eccentric, genius, scientist*

Orson Sanders 228

Wise Falconer

"A hawk knows when to soar, to circle, to swoop down, and to be still on a perch. Folk would do well to heed that example: Take the proper action at the proper time."

Appearance: Orson is older but still vigorous. He wears an eye patch over his left eye covering an injury that predates his service. Some say his gaze from the right eye is like that of the hawks he tends—capable of peering into a man's very soul.

Roleplaying: He nearly always frames his advice in terms of stewardship, using phrases related to birds or the natural world.

Personality: He is usually willing to impart wisdom to those who befriend him. Like any good counselor, Orson is perceptive, attentive, understanding, and capable of giving advice—even the harshest sort—so that it is well received.

Motivation: He loves birds. He loves the outdoors. It's his nature to be helpful.

Background: Orson is custodian of the monastery's aviary, charged with taking care of messenger birds. He also is a falconer. Years ago, when the temple was looking for a caretaker, he stepped forward to accept the position, even though he is of another faith. Years of dedication to the aviary have earned for him the respect and admiration of everyone who lives and works there. Even the high priest goes to him for advice.

Traits: *(TT) Counselor, religious*

Erland Nimz 229

Power-Mad Wizard

"I just love dusty, dank dungeons. If it were not for the fact that the Tome of Shalzar was rumored to be here, I would be content researching in my tower."

Appearance: Erland is a man of average height, with shoulder-length brown hair and a closely trimmed beard. He wears an open gray robe over natural-toned trousers, a tunic, and knee-high boots. He wears a hat and carries a glass orb in his right hand.

Roleplaying: Erland prefers to cast big, impressive spells or spells that empower his companions; he detests melee combat. When he casts a spell he will be animated, cheering as his enemies fall, or as his enchanted comrade slays a foe.

Personality: Lively and opinionated, he enjoys sarcasm and often annoys his companions with his commentary. He has no tolerance for anything mysterious or cryptic.

Motivation: Erland craves arcane power in all forms. When he is not adventuring for artifacts, he researches new spells.

Background: The son of a sage, Erland started his arcane career in his teens, showing great proficiency. Early in his career, he joined an adventuring group and made his initial fortune on several dangerous expeditions, including one that involved the thwarting of a demigod. Today, he continues his research, adventuring now in search of specific artifacts for a project he is trying to complete. No one knows exactly what the project is, but many suspect he is pursuing his own path to becoming a demigod.

Traits: *(PV) Adventurer, magical, power hungry*

Orlando Trimeste 230

Cowardly Impostor

"You dare raise your blade to me? Are you aware of whom you are challenging?"

Appearance: Orlando is a dashing young man in excellent shape. He wears his dirty blond hair shoulder-length and has an impeccable sense of dress.

Roleplaying: He is quite charming, especially to ladies he fancies. He doesn't like to display his prowess with a blade, as "that would be bragging." He does everything possible not to fight, as "it wouldn't be gentlemanly to put you down like a rabid dog."

Personality: Orlando is a lothario and a coward. Both his bravado and combat skills are acts. He constantly lives in fear that he'll be found out and has several escape plans ready should he need them.

Motivation: He enjoys using seduction and his reputation to gain benefits for himself. If found out, his only motivation is survival.

Background: Orlando is a minor noble's son and a lover of women. Unfortunately, one of his lovers was married to the greatest swordsman in the realm. When he caught Orlando in bed with his wife, he intended to run him through. Instead, the wife slew her husband. She told Orlando that it would be their secret and created a story about Orlando besting her husband in a duel. Now, Orlando has a reputation for being the greatest swordsman in the realm; it's a reputation he didn't earn, but it has provided food, women, and a roof wherever he goes.

Traits: *(WC) Beautiful, charming, famous*



Nessie Angelthorn

Artist: Matt Morrow

Nessie Angelthorn 231

Chipper Innkeeper

"Ye'll taste many a fine stew in your journey, Birgid bless, but this is the finest ye'll eat tonight."

Appearance: Nessie wears a dress embroidered with hearth fire, matched by a shock of blond hair radiating from her head like the sun's rays. She's pleasantly plump, wears a broad smile, and often invokes the goddess with a quiet gesture.

Roleplaying: A renowned hostess, Nessie always has food on hand. She is quietly faithful to her goddess, often gesturing or whispering thanks for the small blessings in life.

Personality: Today is good, with even better tomorrows coming. Nessie runs her household firmly, but with obvious love.

Motivation: Nessie is devoted to her family and will do almost anything for them. She's confident that today's effort will be paid back many fold.

Background: Nessie runs the inn while her husband serves as reeve. Her family is large and growing; seven youngsters, from 10 years old down to a newborn, keep her hopping, as do patrons. She's often tired, but thankful for the good fortune she's had in such heaping measure. She is the lay leader devoted to the goddess of increase, and begins her day in the fields with other devotees.

Traits: *(SM) Counselor, entertainment, religious, saintly*

Jack Rawlins 232

Scornful Lawyer

"What you said makes sense, but can you unpack that a bit, m'lord?"

Appearance: Clean-shaven, neat, and well-groomed, Jack dresses in the finest robes and wears a powdered wig. There's always a question in his eyes.

Roleplaying: Jack has a piercing stare and often murmurs a probing "Hmmmm" when interrogating people.

Personality: Stern and inquisitive, Jack is perpetually unbelieving.

Motivation: Jack has a compulsion to uncover the truth in any situation.

Background: Few are better at determining guilt than Jack Rawlins. Possessing an incredible ability to root out a person's guiltiest thoughts through keen perception and an understanding of the human psyche, Jack is a fierce lawyer in his country's courts. When he places himself against the corrupt lords and merchants of his land (for the peasants are rarely given trial), he seeks to understand why they would perform these heinous deeds and to ensure they are not free to commit them again. Jack insists on meeting with every defendant before being assigned to a case by the country's magistrates. If he can sense no guilt in them, which rarely happens, he will refuse the case and offer his services to the defendant free of charge. In these instances, he turns his scorn on the witnesses and fellow prosecutors, rooting out their guilt through piercing glares, razor-sharp questions, and deft jabs. By the time he is finished, whether prosecuting or defending, few truths are left untold.

Traits: *(JA) Counselor, political, scholar*

Welnae Barrow 233

Tough City Guard

"I see the problem here—you must have mistaken me for someone who can't cut you in half and use the pieces to beat your friends to death."

Appearance: Short, broad-shouldered, and attractive, Welnae is used to people not taking her seriously as a city guard until her sword comes out. She smiles rarely, except when among friends.

Roleplaying: Welnae has a chip on her shoulder, and it gets larger with every passing day. She brooks no fools, takes her job seriously, and doesn't know the meaning of the word "outnumbered."

Personality: Welnae makes it a point to start a bar brawl once a week—twice if she's had a bad week. She rarely loses, never pays for drinks, and will gladly punch first and ask questions later. She's wound pretty tight, and it shows.

Motivation: Accustomed to being told she can't do "men's work," Welnae approaches every situation as a chance to prove that she can, and better than anyone else—man or woman.

Background: Orphaned at a young age, Welnae grew up on the streets. She saw crime and blight every day, and vowed to do something about it when she was old enough. As a city guard, she patrols the toughest neighborhoods, stares down criminals twice her size, and knows everyone's business. Cross her, and you'll pay the price; respect her, and you might just earn a friend. She's tough as nails and twice as sharp.

Traits: *(MR) Aggressive, police, warrior*

Bradley Logan 234

Greedy Chosen One

"I would love to bless your business, but we only have a limited supply of holy candles, and they are quite expensive... "

Appearance: Bradley is a fat-cheeked boy with a long ponytail and a winning smile. He wears fine robes that contrast with his comfortable walking shoes and staff. His parents, a small team of monastic tutors, and a train of hangers-on follow him on his travels.

Roleplaying: Thanks to his tutors, Bradley is able to converse intelligently on a wide variety of topics. He has perfected the calm, quiet attitude of a monk.

Personality: Though overly obsessed with money, Bradley is an otherwise normal young boy.

Motivation: Because of his family's poverty, few things are more important to Bradley than the money to take care of his parents.

Background: Bradley's family were poor farmers on the verge of starvation when he was visited by a group of monks claiming that he was a chosen one destined to do great things. They offered him an excellent education at their monastery. Though his parents agreed, Bradley refused to cooperate, demanding the monks teach him during a pilgrimage across the country. Along the way, he has taken any opportunity to earn money from his newfound fame. Although he has more than enough money to see to his family's needs at this point, there is always more that he wants to give them.

Traits: *(MN) Charming, child, famous, merchant, religious, wealthy*

Paulette Strummings 235

Secretive Librarian

"I'll be with you in a bit. I've, uh, got this little thing to take care of here in the stacks first."

Appearance: She is a young woman with an athletic build, evident even in a monk's robes. She is fair-skinned and wears her hair pulled back neatly in a pony tail. Her concealed tattoo, a pinwheel of barbed vines resting between her shoulder blades, identifies her as a member of a secret society of treasure hunters.

Roleplaying: She is an inattentive librarian preoccupied with combing the stacks for her own personal research project.

Personality: Paulette is outgoing and tenacious, and seems out of place amid the dusty old stacks of a monastery library. She often comes up with elaborate excuses to cover the fact that she is not at all versed in the tradition of the religious order of monks she serves.

Motivation: Her current goal is to infiltrate the library, conduct research, and leave at the earliest opportunity.

Background: She is a member of a secret society of treasure hunters. She is well-traveled, despite still being a young adult. She infiltrated the library by presenting herself as an adherent of the monastery's faith. Her knowledge of ancient languages makes her an insightful researcher. She keeps her desk stacked with obscure scrolls from the repository—not materials usually requested by library patrons.

Traits: *(TT) Academic, adventurer, scholar*

Jared Harmon 236

Gutless Guardsman

"Sounds like trouble! You keep an eye on the situation. I'll go for reinforcements."

Appearance: Jared is compact and heavily muscled. Tattoos sleeve his arms, and he carries a large sword with an extra-long hilt.

Roleplaying: Prone to boasting, Jared greatly exaggerates his abilities, posturing and preening to give others a false sense of his importance.

Personality: Jared is secretly afraid of having to perform in dangerous situations. He invents a multitude of excuses to avoid his responsibilities.

Motivation: Pushing for a promotion to a desk job, Jared hopes to avoid the most dangerous aspects of his profession.

Background: Jared became a guard to satisfy family tradition, not because he has a passion for the work or a desire to help others. He spends most of his time avoiding confrontation and looking the other way whenever a situation might turn dangerous. Plenty of criminals are aware of Jared's timorous nature and seek out his patrol routes to commit their crimes. They know he won't have the guts to stop them. Unbeknownst to Jared, other guards and supervisors have noted his incompetence and they have begun campaigning for his removal. So far, his father has used his position to protected Jared, unwilling to believe his son lacks the ability to do his job.

Traits: *(MN) Humorous, police, warrior*

Pickett 237

Amoral Fence

"Yeah, I can sells dat. Don't care where y'got it; wotcher need? Gots a nice dagger here, see th' filigree?"

Appearance: Utterly forgettable, he's of average height, build, and appearance; his only recognizable feature is his voice.

Roleplaying: With staccato delivery and a strong accent, he will bargain for anything.

Personality: Pushy and aggressive when it benefits him, he also knows when to back off and change the subject.

Motivation: He's greedy for anything that can be converted to money, but isn't above taking favors, especially if they can be traded to someone else.

Background: A true child of the city, "Pickett" grew up in many orphanages. He quickly learned not to pick sides in a conflict, but to diplomatically stay available for everyone. After all, nearly everyone eventually needs to unload or acquire something quickly and quietly, right? Upon coming of age, he left the orphanage, picked a name to represent his occupation, and started playing in the big leagues. Over the decades, Pickett's amoral approach has let him work his way into comfortable relationships with many underworld organizations, and he has quite a reputation. He's traded in nearly everything, from legitimate goods to child slaves. He does not trust anyone else, but runs his own trades, relying on an innate ability to remain unnoticed in a crowd. Although he's lost his fortune many times, Pickett himself has never been convicted or punished for his crimes.

Traits: *(KS) Abhorrent, criminal, merchant, notorious, stealthy*

Arlem Tros 238

Scandal-Plagued Singer

"Harlot? Deviant? I have been called all of those things and worse, and they have been justified. But my music comes from passion, and tonight you are my passion."

Appearance: Arlem is of average height, with a small bust, rounded hips, and long, curly black hair. Her brown eyes are piercing, and her attractiveness transcends the physical with an aura that projects beauty.

Roleplaying: She is drawn to any attractive men in a room. She will flirt regardless of who is around and, if rebuked, will move to the next man with no malice.

Personality: Arlem is an amazing singer and composer, known for several famous songs. Her inspiration is a string of male lovers, an indulgence she needs in order to feel alive enough to compose or perform.

Motivation: It is hard to say which rules Arlem more: her passion for music or her passion for men. At this point, she has twisted them into a chimera that now rules her life.

Background: Arlem has always been fond of boys, driving her father sick with worry as she shamelessly chased every boy in town. She had always been a good singer, but after her first lover bedded her, it ignited in her a passion that she funneled into her singing talent. Soon, she moved to the city and began composing her own music. In the course of her career, she has had several disastrous affairs and has made enemies of many wives.

Traits: *(PV) Artist, beautiful, entertainment, notorious*

Friar Julius Norman 239

Cursed Friar

"Please don't get too close. I think I might have a bit of a cold."

Appearance: Friar Norman's skin is translucent and his hair is mostly gone. He's simultaneously bloated and skeletal, and he has weeping lesions on his neck.

Roleplaying: When Julius talks to people, he stays at arm's length. His voice is thick and phlegmy. Speaking usually prompts a wracking fit of coughing that's often followed by a bout of dizziness.

Personality: Erudite and compassionate, Friar Norman helps others to the best of his abilities.

Motivation: Julius wants to share his knowledge with his flock as long as he is able.

Background: For decades, Friar Norman has been the leader of his religious community. A few years ago, he became very ill; a devil visited him, promising immortality if only Norman would betray the trust of his followers and lead them into folly. In a moment of weakness, Julius agreed. He immediately regretted the agreement and never honored his end of the bargain. Cursed with a slow, painful demise, Friar Norman does his best to make the rest of his life count. Each day, the devil returns and offers to remove Julius' disease if only he'll honor the original deal. He worries that one day he will lack to strength to resist or that someone else will find out about these visits.

Traits: *(MN) Counselor, hideous, leader, religious, saintly*

Cosetta Levony 240

Adventurous Prostitute

"Oh, don't leave—come play, my lord."

Appearance: Young and comely, with long red hair, Cosetta is attractive in all the right ways and a few of the wrong ones.

Roleplaying: Cosetta has her come-hither look down pat. She purses her lips and moves her shoulders seductively.

Personality: Bright and bubbly, coy and shy, she molds to her clients' wants.

Motivation: She wants to protect her siblings from the life she was forced into, but is beginning to enjoy her work.

Background: Cosetta works at the Shaded Lamp under the protective eye of Madame Bouvier. Her mother died young and her father was left to raise his three children alone. Working himself into illness, he soon passed. Cosetta, the oldest of the three, was forced into prostitution when the house was taken over. Cosetta made the decision to embrace the lifestyle she was forced into, in order to prevent her siblings from having to make that choice. She is often requested at the Shaded Lamp, and entertains the landlord with his "special requirements" whenever he puts pressure on the brothel. Lately, Cosetta has found herself slipping into the role she donned more and more often. Though at first she saw it as a necessity, she feels comfortable only when the stakes are raised and there is some pain on the table. Cosetta's main reasons for embracing her choice have always been providing for her brother and sister, but this might be changing.

Traits: *(JA) Beautiful, charming, entertainment*

Diedre Cindall 241

Shadow Mage

"You cannot comprehend the power that I wield, nor the responsibility that I bear."

Appearance: Tall and muscular, she wears dark clothing and carries a longsword at her side. Underneath her hood are the sharply contrasted features of her alabaster skin and short locks of black hair. A raven perches on her cloaked shoulder.

Roleplaying: Diedre is brooding to the extreme, speaking softly and saying no more than absolutely necessary. She will speak down to others, underscoring her superior intellect and skills. She exudes strength.

Personality: Confidence flows through her and her decisions are based on logic. She commands the magical arts but just as readily can use the sword. She keeps a great many secrets. Diedre does not open herself to others, save a select few that she protects to the death.

Motivation: Diedre seeks the accumulation of power for her own ends, and to feel a measure of safety. Her goals are mostly benign, except when she is crossed by those that seek to deprive her of power.

Background: Raped and left for dead, her family slaughtered, Diedre took up the magical arts in part to protect herself. This led to an adventurer's life, where she has been thrust into the spotlight. A wielder of corrupting shadow magic, Diedre struggles to reign in her darker shadow-self, which whispers to her. At one point she took on an apprentice and erstwhile lover. She abhors vampires and seeks their destruction at any cost.

Traits: *(DM) Adventurer, genius, power hungry, magical*

The Most Reverend Vargas Inteccion 242

Ambitious Priest

"Do your duty to the gods, and you will be rewarded."

Appearance: Reverend Vargas is almost always the tallest person in the room. His most distinguishing feature is a hawkish nose.

Roleplaying: He rarely smiles, but his eyes convey sincerity. When deep in thought, he presses hands to his lips and nose, clasped as in prayer.

Personality: Vargas is even tempered, so much so that some remark that he lacks the righteous zeal befitting a priest. Generally, he is patient and kind. When he makes a suggestion or advocates a position, it is always after giving the matter due consideration. Never acting in haste, he allows events to unfold, and acts when the opportunity is of the greatest benefit to him or the temple. He believes that, ultimately, he knows what's best to advance the temple's message and standing in the world, though he never openly criticizes the decisions or positions of the high priests.

Motivation: Vargas wishes to navigate the politics of the temple and, eventually, attain a leading position within the church hierarchy.

Background: As a child who was brought to the temple to worship, he always believed in its tenets: indulge not in violence and serve the good of your fellow man. Noticing his natural generosity, pacifism, and leadership potential, his instructors encouraged young Vargas to pursue his priestly vocation.

Traits: *(TT) Power hungry, religious*

Madame Selena Bouvier 243

Brothel Owner

"Come in my darlings, there is always room under my red lights."

Appearance: Madame Selena is plump, curvy, and attractive despite her age, with dark curly hair.

Roleplaying: Madame Selena stretches her syllables and laughs both deeply and coyly.

Personality: Very expressive in action, she was once an incredible beauty, but age is beginning to tame her–not that she'll admit it.

Motivation: Keeping her girls safe and paying off the corrupt landlord are her only concerns.

Background: Madame Bouvier is the owner of the Shaded Lamp, one of the most popular brothels in the city. While not particularly upscale, as prostitution is not looked upon kindly, the Lamp is very clean and pleasant for its visitors. The Lamp is exclusive, for the part of town it is in; those who have caused trouble or who refuse to shower are turned away by the two large bouncers. Madame Bouvier greets every guest and gives the impression that she is more than willing to keep her hand in the game. Despite being popular amongst the wealthy and nobles, who covertly visit through secret entrances, the brothel is under pressure from its corrupt landlord. Madame Bouvier conceals these worries and always has a friendly smile and pat on the back for a new client. Though she is not a fighter, she keeps a dagger on her person at all times, a practice she has taught to every one of her girls.

Traits: *(JA) Aggressive, dilettante, entertainment, merchant*

Fiona the Dancer 244

Cunning Pickpocket

"You are putty in my hands; is that so bad? Just relax and enjoy the performance."

Appearance: Fiona is strikingly beautiful and wears dancing clothes and scarves that leave little to the imagination. She moves fluidly and dances even when she isn't dancing.

Roleplaying: She is always seductive and sultry, even when just exchanging greetings. She does her best to put those she meets at ease. She showers compliments on them and pretends to be interested in their stories.

Personality: Fiona is more than a dancer; she's also an enchantress and a thief. She is an artful schemer, using her abilities to get what she wants without anyone being the wiser.

Motivation: She simply wants to enrich herself and have fun doing it.

Background: Fiona was born on the streets, where she learned to dance to get money, and to pick pockets while doing it. While many such street performers eventually were caught, Fiona had the luck of picking the pocket of an enchantress. When the enchantress caught up to Fiona, she offered to teach her magic. Fiona now uses her magic to seduce her audience and numb their minds, making it easier for her to pick their pockets and leave before they realize what's happened. Oftentimes, Fiona ends up taking something important, only to sell it before the owner catches up with her.

Traits: *(WC) Beautiful, criminal, entertainment, magical*

Jai Purille 245

Spiritual Masochist

"Can't you feel it? The rush? It's the ultimate expression of being truly alive!"

Appearance: He is covered in multi-colored tattoos and bold patterns of scarring. Studs and rings decorate his nose, ears, tongue, eyebrows, and every other part of his body he could get a needle through. His worn hide jacket and loose breeches look simple by comparison. His bald head is also a pallet of expression, covered in ritual scars and pictograms.

Roleplaying: Jai has an intense expression and quick verbal manner. He cracks his knuckles and plucks at his piercings idly during conversation. He's a bit of a zealot and preaches when given the opportunity.

Personality: He's quite sane and friendly, but his appearance is intimidating. Jai is exceedingly eager to experience new things and dutifully catalogs his adventures, and vivid reactions, in a well-worn journal. He actively seeks out new sensations to endure.

Motivation: Jai is moved by the achievement of pleasure through pain, and by sharing his enlightening research with others. Any adventure is an opportunity to experience new sensations and catalog them.

Background: Briefly an adept while growing up, Jai turned away from the philosophical practice of religion and inward towards self-enlightenment. He is very much a masochist and engages in scarification and self-modification to achieve altered states of consciousness. During these periods of lucidity, Jai professes to have visions, the accuracy of which is open to interpretation.

Traits: *(DM) Hideous, scientist, zealot*

Tasinka Naranji 246

Self-Described Expert

"You shall see that even these savages instinctively know how to treat nobles such as ourselves."

Appearance: An elegant lady of high breeding and expensive fashion, Tasinka regards others with some amusement.

Roleplaying: Claiming extensive knowledge of just about any subject, she generously offers her advice and information to anyone listening.

Personality: She is firmly convinced that her insights are far greater than those of mere commoners. While she can be stubborn and condescending in her own way, she always maintains civility and decorum.

Motivation: She wants everyone to acknowledge that she is right all the time.

Background: The only child of doting but distracted nobles, Lady Naranji has led a life of luxury and learning. She speaks many languages, some long-extinct, and has an extensive library. While this may be the foundation of a well-read individual, much of her reading has been of fanciful and romantic books which reinforce her own prejudices. She is not a stupid person, nor necessarily ignorant, but much of her extensive knowledge is based on frighteningly inaccurate sources, which she has taken to be gospel truth. Her romantic readings have also convinced her that the heroes always win, and that all tales have a happy ending. She can be both an excellent resource and a source of much bad information.

Traits: *(KS) Dilettante, royalty, scholar, wealthy*

Vivian Desmont 247

Ruinous Alchemist

"The most powerful reactions are the least stable. We have to find a way to counteract the worst of the backlash."

Appearance: Vivian is a delicate and spindly woman with pale skin and luxurious black hair.

Roleplaying: Shy and more interested in matters alchemical than social, Vivian is quiet and introspective. Her clumsy blundering is usually not a problem, except in her lab where it can become a danger.

Personality: Vivian is brilliant and makes connections between facts quickly. She enjoys quiet and solitude, which help her think.

Motivation: Driven to unlock the secrets of alchemy, Vivian fulfills contracts for high-paying clients to afford her research.

Background: Vivian has studied the alchemical arts since she was a young apprentice, and, after years of research, she discovered a line of extracts that endowed the drinker with preternatural strength, stamina, or other extraordinary abilities. Unfortunately, their use rapidly burns out the body of the user; all but the most suicidal of warriors use her discovery sparingly. Recently widowed, Vivian has thrown herself into her work to distract from her grief. She is working under contract with a militaristic government to perfect new versions of her famous serums that produce stronger effects.

Traits: *(MN) Academic, crafter, genius, magical, merchant, military, scholar, scientist*

Aribeth Redshire 248

Ambitious Merchant

"2,900 gold coins is a fair price. I know you would pay 3,100, but I would rather deal with you fairly and earn your trust."

Appearance: Aribeth dresses richly, but not ostentatiously, and carries a wooden case containing bills of sale and other paperwork. She has a sharp nose and a small chin.

Roleplaying: She speaks in terms of facts and figures, and considers all sides of a situation before acting. She's polite and respectful to a fault.

Personality: Cool, calculating, and practical, Aribeth has a head for figures. Schooled from childhood in every aspect of her business, she's an experienced trader with an eye for recognizing both good bargains and deals that are too good to be true. She treats everyone fairly and kindly, until given cause to do otherwise, and will never cheat someone out of their money.

Motivation: She wants to make the Redshire Trading Coster the greatest merchant house in the entire world—without sacrificing the family's reputation or her own morals in the process.

Background: Aribeth recently became the head of the Redshire Trading Coster, a wealthy merchant house known for fair dealing, well-guarded caravans and ships, and throwing lavish parties for the nobility. Whereas her father, the previous head of the coster, was as ruthless—and as compassionate—as a rattlesnake, Aribeth is a both fair and kind. Her younger brother, Rosibar, wants her seat as the head of the coster, and might kill to get it.

Traits: *(MR) Business, leader, merchant, wealthy, white collar*

Madam Autumn Sylvania 249

Unreasonable Meddler

"I bought 17 cows to milk and to make cheese from. The cows are dry, you say? Sell them to be butchered. The cows are too underfed for butchering? Sell them to the local militia to use as targets for archery training. Do I need to solve all of the problems around here?"

Appearance: Though frail, wrinkled, blue-haired, and hunched over, she dresses in fine gowns and furs. She wears expensive jewelry and is accompanied by bodyguards.

Roleplaying: She feigns being absentminded and senile when it helps her, but she is actually quite sharp. Her downfall is that she ignores bothersome details instead of dealing with them.

Personality: She interferes in the business of others and won't listen to opinions that differ from her own.

Motivation: Madam Sylvania wants to be revered and respected. Unfortunately she is considered a bit of a joke due to her poor decisions and her failure to take responsibility for them.

Background: Autumn Sylvania was always a stubborn child who refused to listen to her parents and tutors. Fearing that the family business would be destroyed in Autumn's charge, her father found her a brilliant husband. Through hard work and smart investments, her parents and her husband grew the business and became very wealthy, but Autumn never bore children and when her parents and husband passed on, she took over the business at last. Now others hope that she will die before all the money is spent.

Traits: *(PB) Aggressive, business, dilettante, wealthy*

Drahin Amrou 250

Cross-Dressing Madam

"The next time you are too rough with one of my girls, I will twist this arm clean off. Now away with you, you caused me to rip my dress."

Appearance: Drahin has a strong build with no curves. She wears too much make-up. Her clothes are handmade and attempt to show off a figure that just isn't there.

Roleplaying: She's soft-spoken and overly pleasant. She calls every one "darlin'."

Personality: Drahin is really a man, but has long abandoned masculine dress and attitude and adopted the mannerisms of a woman. She becomes hostile to the point of violence with anyone who challenges her gender.

Motivation: Regardless of her gender decision, Drahin is very fixated on prosperity and the safety of her girls. They are the only family she has.

Background: Drahin grew up in a small town and eventually served in the kingdom's army. While a competent soldier, on the inside he felt that he was in the wrong body. After a raid on a village, he pillaged several women's dresses for himself. He deserted the military and sunk into the seedier side of the city. There he put his martial skills to use protecting several ladies of the night who took a liking to him. They eventually helped him to transform into a woman. In return, she became their madam, protecting and helping them.

Traits: *(PV) Criminal, focal, leader*

Gordy Tannerson 251

Brash Young Boy

"Why do we just let the knights take what they want?"

Appearance: A ten-year old boy with a bowl haircut, Gordy wears peasant clothes and carries a wooden sword as well as a real knife. He also wears a holy symbol around his neck.

Roleplaying: He says what he means and means what he says. He's bold and honest. He listens to his parents when admonished.

Personality: Like any child, Gordy sees problems in his world and wonders why, often aloud. He is quite bold for a young lad and has no problem questioning the sources of the problem, even when he risks being killed for it.

Motivation: He wants the bad things in his life to change for the better. He knows that he can't do it alone, so he tries to inspire the adult villagers to do it for him.

Background: The son of the village tanner, Gordy sees the burdens the local lord puts on the villagers and wonders why they accept it. After not receiving satisfactory responses, Gordy has gone to the sources of the problems. He's already questioned the tax collector, several knights, and even the lord himself. Fortunately, his young age has protected him from the consequences of his insolence. He has also learned a lot of information about these sources that could be useful to an adventuring party.

Traits: *(WC) Child, impoverished*

Allies

Allies aren't assumed to already be aligned with the PCs, but all of these NPCs are potential friends, supporters, patrons, and adventuring companions. That doesn't mean that they're all paladins in shiny gold armor who never use bad words, though—you'll find plenty of criminals, schemers, and other strange but fascinating bedfellows in this section. Whether their allegiance is temporary and circumstantial or long-lasting, your players will want to encounter these NPCs in your game.

Benny the Bard

252

Tactless Troubadour

"You're quite beautiful, even with that ugly mole on your forehead."

Appearance: He has finely chiseled features, a handsome face, and a winning smile. He dresses fashionably and is well aware of his charms.

Roleplaying: Benny is always the first to initiate a conversation, greeting people with a winning smile and initial complements. After an exchange or two, he always manages to blow it with a brutally honest assumption or observation. He delivers such lines in a matter-of-fact way.

Personality: He is friendly and outgoing, but, unfortunately, also brutally honest.

Motivation: He wants to find inspiration for his songs, as well as romance.

Background: Benny the Bard is a great musician and has many other talents helpful to his adventuring friends. Unfortunately, Benny's assets are always outweighed by his single liability: He can't help but blurt out brutally honest comments that invariably insult the person to whom he's speaking. Benny blames this on a curse, but no one that knows Benny can ever remember him not being that way. Oddly, Benny doesn't generally criticize his traveling companions. Occasionally, Benny's "curse" indirectly reveals useful information. For example, he once insulted an ambassador by commenting on his "duplicitous" eyes. As it turned out, the ambassador was involved in a plot to assassinate the local duke.

Traits: *(WC) Adventurer, charming, entertainment*

Tristan

253

Energetic Child

"So how many monsters do you think we'll get to kill today?!"

Appearance: Tristan is a young boy with a huge, warm smile. His dirt-covered clothing is a byproduct of his exuberance.

Roleplaying: Tristan always wants to help, but there are so many interesting thin—ooh, what's that?!

Personality: Like all children, he is highly distractible and full of energy. He is perpetually curious.

Motivation: Tristan wants to find adventure and fun, but rarely realizes the danger involved.

Background: The night that Tristan was born, there was something peculiar in the air around the campsite of the traveling theater group. A passing faery decided to fly into the window of one of the wagons and gift the newborn Tristan with the ability to understand the ancient and forgotten language of a once-powerful race. As Tristan grew, his strange babblings seemed little more than childish play and no one realized their significance, save the few academics who briefly wondered why the young boy's songs sounded oddly familiar. Tristan is a quintessential "chosen one," but he hasn't realized or grown into his role yet. Fate decreed he be important to the world in some fashion, and that has caused the PCs to run across or be lead to him. While they need his help, his age is problematic and his curiosity is hard to handle. However, he is lovable and engenders feelings of protection in those around him. Perhaps another of the faery's gifts?

Traits: *(JA) Child, entertainment, focal, magical*

Rodett • Rodus • Roland • Rondal • Rosalyn • Rose • Russell

Xeet, the Bearer of Pain 254

Intimidating Warrior

"I have faced death on many occasions. I have yet to succumb to it. This time will be no different."

Appearance: Heavily scarred on every inch of his massive frame, Xeet's skin is like a patchwork quilt of wounds that have been stitched back together.

Roleplaying: He constantly rubs his hand across the back of his neck, as it has never healed properly from an attempt to decapitate him.

Personality: Xeet is quiet and appears to be annoyed by everything. In truth, he is in constant agony from the years of battle that he has faced. He wants nothing more than to retire from this life, but he knows no other trade.

Motivation: He enters battles in order to end them as quickly and as humanely as possible. If that means charging past the front line in order to cleave a field commander in half, so be it.

Background: Xeet left his family's farm at an early age to find adventure. He was quickly recruited into the local army due to his physical prowess and imposing stature. His exceptional skill on the battlefield has kept him alive through years of war and horror. Now a middle-aged man, he is no longer fit for regular service, but he is still hired for mercenary work. He privately weeps for anyone who falls in battle, both friend and foe.

Traits: *(PB) Adventurer, hideous, military, warrior*

Mrs. Arabella Devonshire 255

Quaint Shopkeeper

"You have excellent taste. May I show you something? It will be the perfect accent to that ensemble."

Appearance: A middle-aged woman, she balances dainty spectacles on the end of her nose. She dresses in a buttoned up, high-neck blouse and a bustle with skirts draping to the floor that only show a dash of lace.

Roleplaying: Arabella is precise in her diction but often uses outdated, even formal, turns of phrase. Though she speaks in short sentences, her delivery is never flat nor clipped, but always respectful.

Personality: She prizes good manners in an old-fashioned way. Prim, but never prudish, Mrs. Devonshire insists on proper behavior, and instills it in all her customers by her own demeanor. Mindful of her proximity to the bawdy women, many of whom are her best customers, she mostly offers items that draw a clientele of a higher class. The decor of her shop is an extension of her personality: scented and dainty, but never overpowering.

Motivation: She sells perfumes and tasteful personal adornments from a small shop located just a stone's throw from the tawdry red-lantern district.

Background: There never was a Mr. Devonshire, though she cultivates her role as a widow, attributing a fictional inheritance as the means for opening the shop. In truth, she was a bawdy woman in another town and came here to start over. Though she's tried to distance herself from her past, she remains helpful to "the girls."

Traits: *(TT) Business, merchant*



Oreamnos Surefoot

Artist: Christopher Reach

Oreamnos Surefoot 256

Wandering Merchant

"Trade draws men closer, dispels their prejudices, and makes both sides richer in both purse and soul."

Appearance: It's difficult to say which is more notable, his expensive religious raiment, exceedingly proud demeanor, or elaborate goatee.

Roleplaying: He lectures with a near-condescending tone while stroking his goatee.

Personality: He's not evangelical, but is dedicated to his mission, and he becomes stubborn when he has a goal in sight.

Motivation: He is sworn to travel the world, explore unknown regions, and establish trade missions.

Background: Drawn to the god of trade at a very young age, Oreamnos was selected for the difficult and important Exploration Ministry. The Explorers forsake all goods except those they can carry, and travel the world to establish trade routes. Oreamnos has been in his position for decades, and has the best gear money can buy. Everything else he makes goes to the church, although he often requisitions equipment and transportation. His extensive travels and broad range of skills make him a knowledgeable resource and excellent traveling partner, but his lecturing tone can be wearing, and many have parted ways over his insistence on investigating every trade opportunity.

Traits: *(KS) Famous, merchant, outdoorsman, religious*

Sir Peneford DeAbuville 257

Ordained Guardian

"We see a great many dangers."

Appearance: Sir Peneford is sharp featured, with a balding head and a hook nose. He wears a fine doublet of green and gold, tight-fitting leather breeches, and a chaperon trimmed with fox fur. His billowy sleeves, he conceals leather vambraces and a pair of dueling daggers.

Roleplaying: Peneford loves to flaunt his knowledge—he is quick to correct and his speech is rapid and flowery. Always on the lookout for spies or people with hidden agendas, he will shamelessly ask probing questions of anyone. A bit of a snob, Peneford favors the royal "we."

Personality: He believes himself a keeper of knowledge and superior to others. It's what he can't share with the simpletons around him that truly bothers him.

Motivation: He's confident, but for good reason: He's well educated and financed. He seeks to preserve the Order at all costs.

Background: The Order of the Nine is a privileged secret society that steers governments and individuals according to their mostly benign agenda. Peneford's wealth and parentage assured his ascension into the order, and his penchant for maintaining loyalty at all costs won him the position of legate. As the legate for the Order of the Nine, he's tasked with preserving their time-honored rituals and ferreting out those who would oppose their plans. To this end, Peneford has been well trained in martial arts—which surprises many who cross steel with this academician.

Traits: *(DM) Occult, warrior, wealthy*

Marguerite Russo 258

Reformed Criminal

"I do miss <yawn> the excitement of the old days."

Appearance: She is a handsome, petite woman whose best days are just behind her. Her curly red hair has touches of gray.

Roleplaying: Having retired long ago, Marguerite is bored. She jumps at any chance to relive her glory days.

Personality: She is genuinely pleasant and enjoys her luxurious lifestyle, but misses her carefree days as a burglar.

Motivation: She wants to relive her past by doing "one more job." She is a reformed criminal and only takes jobs that aid the less fortunate or involve the return of stolen property.

Background: "Marguerite Russo" used to be Renee St. Cowan, a poor child brought up in a religious orphanage and given a saint's name as her surname. Unfortunately, war soon came and the king took money anywhere he could find it, including the coffers of the orphanage. Renee took to stealing to help, burglarizing noble mansions, and secretly giving her scores to the orphanage as anonymous donations. When the orphanage finally had to close its doors, the young Renee joined a thieves' guild and became an adventurer. Those were the best times of her life. After her last group disbanded, Renee was left with enough money to purchase a small barony. She changed her name and settled down. Still, she misses the old days, and it takes little to convince Marguerite to put her skills to use one more time.

Traits: *(WC) Criminal, dilettante, saintly, wealthy*

Bernhart the Beneficent 259

Impulsive Noble

"By strength of arms, let's put that to right!"

Appearance: Bernhart is a young, confidently strong man who always wears a puzzled expression. His brown hair is cut short, though his matching mustache is grand, and he tends to wear hunting leathers.

Roleplaying: He gestures with short, precise motions—even a dinner party is described like a battle. He frequently bows, and addresses women genteelly.

Personality: Bernhart is a lord and a man of action; hesitation is for quibblers. When the matter is personal, he offers immediate assistance. If it involves his duchy, he says that he'll have his advisors look into it.

Motivation: A generous lord and a true knight, a man of chivalry—that's how Bernhart hopes to be remembered. He knows that some take advantage, but that's a small price to be a good man. Hunting is clean and pure, a necessary revitalization after toiling on accounts.

Background: Bernhart was thrust into governance young, at the age of 11, after his father died in bed one night. He suspects that an assassin was responsible and would love to find proof. In the meantime, he protects his people and listens to his advisers, being the best ruler he can be. He knows his advisers have the experience he lacks even after governing for a decade—and he hates getting in conflicts with them.

Traits: *(SM) Focal, leader, outdoorsman, political, warrior*

Osusk Nar 260

Eccentric Alchemist

"Go ahead and collect the treasure. I'm going to remove these glands. I have a special potion in mind."

Appearance: Osusk is a short man whose simple clothes have small tears, rips, stains, and burns. His beard is thick and his hair wild. He carries a large knapsack filled with all manner of tools and containers.

Roleplaying: He is always thinking about the next great potion or discovery that he will make. He will sniff everything and taste most things, without knowing what they are. He examines everything from every angle.

Personality: Osusk has never fit in anywhere, but he doesn't care. Social cues don't register with him. Coupled with being direct and curious, Osusk is usually saying or doing something different from everyone else.

Motivation: Two factors drive the alchemist: a thirst for knowledge and a weakness for food, wine, and women. Both of these have left him without coin for most of his life. Only by selling what he learns and makes has he survived.

Background: Born in the wilderness, Osusk learned quickly that his mind was a better weapon than his brawn. He learned how to make things people wanted from items found in nature; he specializes in brewing potions. He learned that his items fetched a better price in the more civilized lands, so that's where he sells his wares. Despite doing his best not to act like a barbarian, he sometimes caves to temptation and blows all of his money on wine, women, and food.

Traits: *(PV) Eccentric, impoverished, primal, scientist*

Fran Limnsman 261

Irritable Chirurgeon

"What in the Hells do you mean by that? Cure your own damn gout!"

Appearance: Fran is dark skinned and dressed in an expensive, if shabby style. His collar and sleeves are constantly unbuttoned and his hair is a mess.

Roleplaying: Energetically talking with his hands, Fran paces endlessly. He takes offense quickly and for seemingly no reason, suddenly jumping from amiable chatter to clenched fists and shouting.

Personality: Fran genuinely wants to help his clients, but his thin skin and short temper often get in the way. After an outburst he is often genuinely remorseful, but the damage is already done.

Motivation: More than anything else, Fran just wants to live a normal quiet life, which is why he hates what his short fuse does to his relationships and his chirurgery and apothecary business.

Background: From a young age Fran's fiery disposition has caused him no end of trouble. Apprenticing under a string of masters and schools, he traveled extensively to find new places to study. In the process, he became an unusual source of local history and geography. Because his off-putting nature drives away respectable clients, Fran has been forced to cater to the undesirable element just to keep his business afloat, making him a useful underworld contact.

Traits: *(MN) Criminal, eccentric, impoverished, medic*

Johann von Diemar 262

Just Sheriff

"You say he stole your horse, but he says the horse bears his brand. Let's have a look in the stable, shall we?"

Appearance: Six feet, five inches and broad-shouldered, Johann has a large, hooked nose, a perpetually furrowed brow, and an easy smile. He walks with a slight limp.

Roleplaying: Johann pauses before he speaks, and then says as little as possible. When offered one side of a story, he always brings up the other side.

Personality: Johann's world is shades of gray—where morality is relative and no one is 100% right or wrong. He remembers the horrors of war keenly, and strives to avoid reliving them.

Motivation: Johann regards those he watches over as his children, and believes that everyone—no matter how unpleasant—deserves to be treated fairly. He believes deeply in the need for peace.

Background: When he returned home after fighting in the war, Johann temporarily stepped into the role of sheriff. Twenty years on, he's still there. Having killed dozens of men and been wounded himself, he has seen enough fighting to last a lifetime. He's a fair man entirely dedicated to preserving the peace, though if pressed, he'll draw his notched sword and back up his words with force. Greatly loved by the people in his region, he takes an immediate liking to anyone who shares his interest in rational, even-handed justice—including adventurers, provided they don't cause too much trouble.

Traits: *(MR) Leader, outdoorsman, police, warrior*

Nestor Lancaster 263

Refugee Healer

"I can heal your comrade, if you would see to take me with you."

Appearance: He is a frail-looking youth in ill-fitting clothes who glances around as if terrified of the world around him.

Roleplaying: Nestor is obviously well educated, with proper diction and manners, but acts nervous and scared.

Personality: The brutal murder of his family members has scarred Nestor with a lifelong fear of violence—or even the possibility of violence. Aside from that fear, he is exceedingly cerebral and driven to learn all he can of healing.

Motivation: He wishes only to survive and escape to somewhere safer, preferably with someone strong.

Background: A child prodigy in the healing arts, Nestor was the youngest of the ill-fated Lancaster noble clan. Betrayal by a supposed family ally led to the brutal slaughter of his entire clan. Nestor escaped the carnage but wound up living on the streets—a life the jittery, wounded boy was not at all suited for. Scarred deeply by the horrors of his past, Nestor doesn't know who he can trust, if anyone. He is not interested in politics or revenge, only escape from the violence that took his family. After reaching a safe haven, Nestor will almost certainly bury himself in study and practice of the healing arts.

Traits: *(KS) Child, medic, royalty*

Sara White 264

Simpleminded Healer

"Mend that break? Let me think... That takes plaster, two parts, and one of water..."

Appearance: Sara is a sparrow of a woman, wearing drab browns and grays, always spotted with blood or serum. She's short, brown-eyed, and always looking down—or three feet to your left.

Roleplaying: Sara never looks people in the face. She is constantly distracted and sometimes mutters lists of ingredients to herself, even during conversations.

Personality: She's simpleminded, but Sara always pushes herself to do her best. She always had a knack for healing, but study and lecture lose her immediately. Keeping track of everything is exhausting—there are all kinds of formulas to remember, mixtures of herbs to make poultices, and it's all really hard. She feels like a failure, even when she saves a life.

Motivation: Mending things drives Sara—and she's pretty good at it. She got a reputation as a healer when she was young, and feels hopelessly out of depth at everything else.

Background: Sara always wanted to help people, mend them, and heal them. She wasn't able to help her own mom, who died in the plague, and she's sure that it's because she wasn't smart enough to learn the right formulas. Memories of her mom haunt her and steal her focus all the time, especially when she's about to operate.

Traits: *(SM) Eccentric, medic, saintly*



Theria

Artist: Avery Liell-Kok

Theria 266

Vengeful Icon

"We live. We die. Choose."

Appearance: Matted black hair extends down the length of her body, obscuring features. She wears gossamer clothing that was once semi-transparent, now torn and discolored. Bits of dried earth and foliage adorn her darkly mottled skin. Her fingernails are grotesquely long and razor sharp.

Roleplaying: She stares with an impeccable—and disconcerting—calmness, never raising her raspy voice.

Personality: Theria's transformation has left her a cold woman bent on revenge. She does not engage in banter and is always focused on her current goal. She gives no quarter and is an emotionless killing machine. Only the cries of the suffering innocent give her pause.

Motivation: Raised by the primal spirits to avenge her horrific death, Theria seeks to dispatch justice to those who have been wronged. She has no respect for law or civilized justice. Her justice is that of a higher power.

Background: Slaughtered by barbarian warriors and left for dead, Theria crawled back home across the swampy moors, her wounds festering in the muddy waters. Legends say that her anguished howl at the sight of her dismembered family can still be heard across the moor on dark nights. Whether she truly lived or died that night is uncertain, but now the simple peasant girl has refined herself into a finely honed warrior who eviscerates her foes and leaves them to bloody, agonizing deaths. For those seeking penance or solace, she will end their existence swiftly.

Traits: *(DM) Mysterious, primal, warrior*

Elody Blackstout 265

Honorable Warrior

"I fear we are mismatched. I will set aside my ax and face you bare-handed to make this fight a fair one."

Appearance: Elody carries a long-handled bearded ax and wears studded leather armor dyed a deep red. Her blond hair hangs down well past her shoulders; she ties it back before fights.

Roleplaying: She refuses to do anything she considers dishonorable, but she's not preachy about it. She's neither prideful nor humble.

Personality: Elody views life as that thing that happens between battles; setting down her ax would be unthinkable. She enjoys the thrill of battle without losing respect for combat or her opponent, and is fierce but without malice for her foes. If she killed a brigand in the woods, she would give him a decent burial.

Motivation: Carrying the ax wielded by her mother, and her grandfather before that, Elody strives to live up to her family's legacy of honor, valor, and strength of arms.

Background: Born from a long line of fighters, she was raised to believe that war comes to all people, and that therefore all people should be ready for war. She values her honor more than her own life and would die for her friends in a heartbeat, without hesitation. Not a leader, she prefers to follow someone who has earned her respect; if she loses that respect, she moves on. She's fought in armies, in mercenary companies, and alongside adventurers, and takes pride in a battle well-fought.

Traits: *(MR) Military, saintly, warrior*

Hatar the Augur 267

Child Oracle

"It is good to see you again, my friend. Say nothing else; I already know why you are here. I saw it all in a vision."

Appearance: Hatar is nine years old, just over four feet tall, and plump. His hair is shaved except for three long braids, which originate behind his left ear. His head is tattooed with ornate lines.

Roleplaying: He has a deep stare that isn't threatening or intimidating. He holds his hands palm-to-palm in front of him while listening. He nods slowly when people talk, and when he speaks it's in a slow, soft voice.

Personality: Despite his age, he has wisdom beyond his years. He is rarely surprised, and gives off an aura of calm. He hasn't lost his childish charm, which puts people at ease.

Motivation: He was raised to serve his church as an oracle. He understands the role he plays and approaches it with great respect.

Background: Hatar's birth fulfilled a prophecy for his church. It foretold the coming of a great oracle who would lead his people into an age of prosperity. His church raised him from birth. At the age of five, Hatar had his first vision. Since then, his visions have increased in frequency. He has become able to control his abilities only recently. Visions of his early demise plague his mind, but he has not shared this news with anyone.

Traits: *(PV) Charming, child, occult*

Jasper Oscamedes 268

Remorseful Wizard

"There're just some magical powers that shouldn't be meddled with—ever!"

Appearance: He's in his middle years, still handsome and fit, with a professorial air. His clothes all come in muted tones, and might even be called stodgy.

Roleplaying: Jasper will do his best to answer nearly all inquiries about magic, but his advice always comes with a finger-waggling warning.

Personality: In nearly every aspect of his life, he's known for his restraint. Beneath this measured consideration lies a deep well of remorse. For Jasper, the arcane arts are mainly a theoretical pursuit—the ivory towers of academia, a sanctuary. Whenever he is outside the halls of learning, when he's forced to cope with real-life confrontations and decisions, he experiences discomfort, even panic. He clearly expresses disdain for any frivolous application of magic, and he demonstrates his own magical aptitude with great reluctance. In truth, he is afraid—paralyzed, even—of making a mistake while casting spells.

Motivation: He wants his students to develop a healthy respect for magic.

Background: Jasper was a gifted wizard. In many ways, he remains so. As a young man, he went on many great adventures and had a reputation for using his magic in a cavalier fashion. Then the careless use of magic caused irreparable harm to a companion. Even though the victim forgave him, the experience and guilt caused him to retreat into a scholarly shell.

Traits: *(TT) Academic, magical, scholar*

Ketah Nembahlek 269

Disturbed Seer

"I warn you people of the end times, and for what? Peasant's rags and beggar's scraps? Why do you seek me out and then refuse to listen? If you will not heed my messages, then at least leave me be!"

Appearance: She is filthy from personal neglect, and her matted hair makes her look much older than she truly is. Her clothing is a mismatched collection of frayed garments that others have discarded as trash.

Roleplaying: She breathes through her mouth and stares intensely at anyone who speaks to her as if she sees something beyond their physical presence. She scratches at her chin as if lost in thought, but is acutely aware of her surroundings.

Personality: Ketah despises most people, and feels no remorse in letting them know this. She respects the forces of nature and magic with fanatical loyalty, and will toil tirelessly to maintain sacred sites of power, despite not caring about her own appearance.

Motivation: She sees beyond the now and past the physical. She can't stop herself from serving the greater forces of the cosmos.

Background: Ketah was born into some wealth, and received an excellent education. Yet material comforts mean nothing to her, for she can hear the dead amongst the living and is shown the future through the movements of the stars. Such knowledge is a burden no person should bear, and it has cost Ketah everything.

Traits: *(PB) Counselor, impoverished, occult*

Sarjeva Romelain 270

Bumbling Summoner

"There are more guards than I expected, but don't worry—I'll just call up a few friends."

Appearance: Sarjeva's bright green eyes peer out from between three huge, livid scars that cover almost her entire face.

Roleplaying: Sarjeva insists, often to the point of madness, that she's a master summoner who can wrap demons around her pinky finger.

Personality: Most who meet Sarjeva would call her "plucky," but those who get to know her tend to regard her as more than a little frightening. She's intense, dramatic, and stubborn.

Motivation: Sarjeva wants to prove she can succeed at anything, and will jump at the chance to show off her skills in the face of danger—no matter how foolish the endeavor.

Background: Bullied for years as a young girl, Sarjeva turned to magic to seek revenge. She plunged in way out of her depth, however, calling up a powerful demon that ate her master; she fled with his spell book. She knows just enough summoning magic to be dangerous—and, usually, more dangerous to her enemies than to her friends. More than anything, she needs friends who will accept her faults and a teacher who will sharpen her grasp of the summoner's art. PCs who can provide either will earn her undying friendship.

Traits: *(MR) Adventurer, aggressive, humorous, magical*

Norman Apswitch 271

Oddball Bounty Hunter

"'Tweren't nothin'. He needed brought in, an' I did it. That's all."

Appearance: Norman wears standard-issue light guard's armor festooned with fetishes and trophies from his hunts. His wild mane is loosely braided and intertwined with herbs and feathers. He bears numerous tattoos of shamanistic wards.

Roleplaying: Many people feel nervous under Norman's trademark wordless stare, but when he does talk he's always polite and complimentary, though his language skills are rusty from long stretches without human company.

Personality: Norman uses his skills to hunt dangerous fugitives in the wilderness, but considers himself largely replaceable, and is grateful he can use his abilities to help others.

Motivation: Protecting others, doing the best job he can, and making a better tomorrow for others drives Norman to never give up a difficult hunt.

Background: Norman has been more comfortable in the forest than in town for his whole life, and started his career as a huntsman, stalking game for food. Now hunting more difficult prey, Norman takes advantage of every superstition that promises an edge over his quarry. As he ages, his thoughts have begun to lean towards training his replacements and retiring to a hunting lodge, but he realizes it's far more likely he'll meet his fate at the end of a fugitive's blade.

Traits: *(MN) Adventurer, eccentric, police, outdoorsman*

Lora Rameris 272

Puzzle-Solving Adventurer

"The right spell, the right place, the right result. It's really just a matter of improvising with what you are given."

Appearance: Lora's brown hair is often held back in a French braid. She wears a leather vest full of pockets and her pack is overflowing with odd items and charms. Her wooden staff seems to have grown around the gem held in the top.

Roleplaying: Lora always has many ideas for how to get around obstacles. Whether it is magic, picking locks, talking her way past guards, or intricate plans for how to take down a country, she is full of ideas. She enjoys playing with metal or wooden puzzles to keep sharp.

Personality: She is quick and capricious, always looking for interesting solutions.

Motivation: Lora enjoys unraveling things. She likes to get past barriers and see what is behind them. She also enjoys being the one who can solve anyone's problem and will often take on a task just to prove she can do it.

Background: Some training in magical ways has given Lora a plethora of minor utilitarian magic that she can employ to overcome situations. She is a true genius when it comes to overcoming puzzles or finding unique solutions, but her warped sense of humor makes her an annoyance to some parties. She gets bored easily, and will leave a group if she gets bored or they get too annoyed with her jokes.

Traits: *(JA) Adventurer, crafter, magical*

Quorra Kang 273

Tough Mercenary

"You have one chance to walk away."

Appearance: Quorra cuts an imposing figure. Her steely face often shows no sign of emotion, except in combat, when it reveals feral glee. She has a hard, lithe body and she moves with a feline gait. She also has exotic features; her skin and hairstyle doesn't match those of the general population.

Roleplaying: She isn't one for long conversations. When she speaks, she is direct and to the point. Her tone is always one of agitation, as if speaking is too much of an effort.

Personality: Quorra's a tough fighter and only seems happy when fighting. She drags out her time fighting opponents, taunting and hurting them before delivering the final blow.

Motivation: She's a mercenary. While she doesn't look for fights, she enjoys defeating opponents with high opinions of themselves.

Background: Quorra Kang is a foreigner and doesn't like to speak about her past. In truth, she was a gladiator slave. She survives by using her skills while keeping a lookout for the hunters that were sent to capture or kill her. Due to her background, Quorra subconsciously plays to the audience. She uses flashy moves and picks opponents apart piece by piece rather than taking them down with a few powerful blows. That said, she fights efficiently when necessary. Quorra doesn't make friends easily, but she is fiercely loyal to those she has.

Traits: *(WC) Entertainment, mysterious, warrior*

Jacad Riworar 274

Grizzled Healer

"You come and bother me at this time of night to heal that?! It's not that much blood loss. Oh fine, stop groaning, sit here, and let me see what you've done."

Appearance: Jacad is tall and thin, with wrinkled, mottled skin. His long white hair is thin, and he dresses in long robes that are out of date.

Roleplaying: Jacad resents all of his patients for putting themselves in a situation that requires his service. He will mock their suffering, often calling them children or belittling their injuries.

Personality: He's seen it all. He's intense and most people find him intimidating. He always has a story about a time worse than the current hardship.

Motivation: Jacad has been a healer for far too long. He grudgingly performs his tasks, but he's always looking for someone he can teach his craft to, so he can pass on the responsibility.

Background: Jacad has been a healer since he was a young man, which was very long ago. Over the years, he has honed his skills healing adventurers and has seen all manner of injury. Adventurers are a wily lot, and Jacad learned early on to act tough and not let them push him around. Over the years, being tough has aged to bitterness. Adventurers know that no one is better than Jacad—no matter how mean he is to them.

Traits: *(PV) Academic, ancient, medic*

Saendra Swifthands 275

Fugitive Guildmaster

"Esmeri silk on a cutpurse? That can mean only one thing, friends."

Appearance: A short, attractive, raven-haired woman in her late twenties, Saendra wears simple cosmetics and a constant but false smile. Her clothes are rich, foreign, and out of date.

Roleplaying: She carefully looks both ways before she speaks, as if fearing eavesdroppers. Saendra strives for a sultry voice, but fails.

Personality: Saendra calculates and plans. She believes that the presentation of a fact is often more important than the fact itself, so she chooses loaded words and implies more than she can honestly say.

Motivation: She schemes to return to a position of power—either in the local guild, or in the aftermath of its collapse. She's happy to do favors for the PCs if they're the type to return favors, but she's always counting the debt.

Background: Once one of the youngest leaders of a guild of thieves far to the south, Saendra didn't realize that she was a figurehead until she crossed the wrong faction. Then she was too busy running to worry about much else. Now that she's settled in, she has no desire to risk her life going back, but she has no patience for starting at the bottom, and she hates having to hide from the locals. She's fallen back on her old skills, burgling and opening locked items.

Traits: *(SM) Aggressive, charming, criminal, impoverished, notorious, stealthy*

Dame Katarina d'Aquitaine 276

Influential Performer

"Smile nonchalantly, no matter what you feel inside. Keep the bastards guessing."

Appearance: She is an elegant older lady who considers others carefully with her enigmatic smile and watchful eyes.

Roleplaying: In her cultured accent, she is both helpful and outspoken.

Personality: She's brutally honest, but guarded; her idealism is balanced by a pragmatic attitude.

Motivation: She wants to help those she finds deserving, and develop future allies.

Background: An orphan adopted by a minor noble, Katarina's beauty, acting talent, and clear voice enthralled many at court. Her parents taught her to care for the less fortunate, but their idealism was unpopular at court. They were sent to a distant outpost and died in a border incursion, leaving their teenaged prodigy to fend for herself in the capital city. In the decades since, Katarina has achieved great fame and fortune as a performer. In the process, she has overcome much adversity, from the vagaries of popularity to outright conspiracy. She has been titled, made many contacts, and learned the skills necessary to navigate the dangerous shoals of the court, and now looks to honor the ideals of her parents by finding deserving souls to advise and ally with. Dame Katarina would be a good mentor for a party who suddenly found themselves in a courtly situation.

Traits: *(KS) Beautiful, charming, entertainment, famous*



Jebediah Pathfinder

Artist: Avery Liell-Kok

Quinn Marxon 277

Jovial Warrior

"This troupe is one of the finest in the kingdom! I know. I see their stirring performances firsthand. Their acting prowess is so great that not one single magistrate has ever ruled against them in a trial. Their show, on the other hand, is bloody awful. Ha!"

Appearance: He is slender and handsome with bright green eyes and long flowing brown hair. His longsword, scabbard, and bracers are adorned with onyx stones and bronze inserts that accentuate his dashing smile.

Roleplaying: Always smiling, Quinn hates to see others in a bad mood and will poke fun at himself if it lifts another person's spirits. He compliments others often, without patronizing them.

Personality: Optimistic and enthusiastic, he has a genuine passion for living in the moment. His goodwill is infectious, and his natural charm has wooed many a maiden.

Motivation: Quinn wants to see the world, meet its people, and to laugh heartily every day.

Background: Raised by the state and put into military service as a teenager, Quinn served through years of rigorous training and little combat. Eventually, he was released from duty because he lacked "the serious nature required of a proper soldier." Left with only his few personal belongings and his ceremonial sword and bracers, Quinn found work providing protection for a traveling troupe of entertainers. Eventually they asked that he choreograph their fight scenes, and now he even has small parts in the shows.

Traits: *(PB) Beautiful, entertainment, warrior*

Jebediah Pathfinder 278

Vengeful Huntsman

"Merchant, the spoor is fresh and your wagon half-empty. Give honest answers or I'll fell you like a yearling doe."

Appearance: Jebediah is a grizzled hunter, with a day's stubble, piercing green eyes, and half his left ear missing. Raven-dark hair hangs over his well-tanned skin.

Roleplaying: Jebediah keeps a bow or staff within easy grasp, ever tense and alert. He studies individuals with his peripheral vision, rarely facing them head on. He's terse, parting with words as reluctantly as coin. When he does speak, it's in a gravelly voice with a foreign accent.

Personality: He's confident—centuries of experience have honed his skills. He's also suspicious, focused, and hard to mislead.

Motivation: Survivor's guilt tugs at him; so many friends were lost. His goddess must be responsible for his absence, sparing him to avenge this terrible wrong by tracking the villains to their lair and spilling blood for blood.

Background: Jebediah was the cult's ceremonial hunter for more than a century—his aging halted by a draught of timeless elixir. A month ago he returned from hunting to find the chapter house in ashes, along with his lifelong friends. His keen skills were sufficient to track the perpetrators through two villages and into a great city, but the trail vanished on the cobblestones. Now he has to find allies and ask difficult questions before the trail goes cold.

Traits: *(SM) Ancient, outdoorsman, religious*

Braden Tourmaline 279

Enormous Butler

"Of course, sir."

Appearance: At nearly seven feet tall, Braden is a giant man, though handsomely proportional in all his features. He moves with a grace that belies his stature. His clothes, including his shined shoes, are finely tailored. There's nary a hair out of place.

Roleplaying: He is a gentleman's gentleman: exceptionally skilled in all his domestic duties, meticulous, and graceful. On the rare occasions when he speaks, it's in a high-pitched, squeaky voice that seems out of place.

Personality: Quiet but alert, little escapes his notice. Braden's loyalty to his employer is without exception. He won't discuss his past, but he's demonstrated that he's a capable bodyguard, cook, courier, and secretary. He always suggests straightforward action when asked for advice.

Motivation: His only wish is to provide the best service with honor, distinction, and discretion.

Background: Never able to fit in because of his size, he entered military service. In weapons training, he developed the coordination he lacked growing up, and he acquired discipline during his uniformed service. When he saved an officer's life, the young aristocrat took approving notice of his skills. The officer offered Braden a job as his valet and confidante. His main job is to see to his gentleman's grooming, wardrobe, and professional and personal schedule. They have maintained that arrangement for nearly two decades.

Traits: *(TT) Counselor, mysterious*

Landwehr 280

Analytical Trapfinder

"It's not that you need to check every door for poison needles, just the ones that have them."

Appearance: Landwehr is tall, sinewy, fast, and firm. Her long hair and clothing are always neat and clean.

Roleplaying: She is constantly alert, perceptive, calm, and focused. She squints with a focused stare.

Personality: Landwehr is smart and detail-oriented. She never betrays herself and schools every aspect of her physical and emotional being.

Motivation: She seeks to perfect herself and make up for the tragedies caused by her past mistakes.

Background: Like many of the other orphaned children created by the war, Landwehr was happy to take the few coins that the explorers offered to bypass or set off traps in the local ruins. Unlike many of the other children, she had a talent for doing it without losing limb or life. When the master of a thieves' guild noticed this skill, he took her under his wing and made her a member. During training, she quickly surpassed her instructors in every skill they could teach her. Filled with hubris, she made a fatal error on her first mission, costing four comrades their lives. Vowing to never let it happen again, she trained relentlessly, honing her perceptiveness and skill to unnatural levels. Now she works for hire, lending her incredible skills to those who catch her eye with enough coin or a worthy goal.

Traits: *(JA) Adventurer, artist, stealthy*

Rebald the Lackey 281

Incompetent Hero

"I can handle a sword pretty well myself—ouch!"

Appearance: He is an average man whose stomach has seen one too many tankards of ale. He's a bit above the average age for a lackey or squire and generally has one or two bruises on his face.

Roleplaying: Rebald is always angling to "do" something rather than play a supporting role. He eagerly volunteers for any mission, no matter how dangerous, and often doesn't tell his employer, as he feels he can handle things himself.

Personality: He is overly effusive and helpful. Unfortunately, he fancies himself as capable as the one he serves and often attempts to accomplish acts best left to the professional.

Motivation: He wants to be a hero rather than carry the sword for one.

Background: All his life, Rebald only wanted to be a hero. Unfortunately, Lady Luck had other plans. Rebald was born into the wrong class and station to achieve greatness. His skills, while excellent for being a henchman or lackey, always fail him when he tries to be a hero. Rather than be content with what he does well, Rebald tries to grab the brass ring and always falls short. Rebald can be a squire, priest's assistant, or even a perpetual sorcerer's apprentice. While doing his official duties, he always excels; when he tries to play hero, he always manages to fail miserably.

Traits: *(WC) Adventurer, humorous*

Micklin "Mickey" Fell 282

Paranoid Fence

"Let's not be too hasty here. There's coin to be made if we don't screw this up."

Appearance: His black hair is slicked back and stubble darkens his chin. Micklin wears a plain cotton shirt and drab breeches. Large rings adorn his stubby, fat fingers. A festive drink is often nearby.

Roleplaying: He smiles broadly but nervously looks about. Micklin talks softly and in a friendly tone, dabbing sweat from his brow regardless of the temperature.

Personality: Mickey's always expecting the worst and his nerves are shot to hell. His contacts are impeccable and he's proud of the reputation he has developed in the quasi-legal business world.

Motivation: He's looking for the next big score and just hoping nothing goes wrong this time! Just one more job and then he's free to retire…

Background: Micklin's original trade was as a middleman and fence. Many years ago, he had a run in with the law, stolen goods still in his possession. He was smart enough to keep his mouth shut and lucky enough to keep his head attached to his neck—earning him a reputation for discretion and loyalty. In reality, Micklin is a coward who faints at the slightest threat of torture and keeps poor records. He doesn't deal in illegal activities per se, but he's not above putting the characters in contact with someone who does…for a price. The criminal elements pay Mickey no mind, as he's not a threat.

Traits: *(DM) Business, focal, white collar*

Sasha Bitterswood 283

Vigilante Activist

"I cut him only as much as he deserved!"

Appearance: Curvaceous and fiercely handsome despite her maturity, Sasha wears sumptuous finery while working and socializing. During her nocturnal excursions, she dresses with an eye towards functionality and inconspicuousness.

Roleplaying: Usually outgoing and warm, Sasha is forceful and unyielding when fighting for a reform or dealing with argumentative underlings.

Personality: Sasha insists that the perfect society can be built, and crusades tirelessly in pursuit of it. When an individual is a thorn in the side of progress, either a criminal or, rarely, a rival, she maintains a pleasant façade, but does what must be done in the back alleys.

Motivation: The betterment of society, especially the rights of women, is Sasha's primary cause.

Background: Despite being born into a privileged family, Sasha has seen firsthand the trouble of the common people and has built a career out of working to improve the conditions of society. She does what she can through government office and sponsoring enlightened policy, but when necessary, she isn't above taking the law into her own hands making an example of a particularly heinous criminal or stubborn traditionalist. By night, she brings savage vigilante justice to criminals the guard cannot catch or political rivals who block progress.

Traits: *(MN) Aggressive, beautiful, political, stealthy, wealthy, white collar, zealot*

Darius Bellwater 284

Focused Tactician

"Do not lie to me! Especially when it involves Jessica."

Appearance: Darius is muscled and tough. His face bears scars and hides his emotions, showing only his uncompromising nature.

Roleplaying: Darius is solid and dependable, but intensely focused.

Personality: He is tough, polished, and controlled, except when it comes to his sister, Jessica. He never turns on comrades, unless they hinder his pursuit of Jessica. Then he leaves to work on his own.

Motivation: Darius searches for news of his sister, who was kidnapped from their village years ago.

Background: When his sister was kidnapped, Darius tried to find her the "correct" way: contacting the king's guard, offering rewards, and using official resources, all to no avail. The search continued, and a run-in with a mercenary provided him two things: a message from the warlord his sister was enslaved to in the form of a humiliating beat-down, and proof that the official ways didn't work. He began investigating in new ways. He joined up with mercenary groups and proved himself a master of combat tactics and strategy. He also toughened himself up, covering his keen intelligence behind a rough and hardened frame. While not much of a fighter, he is tough enough to prove himself to employers. His wide web of contacts and diverse knowledge of tactics used by military groups has proven invaluable to many organizations, so long as they can get him closer to freeing his sister.

Traits: *(JA) Military, police, zealot*

Princess Alexandra Ves'ryn 285

Macho Weaponsmith

"I know you prefer a lighter blade, but trust me this sword is lighter than it looks. I used the lightest and most resilient metals to create it."

Appearance: Alexandra is plain looking, but not unattractive. Her build is wide in the shoulders and narrow in the hips. She wears her blond hair shorter than the other court women, and rarely wears gowns, preferring slacks and blouses.

Roleplaying: No one ever accused the princess of being ladylike. She laughs loudly, claps people on their shoulders, and doesn't hesitate to push people in jest.

Personality: Alexandra is macho. She's a woman most comfortable in the company of men, laughing and swapping stories with them. She is immensely knowledgeable in weapons: their construction, history, and use.

Motivation: She's obsessed with creating the finest of weapons, but her true passion lies in the dream of one day creating a new weapon that will change the battlefield.

Background: The youngest child in a family of brothers, the princess was a tomboy since she could walk. When the king refused her entry into the military, she funneled her frustration and her intellect into the art of weaponsmithing. Her creations are well-known for their beauty and deadliness. She loves to spend time with adventurers listening to their stories and sparring with them.

Traits: *(PV) Crafter, genius, royalty*

Kilp Whitebow 286

Prissy Adventurer

"If we're going into that tomb, I must fetch my dungeoneering boots. And polish them, of course."

Appearance: Kilp is short, slender, and exceptionally well-groomed. He wears spotless clothes and carries a crossbow made of white wood wrapped in oilcloth.

Roleplaying: When Kilp isn't picking at invisible pieces of lint or twirling one end of his mustache, he's smoothing nonexistent wrinkles in his tunic.

Personality: For such a fussy little man, Kilp is surprisingly unfazed by just about anything except dirt. Everything separating him from treasure is just a petty annoyance, put there to vex him.

Motivation: Kilp loves shiny baubles and hates the thought of someone else finding them first.

Background: Kilp's talent with a crossbow is matched only by his prissiness about his appearance; he uses his crossbow like it's a part of his body, and it's every bit as polished as he is. No one knows why Kilp became an adventurer, and apart from the treasure, he seems to dislike just about every aspect of his profession—yet he traipses on, unconcerned what others think of him. Partnered with people who can put up with his quirks, Kilp will quickly prove himself to be a valuable, and fearless, ally. He knows a surprising amount about wilderness survival and monster lore for someone who hates to get mud on his best traveling cloak.

Traits: *(MR) Adventurer, eccentric, humorous, outdoorsman, warrior*



Theodora, Sonja's Daughter

Artist: Christopher Reach

Theodora, Sonja's Daughter 287

Driven Mercenary

"They will pay to the last inch, the very last."

Appearance: Almost a beauty, Theodora stands tall and thin, her appearance marred by a wide, red scrape across her neck. Muscles stand corded when she clenches her fists and her eyes narrow down to almost total black when she glares.

Roleplaying: Theodora is full of pent-up energy; she paces, ticks chairs with her sword tip, and smiles with menace. Always tense, her arms swing as she quickly walks.

Personality: She's a barely contained bomb that's ready to blow. Only strong good sense stops her from throwing her life away in a futile frontal assault.

Motivation: Burning with anger and a need to strike back, Theodora supports any cause that discomfits the local nobility. She is desperate to punish the perpetrators.

Background: Last year "bandits" came out of the woods and set her family's house on fire. As they fled, each member of her family was shot with a crossbow or speared to death. Theodora almost met the same fate; her "bandit" caught her in the side of the throat with his spear blade and didn't check when she fell. While she lay dazed, the bandits talked freely as they looted, revealing themselves as servants of the neighboring baron. The king has already sided with the guilty baron, ruling her family's death a bandit attack, leaving her no just path—only vengeance. Since then she has trained as a mercenary, learning quickly.

Traits: *(SM) Adventurer, aggressive, warrior*

"Rock" Clemensa 288

Underworld Fence

"Name your price. Bah! Don't be offended! Everything has a price, though it is not always in coin."

Appearance: He is an elegantly dressed and meticulously groomed middle-aged man from a foreign culture and, no matter where he is, will act as though he owns the place.

Roleplaying: Rock portrays an unshakable confidence and speaks with a thick foreign accent.

Personality: Behind the façade, Rock is always curious and learning new things. He learned the importance of a good reputation early, and works hard to maintain his.

Motivation: He seeks to build his business through the loyalty of his clients and the gathering of good information.

Background: As a young criminal, Clement learned quickly that the fence takes the least risk, but often gains the most from the deal. He pursued his new career with gusto. After a particularly hard-negotiated but profitable exchange with a desperate client who described him as "unmoving as rock itself," the man known as Clement disappeared. In his wake appeared "Rock" Clemensa, a mysterious character whose strong foreign accent and blunt exterior hide his calculating personality. Since then, Rock has leveraged his notoriety well, and his success in the black market has inspired him to try his hand at organized crime. From the beginning, he ensured his organization would garner a reputation for adherence to contracts and loyalty to allies. Behind the scenes, they pursue and collect information as aggressively as they do merchandise.

Traits: *(KS) Aggressive, criminal, merchant, notorious, wealthy*

Cap'n Johann Spencer 289

Rakish Privateer

"A pirate, you say? No sir! I'm a good king's man: a privateer in service to the crown. I will defend my honor and that of my crew against anyone who says otherwise."

Appearance: He's barrel-chested, with arm and leg muscles like iron bands. His swarthy complexion comes from hours spent under the hot tropical sun.

Roleplaying: Johann is crafty, always looking for an angle. As a combatant, he's reckless.

Personality: He's two men. At sea and as captain, he's a firm disciplinarian and mission-oriented—"All-business," as the crew likes to say. In port, he's as dissolute as any bilge rat, a libertine who takes his pleasures with almost no regard for convention or order. His devotion to his crew is one of his few redeeming qualities.

Motivation: He wants to plunder, to take the gold and jewels from the holds of enemy ships, and to immerse himself in all the pleasures the treasure will purchase.

Background: Captain Spencer is an educated man, but one who could not conform to the rigid demands of respectable society. He found freedom at sea and in plying the waters around the colonial holdings of his native land, but it's his rakish approach to life and disregard for civilized behavior that keeps him from making a transition to being a gentleman.

Traits: *(TT) Adventurer, business, eccentric, pilot, wealthy*

Sanida Aemountu 290

Miserly Adventurer

"An inn? We do not need such lavish accommodations. That kind of luxury leads to decadence and straying from the divine messages. What coin we have should go to the church."

Appearance: Sanida is a plain-looking woman with short hair and a thin, strong body. She wears simple armor that has been repaired many times. Her sword is also utilitarian.

Roleplaying: She shakes her head slightly and says "tsk-tsk" when anyone wants to spend money on any luxury. She always pays close attention to the division of any loot.

Personality: Sanida is a miser and never misses an opportunity for making money, as long as it doesn't violate divine law. She never spends money frivolously, preferring to camp instead of visit an inn and eat simple rations instead of a lavish meal.

Motivation: A devout woman, Sanida adventures in order to make money or find treasure that she can use to fund her church. She wants her church to be a beacon to the masses and a tribute to her god.

Background: Sanida was born into slavery. A group of holy warriors freed her in her teens. From that time, she dedicated her life to their god and beliefs. To show homage, she built a modest church in a small town and vowed that it will one day be a great temple. To this end, she adventures to hoard as much money as she can.

Traits: *(PV) Focal, religious, warrior*

Ginnie Moore 291

Feebleminded Mercenary

"You're the one who asked me to open the door. How was I supposed to know you meant with the handle, not my ax?"

Appearance: Ginnie's tiny frame, crooked-toothed smile, and absent stare mean her dense muscles and numerous scars often catch observers off guard.

Roleplaying: Most of the time Ginnie is fairly withdrawn and lost in her own little world. She rarely questions what she's told and only focuses well on the simplest of tasks. She's also fairly naïve and sensitive, despite her violent career, making her an easy mark.

Personality: Ginnie is bubbly and pleasant, though easily distracted. When concentrating on a task at hand, she is often blinded to other stimuli.

Motivation: Lacking the capacity to worry about long-term plans, Ginnie usually lives in the moment and does whatever seems like a good idea at the time.

Background: Born to a large, poor family and tasked with manual labor early in life, Ginnie was always tougher than she was smart, and a childhood of back alley scraps and irritable livestock did nothing to enhance her mentally. Setting off on her own, she spent several years as a mercenary before falling in with a group of ne'er-do-wells who take advantage of her limited intellect to manipulate her into doing their dirty work. It's only a matter of time before she gets into more trouble than she can handle.

Traits: *(MN) Adventurer, criminal, warrior*

Skeld the Salty 292

Experienced Merchant

"In the south they emphasize striking with swiftness, drawing steel in an eye's blink."

Appearance: Skeld is 43 and balding with a fringe of speckled brown hair. He's still lithe and strong, with piercing blue eyes. He wears rich, bright clothing.

Roleplaying: He walks slowly, often coughing into a handkerchief, but is vibrant in conversation. Skeld clasps his hands to call for attention and uses nautical terms whenever possible, using port for left, even saying "swab yer faces" to ask people to clean up for dinner.

Personality: Skeld is slowing down and has felt death brush by; he's eager to pack in good living and enjoy his family in the meantime. He has seen a lot of the world and has a love for namedropping.

Motivation: He is devoted to his family and the firm that has given him such a prosperous life. Skeld waxes nostalgic about his time abroad, but refuses to trade being home with his family for anything.

Background: After serving in several roles in a mercantile firm, first as a sailor, then as cargo handler, Skeld finally became an overseas factor—a purchaser and agent. He spent months at a time overseas, negotiating and arranging complex deals. A few years ago, he caught a tropical fever and returned home, where he continues to work diligently. These days he's training his oldest son, Thaddeus, to take over his role in the company.

Traits: *(SM) Business, merchant, wealthy, white collar*

Zadonna Ruega de Cadonia 293

Flashy Wizard

"Why simply float you over the wall? It is much more impressive to blast it open with a flame bolt!"

Appearance: She always stands out, but not because she is particularly attractive, nor because she has a stunning personality. She is always outlandishly dressed and wears distinctive hairstyles that invite comment.

Roleplaying: Zadonna is overeager to improve any plan by choosing spells emphasizing flair over subtlety. Even when she promises to do what is asked she'll sometimes go with her gut instead.

Personality: She's a wizard with the soul of an artist, and spellcasting is her medium. She is loyal to her friends and wants them to succeed, but sometimes she just can't help herself.

Motivation: She wants to be remembered as a trendsetter, and for her friends and enemies to respect her magical artistry.

Background: Zadonna was born into an artistic family. While most of her family members were skilled artists and artisans, Zadonna never showed any special artistic promise until she was apprenticed to a local wizard. With eldritch energies at her command, Zadonna found that she had a gift for sorcery. Unfortunately, the frustrated artist inside of her demanded to be let out. Although she is an extremely competent wizard, Zadonna can't help but use the flashiest spells in her arsenal. Even if a mission relies on stealth, she'll convince herself that flair is necessary, and eventually fall back on flashy spells at awkward times.

Traits: *(WC) Adventurer, artist, eccentric, magical*

Sir Naud Ardwor 294

Deluded Explorer

"Ah yes, you are correct I am indeed the discoverer of the lost island Souldust. Another expedition? Of course! Though you do know it's dangerous there, right?"

Appearance: Sir Naud is short, with thick black hair and a constant five o'clock shadow. He is in good shape, handsome, and well-dressed.

Roleplaying: He never hesitates, never considers fear, and always assumes everything will work out fine. Puzzlement strikes him when someone else fails or suffers injury.

Personality: Naud is naïve, and a dangerous combination of stupid and lucky. He charges into everything head first, with no regard for consequences to himself or his companions. History has taught him that he will not only be fine, but likely will come out ahead.

Motivation: He buys into his inflated reputation fully. He has deluded himself into behaving as a great ship's pilot and explorer and is always ready for a new adventure.

Background: Naud was once the captain of an unimportant vessel. Sailing back from a trading outpost, the ship came upon the lost island of Souldust. Through his careless actions, Naud unleashed the island's horrors and inadvertently killed his crew. He fled and made his way home through dumb luck. Upon his return, he became famous for his discovery and was given a royal title and a much bigger ship. Since then, Sir Naud has embarked on several dangerous expeditions, and returned from each one as the sole survivor.

Traits: *(PV) Famous, pilot, royalty*

Barley Trowbridge 295

Garrulous Innkeeper

"Welcome to my inn! Relax by the fire while I fetch you a spiced ale. Tell me a tale, and the drink's on me."

Appearance: People expect innkeepers to be portly, but Trowbridge is slender. His eyes are surrounded by laughter lines, and he makes up for his lack of girth with a thick, wooly brown beard that's wider than his head.

Roleplaying: Trowbridge comes off like a kindly old uncle, with a ready smile and a story for every occasion. He's an exceptionally good listener.

Personality: Outgoing, friendly, warm, and incredibly hard to dislike, Trowbridge is generous and charitable without being naïve. Underneath all that, he can be quite ruthless.

Motivation: He likes to be the center of attention. If he scents a good story, he'll do whatever it takes to ferret it out—and he's always on the lookout for saleable information.

Background: Trowbridge (Barley to his friends) is the innkeeper who knows everyone and everything. Garrulous by nature, he's immediately likable. It's not an act, but nor is Trowbridge exactly what he appears. He gathers information from all corners of the kingdom, gently squeezing it out of his guests and selling it to those he likes or respects; the fee is often an exchange of information. He's no stranger to skullduggery and smuggling, and he puts the bonds of friendship over the law. If the PCs need something done, and if Trowbridge likes them, chances are he can help.

Traits: *(MR) Business, charming, criminal, merchant, scholar*

Gendarme Olivia 296

Judgmental Sheriff

"Your needs are irrelevant to the situation. Hunger does not justify theft. Come. Our rulers will decide your fate. Save your pleas for them if you seek mercy, for I have none for you."

Appearance: Short, but with a powerful frame and a large bust, Gendarme Olivia wears her immaculate uniform with pride. Her ivory skin and short golden curls may give her a childish appearance, but her dark brown eyes beam with fervor for her work. A large iron mace dangles off of her hip.

Roleplaying: Rigid and always at attention, she has a sharp tone of command in her voice. Gendarme interrogates others with short and direct questions. She often quotes the written laws of the land verbatim from memory.

Personality: Gendarme Olivia is polite in her manners but terse in her delivery. She is always on guard for any possible mischief, and the closest that she comes to relaxing is competing against others through sports.

Motivation: Seen by many as uncaring and stoic, she is actually intensely concerned with the well-being of others. Yet, the drive to ensure that those within her jurisdiction are safe is the very thing that disconnects her from others socially.

Background: Olivia was the ninth child of a local sheriff. Her older siblings (all brothers) refused to follow in their father's footsteps. Only Olivia was determined to continue her father's legacy.

Traits: *(PB) Counselor, notorious, police*

Esmikri Induri

297

Secret Policeman

"In my father's day 'taxing' pilgrims was an abomination. Now it's common as tithe."

Appearance: He is older, slightly stooped, with a full head of gray hair and calloused hands. Esmikri dresses to his role, often as an old traveler making a pilgrimage.

Roleplaying: Esmikri is the quietest member of a conversation, often bringing up topics and stepping back to focus attention on others, taking long pauses, or making disconcerting conversational leaps.

Personality: He's a dedicated man, a seeker of truth. He believes in the emperor, but the injustices he's seen weigh heavily on his heart.

Motivation: The empire he loves would collapse if not for the constant efforts of the inspectorate. He's tired, but he can't allow creeping corruption and factionalism to undermine the empire while he still breathes.

Background: Raised in a cloister until he was nine, Esmikri's brilliant observations marked him for imperial service. He was sent to boarding school, where he studied imperial law for seven years. After testing, Esmikri joined the emperor's secret police and began watching the local justice. He's done so mostly unobtrusively, visiting the cities and talking with common folk. His reports have led to several noblemen being chastised by the bureaucracy—one by the emperor himself!

Traits: *(SM) Focal, genius, mysterious, police, white collar*



Esmikri Induri

Artist: Avery Liell-Kok

Celile

298

Foul-Tempered Dancer

"Name? I cans give you a name. You shoulds have to come to me first."

Appearance: Heavy cosmetics accentuate her large, brown eyes and sandy hair. She moves like a prowling animal and slides comfortably into the laps of her patrons. Her perfume is intoxicating, if not a little overwhelming.

Roleplaying: Her speech is demure and sophisticated, though Celile is prone to mispronounce simple words and tries to act smarter than she really is. She has a heavy accent.

Personality: Stubborn and arrogant, she's in over her head, trying to give the appearance of being upscale. She's most honest with herself when she dances—and does so quite well.

Motivation: Celile is working to elevate her status; she feels that she deserves more.

Background: A professional dancer by trade, Celile earns honest coin by entertaining men and women as they unwind and let their guard down. This affords her the opportunity to pick up small bits of information. Thinking this makes her an information broker of sorts, she tries to peddle her knowledge for favors and power. Rarely does it work, and consequently, Celile has a large chip on her shoulder. Two small children wait for her at home, the byproduct of poor decisions early in her career. She wants more but is trapped by circumstance. Celile earns an honest wage dancing; she absolutely refuses to whore out her body. She knows her big break must be coming.

Traits: *(DM) Entertainment, power hungry, white collar*

Sir Vilhelm of Strawbourg

299

Unscrupulous Knight

"Of course chivalry and honor are important, but only when you are winning!"

Appearance: Vilhelm is a handsome knight in gleaming armor. His hair is immaculate and frames his square-jawed face. A short goatee surrounds his roguish grin.

Roleplaying: He speaks and acts as if he were the noblest of knights. He is well versed in the local laws of chivalry and is fond of quoting them when appropriate.

Personality: Vilhelm presents himself as the model of chivalry, but it is nothing more than a mask hiding a cunning mind in search of an opportunity.

Motivation: He likes to win, no matter the cost.

Background: For the most part, Vilhelm is what he represents. He comes from a noble family and is an excellent, well-bred knight. He is one of the best warriors of his generation and shouldn't need to resort to underhanded tactics. Unfortunately, it's a bit of a character flaw. If Vilhelm feels that there is even a chance he might lose, then he won't hesitate to cheat. Vilhelm's allies take comfort in the fact that he won't cheat them, but his actions may ruffle feathers amongst more honorable companions. Vilhelm always justifies his actions as necessary to attain his allies' goals, and takes great offense at being called out for underhandedness.

Traits: *(WC) Notorious, political, warrior*

Neva Ambrose, "The Red Sash" 300

Vengeful Folk Hero

"You serve an unjust king. Now, forfeit your purse or forfeit your life."

Appearance: The Red Sash's costume consists of a black tricorn hat, hair tucked into a headscarf mask, satin blouse, trousers, overcoat, and riding boots. Clad in black from head to foot, save for a red sash holding a rapier at her waist, she stands in profile—mysterious and forbidding. Otherwise, Neva is plain-looking and wears a serving-girl's apron.

Roleplaying: The Red Sash speaks as little as possible, and uses a low, rasping voice as part of her disguise.

Personality: She cares little for her rising status as a folk hero. Songs and stories of her exploits are well and good, but her appetite is for revenge. She's not doing this to lead an uprising, but she's beginning to realize that she'll need allies.

Motivation: Neva wants repayment for the crown's injustice in blood.

Background: She already had no love for the crown because of the stiff taxes placed on the neighborhood businesses, including her father's tavern. But she swore her revenge when her young beau was drafted into the king's service and died under the command of some foppish gentleman who ordered him on an unwarranted adventure. Now she rides the King's Road, exacting a bloody toll on agents of the crown. She periodically switches mounts, so she can't be identified by her horse.

Traits: *(TT) Mysterious, notorious, stealthy*

Ian Ross 301

Fraudulent Archivist

"If you just read the scrolls, you'll see it didn't happen that way at all."

Appearance: Ian is a skeletal young man with shocking blond hair who dresses in classical style.

Roleplaying: Despite being dour and unresponsive, Ian often smirks at some private joke. He listens and watches intently for anything he can use to his advantage.

Personality: Though he hides it well, Ian has a complete and utter disregard for the integrity of his job. He derives perverse gratification from altering the records in his charge for no reason other than his own amusement.

Motivation: He loves causing subtle chaos for chaos' sake.

Background: As a scribe, Ian maneuvered into a job in political records via unscrupulous behavior. He has an extensive network of politicians and functionaries paying him hush money, which gives him an unexpected amount of influence. He isn't above selling information or altering records for money if he thinks it will further his schemes. He practically drools for the day when he will have unlimited and unquestioned access to the archives—he plans to rewrite history completely.

Traits: *(MN) Abhorrent, academic, criminal, focal, political, power hungry, scholar*

"Revolution" 302

Political Radical

"Hear me, good people! 'Politics' is a compound word. 'Poli' means 'many' and, as you fine citizens know, ticks are bloodsucking parasites!"

Appearance: Dressed in outlandish clothes mocking the royal symbol, Revolution is young, androgynous, and wild-eyed.

Roleplaying: Driven by her cause, Revolution uses manic gestures and powerful rhetoric.

Personality: Outside of her fierce desire to tear down all rulers, there is very little left of the original actress and acrobat, Revy.

Motivation: Revolution seeks to collapse the rule of all tyrants, by any means necessary.

Background: During a year-long tour with a troupe of traveling entertainers, Revy and one of the comedy minstrels, Billicks, fell madly in love. Towards the end of their tour, Billicks sang an impromptu number mildly poking fun at the local ruler. That night, the ruler's men took the entire troupe prisoner. They were tortured for the next three days and released into the wild, with none of their gear. Only Revy made it out alive, and she swore revenge on all rulers. Nobody knows who or what answered her oath, but despite the efforts of many, she has never been captured. She led a bloody revolt against the local lord who killed her troupe, and has been a thorn in the side of those in power ever since. Revolution has penned satirical songs, started vicious rumors, upstaged popular performances, and incited riots in her crusade.

Traits: *(KS) Entertainment, notorious, stealthy, zealot*

Lady Loran Siroth 303

Beautiful Socialite

"Another threat at the border? I'm sure it's a few drunken goblins that got lost. Can we wrap this up and head to the social now?"

Appearance: Loran is beautiful in every way, with a voluptuous body and long, flowing, chestnut hair.

Roleplaying: She rolls her head around when talking about anything serious. She laughs a bit too loudly, and flips her hair when she is socializing and more relaxed

Personality: Loran is a dilettante, with little passion for anything serious. She has a sense of humor that disarms and charms in social circumstances, but it warps into scathing sarcasm in serious situations. She is in her true element at any kind of social function, where she is a natural entertainer and host.

Motivation: Loran is a minor noble who desires to move up the social ladder and become the most popular host in the kingdom. She looks for any angle that might improve her position.

Background: Lady Siroth was born to a minor noble house. She attended the best schools, and earned a minor government post where she collects reports from adventurers about monster encounters to determine if there are any threats. She only halfheartedly performs her duties, counting down the time until the next party. She is a great source of information, and, with a little flattery, she can reveal all sorts of details about monsters sighted and ruins found.

Traits: *(PV) Beautiful, dilettante, humorous, political*

Uzumaia Three-Eyes 304

Greedy Treasure Hunter

"You know, it would be a shame to let this map to the Tomb of the Unstoppable Death-Juggernaut go to waste…"

Appearance: Uzumaia has deep brown skin, flinty eyes, and the wrinkled, weathered face of someone who's spent a lifetime outdoors. A third eye is tattooed in the middle of her forehead.

Roleplaying: She pauses before she speaks, weighing her response before ever uttering a word. When she's thinking, she twists a lock of hair around one finger.

Personality: While Uzumaia used to adventure for the thrill of it, now it's all about the money. She's comfortably well off and could retire, but she always wants another haul.

Motivation: At this point, Uzumaia is motivated purely by greed. She knows she's too old for adventuring, but the need for treasure has become a compulsion. She is not so unscrupulous as to betray her friends for money, though.

Background: Uzumaia is a treasure hunter who should have retired some years ago, but who's always chasing "just one more" score. Past her prime, she nonetheless possesses the accumulated wisdom, good fortune, and keen instincts of a lifelong adventurer—if not the vitality, toughness, or combat prowess she used to display. Her third-eye tattoo is the product of a lost bet, and represents her seemingly magical ability to avoid danger just moments before something horrible happens (not always to the benefit of her companions, though). She's an expert trapsmith and a middling fighter.

Traits: *(MR) Adventurer, outdoorsman, stealthy*

Baron Von Hent 305

Crippled Nobleman

"My people…pity me…because of my scars. Their pains…are far greater…than the burden…of my visage. I must…tend…to their needs."

Appearance: Cloaked in fine furs and royal robes, Baron Von Hent radiates nobility. His face appears skeletal due to intense burns and scarring, but is hidden behind a fine silver mask. The baron carries an ornate silver staff with him at all times.

Roleplaying: He speaks softly and breathes heavily because of his injuries. Due to his shortness of breath, he uses his hands and gestures to imply meaning whenever possible, instead of speaking.

Personality: Baron Von Hent is a brave soul, and he is grateful that his position gives him the opportunity to serve his people.

Motivation: The baron is a patriot, and his love for his people is second only to his love for the kingdom itself.

Background: Von Hent's family has ruled these lands for centuries. His family raised him to treat his people with fairness and to have an open heart. As a young boy, he learned that the nobility must secure the lands from all threats for the commoners. This lesson was put to the test nearly a decade ago when he defended his people and lands from demonic invaders. The baron was nearly killed in battle as the enemy pummeled him with hellfire, but his convictions were so strong that he continued to fight with unrelenting fury until victory was secured.

Traits: *(PB) Hideous, royalty, warrior*

Salvestro di Carzetti 306

Ruthless Patron

"I possess many beautiful things. But it is sculpture that is the most sublime. To make from a hunk of rock something that is seemingly alive, that, my friends, is as close as we mortals will come to our Creator—who it is said, fashioned us from clay. No?"

Appearance: His face is remarkably flat, even expressionless, for an otherwise vigorous man in his later years. He wears fine clothes befitting a merchant prince.

Roleplaying: Salvestro cultivates an air of magnanimity, and is generous with his praise and rewards to those who give exceptional service.

Personality: In politics and business di Carzetti is absolutely ruthless. He is always busy, and is always surrounded by secretaries, investors, or emissaries. However, he is always willing to pardon an interruption to advise an artisan or to receive an update from an adventuring company.

Motivation: In addition to guiding his house to greater prosperity and influence, he sees art as a legacy that will endure for generations.

Background: He is head of a family that has built a powerful merchant house on banking and the trade of the purple goods favored by royalty. He started a new tradition of being a patron to the arts by commissioning works of art, music, and history. To complement his collection of commissioned artworks, he sponsors adventuring companies to acquire lost treasures from ruins and forgotten dungeons. This flirtation with using adventurers is a sidelight, one he gives only cursory attention.

Traits: *(TT) Business, famous, wealthy*

Hvarri the Peeper 307

Incredulous Anthropologist

"You people do what? You can't be serious."

Appearance: Hvarri has a clearly foreign bone structure and appearance, and, though he tries to adapt his wardrobe to his current location, he often mismatches styles or leaves telltale signs of his native culture.

Roleplaying: To gather the stories his people crave, Hvarri observes everything carefully—even things most would consider inconsequential exchanges. He's not above asking questions if the meaning of something is unclear, and he immerses himself in seemingly everyday activities, tasks, and experiences.

Personality: Hvarri is eager to immerse himself in unfamiliar cultures. They're both incredibly interesting and treasured. He wants to try as many new things as he can. The more exciting the story it will make, the better the adventure.

Motivation: His people value stories of other places for both the knowledge and the entertainment, so Hvarri strives to collect as many as possible. If, in the course of his research, he can spread his faith and help others he will happily do so.

Background: Hvarri is a young shaman for his people, embarking upon his final training pilgrimage. However, the ridiculous things other cultures do often leaves him nonplussed and slack-jawed. That said, he's here only to observe, not to judge.

Traits: *(MN) Adventurer, eccentric, humorous, impoverished, magical, primal, religious, scholar*



Isabella the Bonespeaker

Artist: Christopher Reach

Isabella the Bonespeaker 308

Seductive Shaman

"Yes, come in! There is always room for guests during the ancestor festival."

Appearance: Isabella has an attractive figure and strong bearing, often wearing elaborate dresses and skull face paint.

Roleplaying: She is seductive and tantalizing, but her accoutrements and mannerisms can be unsettling.

Personality: Isabella is generally friendly and alluring, but acts ferociously if the need arises.

Motivation: She holds to her duty, seeking to bridge the worlds of the living and dead.

Background: Isabella was raised in the tradition of her village's Bonespeakers, communicating with the dead and using magic to manipulate corpses. During the ancestor's festival, Isabella raises her arms and calls forth the spirits of the ancestors, who flood into the bodies of those attending and walk amongst the living once more. Isabella's magic cannot be denied, and she is sought out by many wishing speak with the dead. When her village was besieged, she called upon the ancestors to raise their bones from the graves and defend them. While her necromancy is not a dark and vile thing to her village, it is unsettling to outsiders. It is not often enough to overwhelm the appeal of her voluptuous body and seductive charms, and she has constant suitors; some she takes to bed when they intrigue her. She often unsettles people because of her sometimes uncouth mannerisms and lack of remorse, a side effect of her connection to the realm of the dead.

Traits: *(JA) Beautiful, magical, occult*

Adjudicator Jerome Dalton 309

Critical Judge

"What do you have to say for yourself?"

Appearance: Piercing black eyes stand out against his weathered face. His mustache is slender and well trimmed. He wears a black frock coat over a buttoned high-collar white shirt.

Roleplaying: He has impeccable posture, leaving his hands face-down upon the table or clasped, quietly observing. He speaks deliberately and with conviction, often with an undertone of scorn. He shows little emotion and bites back disdain.

Personality: He is quick to pass judgment both at work and in life. Years on the bench have left him with a cynical attitude and little faith in people.

Motivation: The law binds civilization together and must be respected. Everything is black and white and when issues cannot otherwise be solved, the adjudicator must preside. It is a heavy burden of service he carries.

Background: From humble beginnings, Jerome sought to make a difference. He saw law as a way to enrich society. The years have traded hope for cynicism and the cases he has presided over have taken their toll. Yet the adjudicator continues to strive to be impartial. In some cases, the law may find the defendant not guilty by way of a technicality. Officially, his hands are tied. Fortunately the adjudicator has some means to see that justice is in fact meted out, and employs adventurers with like minds to assist. Many owe him favors.

Traits: *(DM) Focal, political*

Lady Arielle Banforth 310

Scholarly Princess

"The ancient Thessefallians had a similar problem in their day: 'Alium quinctus denii.'"

Appearance: Proudly wearing a well-draped linen shirt bearing the arms of her house quartered with the king's, Arielle moves with confident determination. Her face is untouched by cosmetics and framed by pixie-like hair. She has blue eyes that twinkle as her softly mannered voice lists fault after fault.

Roleplaying: Arielle is of royal descent and knows her brilliance, and thus only the king gets deference. She uses obscure proverbs and foreign quotes liberally, aiming for mathematical precision. She is impatient with interruption, visibly bristling at such rudeness.

Personality: Arielle is a studious woman, with unique access to rare books and obscure philosophers. Her passion is knowledge; she hopes to make several valuable contributions.

Motivation: Arielle inherited her father's love of knowledge, and had few enough responsibilities as a younger daughter that she was able to pursue it. After intimidating her first marriage prospects, she has been left alone to her true calling.

Background: A niece to the old king, Arielle was raised as a princess—but is far enough out of the line of succession that her children would not have the same experience. She was her father's joy, the scholar that he was too engrossed with politics to be. Her sharp tongue and deep education intimidated her marriage prospects. Today she recovers lost knowledge and champions broader schooling to the king.

Traits: *(SM) Aggressive, royalty, scholar, white collar*

Andrelle Ironbrow 311

Grim Dragon Slayer

"No one alive knows dragons as well as I do. When I'm through killing them all, I can start trying to forget what I know."

Appearance: Andrelle has medium-brown skin and muscular arms, and one of her eyes doesn't open fully (a past wound). Her body is covered in scars, as is her scorched plate armor.

Roleplaying: Andrelle is grim and cynical, particularly about the hubris of adventurers and the notion of free will.

Personality: Once an optimist, Andrelle inhabits a world that seems darker than it did before. She's paranoid, pessimistic, and sardonic at the best of times.

Motivation: Andrelle wants every dragon in the world dead, even the "good" ones. If she's not on the hunt, she is restless.

Background: Though a fearless dragon hunter now, until just a few years ago, Andrelle was a red dragon's slave. Ensorcelled into doing its bidding, she lived as a slave for more than a decade, watching party after party of adventurers face the dragon and be destroyed. She wasn't treated poorly, but she was forced to act as the dragon's scout and bait—and she knew her mind wasn't fully her own. When a band of heroes finally slew her master, she dedicated herself to killing dragons. She pursues her quarry with a single-mindedness that can be frightening to witness. Anyone with information on a dragon's whereabouts or weaknesses will have her ear; anyone hunting one can count on her spear, as well.

Traits: *(MR) Adventurer, scholar, warrior, zealot*

Professor Tithus Corelian 312

Proud Wizard

"I am not particularly worried about how long it takes; I do not want to get it wrong."

Appearance: Tithus sports a skinny, well-groomed, russet beard. He always stands tall.

Roleplaying: He is slow and controlled in his work, but impatient with others' demands. He gives off an aura of confidence that backs up his vast intellect.

Personality: His attention to detail makes Tithus very proud and assured of himself.

Motivation: Tithus devoted his entire youth to learning countless obscurities and magical practices, and now he uses all of his skills to expand the reach of academia.

Background: Professor Tithus possesses a rare type of intellect, one that allows him almost perfect recall. He fell in love with learning at a young age and proceeded to pursue every academic avenue open to him. Quickly memorizing all of the mundane academic books presented to him, he turned his eye and sponge-like brain to more complex magical pursuits, excelling at those as well and becoming a much-loved professor. While his memory is impressive, it is his careful and cautious approach that has brought him the most success. Few of his experiments have ever gone wrong, as he takes the time to verify his formulae and double check his work. This annoys some, but none can argue with the results. Professor Tithus is not very adaptable, and often scoffs at untested and new advances, preferring the tried and true methods.

Traits: *(JA) Academic, genius, magical*

Sister Aileen 313

Weak-Willed Priest

"We could go back…or we could go forward. I don't know. Can someone else decide?"

Appearance: Aileen is a warrior priest. She wears a fitted suit of chainmail with a tabard that displays her deity's symbol. She's an attractive woman with a slight scar across her nose. She projects a stoic, intimidating image.

Roleplaying: At first, Aileen seems very agreeable. Unfortunately, it becomes evident rather quickly that she always agrees with whomever she is speaking, even if she's held opposite opinions in the past—and even if the past was one person ago.

Personality: She hates avoidable conflicts. She just doesn't feel that any of her opinions are strong enough to be worth a fight; she'd rather capitulate. Aileen's sole exception is her faith, which she'll follow no matter who challenges it.

Motivation: She wants to keep the peace.

Background: Aileen never really had control over her own life; from the time she was a child everyone made her decisions for her. She was raised to be the perfect wife amongst eligible suitors, but the day before her "coming out" party, she panicked. There were so many suitors to choose from and she didn't want to risk disappointing any of them. The only way out of it was to dedicate her life to faith and she took vows that evening. Aileen's superiors trained her to help those in need, which she does without question.

Traits: *(WC) Religious, saintly, warrior*

Eleanor Devotian 314

Scheming Businesswoman

"Each of us has a duty to advance the fortunes of this house."

Appearance: Eleanor no longer has the beauty of youth, but she possesses attractive matronly features. Still of child-bearing age, she is likely to be at some stage of pregnancy when encountered. A trio of handmaidens always attends her.

Roleplaying: Her most joyous expressions are saved for seeing her children, or when being entertained by poets or musicians. Otherwise, she presents an even countenance.

Personality: The wheels in her head never stop turning. All people, save her children, are pieces on a chess board—to be moved, coaxed, or toppled as needed to elevate the status of those she loves.

Motivation: She assumes the burden of successfully maneuvering political waters to promote the fortunes of the merchant houses of her family and her husband.

Background: She cultivates her own network of informants, important eyes and ears when pregnancy hinders her mobility. She rewards those allies she is most dependent upon. As eldest daughter, she also was raised with the purpose of marrying into a greater house, which happened. She considers her husband honorable, insofar as there is honor between competing merchant houses, and dutiful. She has given birth to two sons and a daughter and there is another child on the way.

Traits: *(TT) Business, charming, power hungry*

Maximus the Mysterious 315

Arcane Con Artist

"Gather round! Watch carefully as I... What's that smell? Ladies and gentlemen: the illusion of the flaming robe!"

Appearance: Maximus is a wizard from the tip of his pointy hat to the bottom of his road-muddied gown.

Roleplaying: He would love for everyone to believe he's an impressive wizard, but he's more of a giant ham. His booming wizard voice and arcane hand gestures are all public performances that he drops behind closed doors.

Personality: Half confidence man, half thief, and half-assed wizard, Maximus is wholly a loser. He puts on a good show to the contrary. In reality he's tired, frustrated, and just wants a bath, a smoke, and some warm stew.

Motivation: If he can't find gainful employment befitting a wizard of his apparent stature, or a band of adventurers who'll let him stand in the rear of the party and not do much for his share of the treasure, Maximus will settle for fleecing people out of as much pocket change as he can manage before skipping town.

Background: It turned out that wizarding was a lot harder than Maximus assumed when he became an apprentice, and he never learned more than the most simple incantations and illusions. With little ability to rely on, he lives the life of a traveling wizard, selling potions, love spells, and lucky charms along the way. Some of them might even work.

Traits: *(MN) Adventurer, humorous, impoverished, mysterious, magical*

Wulf Greymane 316

Feral Scout

"Awroooooooooooo…<snarls and growls> you die!"

Appearance: Wulf is a wild-eyed man in his late thirties. He has a shaggy mane of graying hair but keeps himself clean-shaven. He's sharpened his teeth, and he usually wears gloves with sharp claws on the end. He rarely bathes.

Roleplaying: He is more animal than human. He scratches himself constantly and prefers to eat on the floor. He curls into a ball at night. He has a limited vocabulary that he punctuates with wolf-like grunts and howls.

Personality: With the instincts and perspective of an animal, Wulf is loyal to his friends and always obeys the alpha of the group.

Motivation: He is interested in survival and the safety of his current "pack."

Background: Wulf was discovered by a band of adventurers in a deep forest. He appeared to be in his early twenties but had no memory of living amongst humans. He considered a pack of wolves to be his family and could not speak to humans until one of the adventurers used magic to communicate with him. Wulf refused to leave his family until a monstrous horde, the ones that the adventurers had been tracking, slaughtered them. Wulf helped the adventurers defeat the horde and decided to live amongst humans. He makes a living now as a scout for groups trying to travel through his forest.

Traits: *(WC) Aggressive, impoverished, outdoorsman, primal, stealthy, warrior*

Peregrine Kestrel 317

Crazy Pilot

"Didja see that dive? I bet five I can pull out even lower!"

Appearance: This petite, athletic woman with windswept hair and a goggle tan never seems to stop moving or talking.

Roleplaying: She's impatient; nothing ever happens fast enough. Her speech is rapid-fire, and she's always cracking jokes.

Personality: An adrenaline junkie, she doesn't seem to take anything but her flying seriously.

Motivation: She's always been driven to be the best pilot that has ever flown, to do more than anyone else, and to do it faster. Recently, she's developed a death wish.

Background: With both parents in mounted aviation (and being named as she was), Peregrine was born into the saddle. Raised in her parents' squadron, by the time of her first official class she'd had more time aloft than some of her instructors. Her reckless attitude and quick mouth have earned her plenty of disciplinary action, but her raw talent keeps her flying more often than not. She holds a number of unofficial records, and is always pushing the envelope to see how far and how fast she can go. Her parents' recent death on a scouting expedition seems to have increased her passion for flying. Her normally devil-may-care personality has covered it up so far, but lately she seems to be actively courting death.

Traits: *(KS) Humorous, military, pilot*

Naomi Wyerrn 318

Impulsive War-Wizard

"There's nothing a firebolt can't solve!"

Appearance: Wearing golden robes trimmed in red, her own flaming red hair is tied back in the martial style. Smelling of brimstone and sulfur, her hands are dirty, her nails chipped and torn. She stands taught and ready for action, reaching for the pouch of components at her side.

Roleplaying: Naomi constantly interrupts and acts on the first conclusion she leaps to. Fortune favors the bold!

Personality: A firebrand—literally—Naomi doesn't understand "can't." This drives her to excel but keeps others at a distance. She respects those who follow their convictions with action. To most, Naomi is off-putting with her bold honesty and frank observations. She respects—and follows—authority.

Motivation: She strives to be better than the rest, to prove the impossible is possible, and to show her detractors that they're wrong.

Background: Naomi never fit in within her social circles; attending court and masques bored her to tears. A call to action burned in her blood, and when she came of age, she spent the majority of her inheritance pursuing magical art and instruction. Told she was too old and didn't have the aptitude, this merely spurred her on. Having joined the Wizard's Corps of the militia, few know of her wealthy background—and she prefers to keep it that way. Secretly, her family hopes this obsession will pass. Her fledgling ability sometimes endangers her and her companions—and she has the burns to prove it.

Traits: *(DM) Magical, military, wealthy*



Naomi Wyerrn

Artist: Avery Liell-Kok

Rebekah Dunwaith 319

Immortal Silversmith

"With age, silver tarnishes, but nothing else beckons bright as our lady above."

Appearance: Rebekah is attractive, with dark black hair to her waist held in bejeweled leather thongs, and a tendency to wear simple white robes.

Roleplaying: She's normally quiet, thoughtful, and precise—quite unusual in someone so young. Talking about art brings her to life. When she's not careful, she'll casually mention what a person's grandparents were like as children.

Personality: Normally calm and withdrawn, Rebekah is driven by the assault on her cult. She seems like a rock poised on the edge of a cliff: waiting…waiting…and then exploding into action.

Motivation: After centuries of quiet silver-craft and reflection far from society, Rebekah has been forced into action in a way she never practiced. Now she's active in the world, trying to track down the killers.

Background: Rebekah was born into a society with ancient traditions. After years of intense study, she was initiated into the highest rank of the cult at age 27. As part of the ceremony, she drank an elixir of timelessness and swore to uphold their traditions. Three centuries later, a force of men assaulted their gathering and slew nearly everyone. Rebekah barely escaped. She now focuses on tracking down those responsible and finding her scattered friends, if any survived.

Traits: *(SM) Ancient, artist, religious, police*

Sister Elora ("Mallory") 320

Kinky Nun

"We all have a vice that shames us. Let us not have our struggles poison our good works."

Appearance: As Sister Elora, she wears religious garments that reveal no flesh other than her face. As Mallory, she wears a silk dress that shows off her figure.

Roleplaying: Sister Elora is the epitome of manners and restraint. As Mallory, she is flirtatious and sexually suggestive.

Personality: When in public, either persona behaves exactly as others expect, but in private she cries and prays for guidance.

Motivation: She truly wants to help those in need through the good word and philanthropy of the church, but she has repressed her nature for too long.

Background: Raised to serve only her faith, she quickly ascended to the highest levels of both religious and political institutions. Her unceasing, selfless devotion eventually caused a breakdown, and she disappeared for several days. Just as suddenly, she returned, vibrant and again working diligently to help others. What no one knows is that she created a new identity as a prostitute during that time, and she now lives a double life. For weeks at a time, Sister Elora will tirelessly serve the public good, but for a few days, she will become "Mallory," living a life of vice until her guilt and shame overwhelm her. She is tearing herself apart with her dual life.

Traits: *(PB) Charming, political, religious, saintly*

Avanda Marks 321

Sultry Actress

"How can you say he's wrong for me? He's so rugged and handsome. When we're together, it's like fire! So what if he's a bit of scamp. No need to fuss. I can take care of myself, you know."

Appearance: Her jade eyes smolder and are framed by jet-black tresses. A young woman in her twenties, she favors colorful flowing blouses and skirts that accentuate her sweeping arms and legs.

Roleplaying: She has a flirtatious swirl in her step, a sultry presence, and a breathless way of speaking.

Personality: Her natural beauty and easy charm win her the attentions of many men, but it is the combustible and destructive romances she is drawn to. She has a knack for misinterpreting motives, spurning fair-minded friends and falling in with the worst sorts, drawn by the excitement they offer. For those genuinely concerned for her, she can be exasperating and mercurial. After being taken advantage of, she runs back to those whose help and advice she disregarded.

Motivation: She wants to be the star attraction, and to gain all the attention and affection that goes with it.

Background: The bored daughter of a cooper, she became enamored with the life of a player and struck out on her own. In the downtown theater district, she is making her way through lusty pursuits amid a theatrical company comprised of scoundrels. Occasionally a protector makes a gallant effort to shield her from opportunists—a gesture she inevitably rebuffs.

Traits: *(TT) Beautiful, entertainment*



Armand Patrella

Artist: Matt Morrow

Bannon Foxwhistle 322

Hedonistic Sage

"I'm too sore to head to the library right now, but pass me that wineskin and I'll be right as rain by tonight."

Appearance: With sparkling green eyes and a lean physique honed by hours of "exercise," Bannon has to beat potential lovers—men and women alike—away with a stick. After a night of revelry, he's usually wearing someone else's clothes.

Roleplaying: Whenever possible, Bannon has a book in one hand and a wineglass in the other. He undresses almost everyone he meets with his eyes, and will shamelessly proposition anyone he finds attractive.

Personality: Bannon is charming, likable, outgoing, friendly, and unabashedly sexual.

Motivation: A hedonist through-and-through, Bannon seeks out pleasure, generally in the form of sex, alcohol, or reading a musty old book, at every opportunity.

Background: A sage, of sorts, Bannon finds equal enjoyment in the pleasures of knowledge and the pleasures of the flesh. His appetite for both is voracious, uninhibited, and usually on shameless display. He's a font of information on a wide variety of topics, reads multiple languages, and forgets fear if there's a chance to learn something new. Too flighty to get a real job, Bannon cries out for patronage. PCs who keep him in women, men, and wine, and who give him a chance to explore ancient ruins from time to time, will find him to be a fast friend and a valuable resource.

Traits: *(MR) Academic, beautiful, charming, eccentric, humorous, primal, scholar*

Armand Patrella 323

Underground Financier

"You wish my help? You agree to my terms."

Appearance: His portly frame is well-groomed, and his fancy clothing speaks of his affluence.

Roleplaying: Armand always loans money if he can see the profit in his rank or his pocket. He overplays his mannerisms, mimicking the nobles he wishes to join.

Personality: He is jovial and pretentious, but becomes cruel when he doesn't get his way.

Motivation: Armand seeks profit and status in society.

Background: Nobles are always in need of a small loan to keep them well-dressed and in style, and Armand is always in need of nobles who owe him. Armand began as a financier when he was left a small inheritance by his uncle. Armand realized this was a path to his true goal—becoming one of the nobles he so admired. Amassing a fortune through targeted loans, he learned to deal with all levels of society but quickly found that illegal ventures were often the most profitable to his pocketbook. Armand has never seen what he does as wrong, merely a unique route to power and status. While he never gets his hands dirty, he is not hesitant to call in favors from the underworld. He is often willing to fund an adventuring party who might bring back cultural artifacts on behalf of a noble benefactor, if he can profit from the deal.

Traits: *(JA) Criminal, merchant, political, wealthy*

Victor Calman 324

Deception Expert

"Annoying? I'm told that's my best quality, actually."

Appearance: Messy dark hair, constantly being pushed aside, reveals bright blue eyes and a disarming smile. A blue brocade waistcoat accentuates his thin frame.

Roleplaying: Victor uses flattery and a gilded tongue to lure people in, then closes the door shut with a direct observation that strikes to the core.

Personality: Playful and quick on his feet, Victor is a skilled negotiator who thrills in verbal foreplay. His greatest skill is reading people for deception. He loves to be the center of attention and will grandstand without provocation. His bluntness throws people off and makes them even easier to read.

Motivation: Victor strives for advancement of his skills and longs for others to recognize his value. Most often that means getting the best deal, but more importantly, that means being right. He's never been wrong about a person.

Background: From his father, a notorious con artist, Victor learned relevant skills and inherited a gift for spinning lies. He most often, however, uses his ability to detect deception in others. He's made a good living but is always anxious for the next challenge. Victor is well-read and uses science along with instinct to hone his understanding of people. By confronting individuals with their falsehoods he is able to dig deeper into their motivation. He's a bit of a rogue at heart, something else he inherited from his father.

Traits: *(DM) Academic, charming, power hungry*

Ardon Blackwood 325

Lecherous Patron

"Art is beauty, and beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Make them see the beauty and I'll make sure that they know your name."

Appearance: Ardon is tall and handsome with blond hair and blue eyes. He wears nothing but the finest tailored clothes. Every day, he pins a freshly cut flower to his coat.

Roleplaying: Ardon compliments ladies whenever they are present, and continues to pay close attention to the prettier ones. When pondering a thought, he sniffs the flower on his coat.

Personality: He is a womanizer and a scoundrel. When discussing matters of business, however, Ardon is completely professional.

Motivation: He wants to be known, loved, and adored by the art community.

Background: The bastard child of a nobleman, Ardon and his mother still receive financial support from him. Ardon was sent to the finest of academies, but never bothered to apply himself in any skill or trade, choosing instead to focus his attentions on his female classmates. Initially lured to art by all the young models, he discovered (to his great surprise) a passion for painting. He showed no skill for it, though, and for the first time, Ardon discovered something that he could not achieve via money or his looks. Devastated, he concluded that if he could not be a talented artist then he would be the one who discovers them. Now, Ardon is one of the up-and-coming among patrons of the arts.

Traits: *(PB) Beautiful, business, dilettante*

The Madame of Whispers 326

Nosy Information Broker

"Come and sit. I have many ears, which hear many things. But before you ask your question, you must first share a secret with me."

Appearance: It is possible that once, eons ago, she may have been attractive, but now she is a desiccated scarecrow. She wears long robes with small baubles woven into the fabric.

Roleplaying: She speaks in whispers—soft whispers when she is calm, and harsh whispers when she is animated. She looks around as if someone is listening, and at times drifts off as if she hears someone talking to her.

Personality: The Madame is intensely nosy; she cannot resist prying details out of anyone she has a conversation with. She is drawn to anyone who engages in gossip. She thinly feigns patience when trying to learn a secret from someone.

Motivation: She collects and brokers the secrets she learns to gain arcane powers from the spirit world. These powers are used in part to keep her living past a natural age.

Background: The Madame started her career as a minor mage. She discovered a ritual for contacting a powerful spirit that thrived on the secrets that people keep. Since then she has created a complex web of informants who collect and pass secrets to her, which she brokers for additional power. Adventurers know the Madame of Whispers as the ultimate source of information, if you're willing to pay her price.

Traits: *(PV) Ancient, business, magical*

Adell Stormrunner 327

Stoic Motivator

"We will hold them here, and no further!"

Appearance: A wizened woman, she has long, silver hair that is tied at the nape and splays over her shoulder. Surprisingly fit for her age, she wears weathered leather armor covered in scores of nicks and cuts. Adell leans on a gnarled walking stick.

Roleplaying: She listens intently and speaks firmly, pausing often to regain her breath. After hearing all arguments, she takes time to make a thoughtful decision. Adell doesn't lose her cool.

Personality: Experience has tempered Adell to be strong in the face of adversity. Both stoic and reserved, years of adventuring have strengthened her resolve and evened her temper. She will never back down or give up in the face of defeat. Her plans reflect her philosophy of attacking where least expected.

Motivation: She believes there will be time enough to rest once she's passed on. Sharing her wisdom is her driving passion as a military leader.

Background: Adell sought a simple life of service—forgoing the family way—and spent decades in the military as a tracker and a scout. Her quiet demeanor never brought her fame, but amongst those she served, Adell had the utmost respect. A reluctant leader, her responsibilities grew and she took part in many campaigns, burying many of her fellows along the way. Her movements have slowed and her vision has blurred, but her instincts remain sharp. When Adell speaks, even the commander stops to listen and heed her council.

Traits: *(DM) Ancient, military, outdoorsman*

Bailey Zaid 328

Latchkey Noble

"You need to get in where? No problem. You're with me, aren't you?"

Appearance: As a member of an influential noble house, Bailey is primped, preened, dressed, and accessorized to perfection. When not being "handled" at official functions, her personal tastes tend towards over-the-top haute couture fashion.

Roleplaying: When she's being overseen, Bailey is the perfect noble lady, which mostly consists of sitting still and looking charming. Out from under the thumb of her handlers, she has quite a wild side and is energetic, boisterous, and loud.

Personality: Though she feels it's her duty to be the attractive backdrop at official functions, she chafes at her role and looks forward to opportunities to let loose and have fun.

Motivation: Her future promises to be both secure and boring, so Bailey is trying to do enough living now to last the rest of her life, and she's not particular about with whom she does it.

Background: Bailey's aunt always thrilled her with stories of adventure, excitement, and bucking the status quo, while her parents impressed on her the importance of duty and family. Now torn between her desires and her duty, she leads a double life and thrills at minor rebellions. Sneaking thieves into the palace and including adventurers in her entourage when she attends the ball is just as much of a thrill for her as slumming it at the docks.

Traits: *(MN) Beautiful, charming, dilettante, famous, royalty, wealthy*

Cybil 329

Addicted Prophet

"You gots some more, um, stuff on ya? I could use some more o' that."

Appearance: She's a beggar, complete with sores, missing teeth, foul stench, and half-crazed rambling.

Roleplaying: A stereotypical street bum, she shuffles, is semi-coherent, loses her train of thought, and asks for money or "stuff."

Personality: The person she once was is lost to addiction. If healed, she'll be shy and embarrassed of her past.

Motivation: She needs more drugs to feed her addiction.

Background: Cybil's been a part of the street scene for as long as anyone can remember. The churches take pity on her on cold nights, and others will give her food to make her leave. Whenever she takes a dose of her drug, she becomes manic for about 15 minutes—flailing about, talking apparent nonsense, screaming. Then she settles down into a quiet mumbling trance for a few hours before passing out for most of a day. The key to Cybil is that her apparent nonsense is a prophecy for whoever gave her the drug. It's not necessarily clear, but taken with a bit of interpretation, will give a frighteningly accurate picture of what is going on around that individual. She is the only person so affected by the drug. The drug could be something as mundane as the dried seeds of a plant found nearby, as exotic as a processed compound, or as commonplace as a healing potion.

Traits: *(KS) Hideous, impoverished, mysterious, primal*

Brother Mortimer 330

Jovial Friar of Death

"Skulls shouldn't scare anyone; they're always grinning!"

Appearance: This plump, grinning, bald man in black robes adorned with silver skulls is the source of many double-takes.

Roleplaying: Jolly and gregarious, he's always got a smile on his face and a joke on his lips.

Personality: Brother Mortimer can find something positive about any situation, usually involving an intentionally bad pun.

Motivation: He enjoys making others laugh, and comforting mourners.

Background: The figure of Brother Mortimer is not how most envision a priest of the god of death. His downright jolly optimism seems completely at odds with expectations. Raised in his parents' funeral home, he had regular contact with the death god's priests, who ensure that the proper rituals are followed, and reassure the bereaved that the lost one's soul has found its resting place. Over time, he found himself emulating the Brothers, but his own effervescence bubbled to the surface, usually with positive results. He joined the priesthood as soon as he could. After his training, Brother Mortimer didn't seem to fit anywhere. He briefly found a home in a military outfit where his gallows humor was welcome, at least until a no-nonsense commander sent him packing. Now he finds himself preaching to adventurers and occasionally joining them. Brother Mortimer is not just comic relief: He is an active evangelist for the god of death, and is himself very happy that someone will see that his soul goes to its proper place when he dies.

Traits: *(KS) Eccentric, humorous, religious, zealot*

Merrill Tasker 331

Shady Fence

"Oh my. That's a fine piece, I have to admit. Exquisite markings. Easily identifiable…and tough to unload. I need a bigger cut of the action if I'm going to take this off your hands."

Appearance: Merrill looks distinguished, for a craftsman, in a well-tailored shirt and waistcoat. He keeps his shoulder-length hair pulled back and tightly braided.

Roleplaying: Worried about being caught or robbed, Merrill often wrings his hands.

Personality: While he cultivates the image of an upstanding storekeeper, at heart he is a sly operator. Even as a legitimate businessman, he drives a hard bargain. A skillful persuader, he will wrangle the best percentage for any item he is fencing.

Motivation: Merrill firmly believes that there are too many restrictions on the sale and possession of magical items, so he is willing to risk his business to fence such things.

Background: He is a respected jeweler in a district known for fine shops. In the back room, he offers his services as a fence to adventurers and acquisition agents. He developed an appraiser's eye for magic items while serving as an apprentice to a wizard. Not exhibiting any innate magical talents, he learned another trade from a jeweler. All the while, he dealt in costume jewelry, saving up a nice down-payment for a real storefront. After he established his legitimate shop, his more unseemly clientele continued to seek out his services.

Traits: *(TT) Business, crafter, criminal*

The Widow Jones 332

Wandering Trader

"Going to fight beasties and to hunt for treasure? Good for you! For a few coins you can buy some decent armor from me instead of rattling about in that ration can that you are wearing now. All sorts of critters will hear you wearing that rust pile!"

Appearance: She is elderly but with vibrant violet eyes. She wears a leather cloak with many pockets sewn into the lining that contain various items for sale.

Roleplaying: The Widow Jones loves people and will talk to anyone, listening intensely to every word that is spoken. She constantly is rummaging through her pockets, finding items to sell them based upon what she learns.

Personality: She is vibrant and energetic despite her age. She's a crafty merchant, but an old and kind soul.

Motivation: The Widow Jones figures that she has two options at her age: die or keep busy. She decided to keep busy.

Background: For years, she and her husband traveled the land selling goods to adventurers from their horse-drawn wagon. Her husband was killed by bandits 25 years ago. Many people expected her to do the proper thing and retire, but to their shock and disbelief, the Widow Jones is still doing what she and her husband always loved doing—selling goods to traveling adventurers.

Traits: *(PB) Ancient, merchant*



Ramona Harrigan

Artist: Matt Morrow

Erlim the Speaker 333

Ancient Prophet

"Do not judge me by my size. I have lived generations longer than you."

Appearance: Erlim appears to be an eight-year-old boy with a shaven head, but he has the demeanor of a wise old man. He usually walks with his hands behind his back as if he is studying everything he sees.

Roleplaying: He chooses his words carefully and asks as many questions as he answers, but his answers tend to spark more questions. He speaks like a wise teacher and chides others for their impulsiveness.

Personality: Erlim has the same personality of every Speaker before him; he acts as if there is little he doesn't know. He is world-weary and prefers to contemplate in his mountain monastery rather than see the world. Some believe he is depressed that he did not get to enjoy "life in ignorance."

Motivation: He helps those in need, usually with cryptic language.

Background: Erlim is the latest in a line of Speakers, the voice of the god of prophecy. He has the memories of every Speaker before him. Erlim was not supposed to become the Speaker this early in his life, as most Speakers are well into their middle age before receiving the mantle. His predecessor was killed by a barbaric warlord who disliked what the Speaker had to say. Erlim is disappointed that he missed out on having a childhood, but continues to do as his god asks of him.

Traits: *(WC) Ancient, child, counselor, mysterious, religious, scholar*

Ramona Harrigan 334

Information Broker

"If it's happening in the city, then it's getting ink on the page!"

Appearance: Ramona has a middle-aged, friendly face, and her clothing is forever ink-spattered.

Roleplaying: Perpetually busy, Ramona makes time to trade or hear information if there is a chance to learn something valuable.

Personality: She never forgets a piece of information, and Ramona has an uncanny ability to connect the lines between seemingly unrelated events.

Motivation: Ramona wants to act as a balancing force against the city's corrupt government.

Background: Once an official in the city's government, she quickly realized the supposed democratic process of the city was corrupted by the nobility to an irredeemable degree. Seeing no way to change the system from within, Ramona left her office and began an underground newspaper, but that is only half the story. Ramona hears everything from everyone—urchins, thieves, prostitutes, merchants, political figures, and even the corrupt nobles she works against come to her to trade information and determine opponent's strategies. With the tiniest tidbit of information, she is able to make connections and sort out the truth of most situations. She is always willing to share this information with those who might make a positive force for change in the city. This sometimes gets her into trouble with those who would keep their business secret, but Ramona is smart enough to not print dangerous information, only coyly spread it for the greater good.

Traits: *(JA) Genius, political, scholar*



Sci-Fi

Space is big, the science fiction genre is bigger. The 83 villains, 83 allies, and 167 neutral NPCs in this chapter would be right at home in campaigns ranging from space opera to cyberpunk to supers—and all points in between.

Within these pages are villains like a psychic king who possesses a new body every time he dies, a superstitious corporate infiltrator, and a slaver with dangerous friends; neutral NPCs such as a medic who survived the apocalypse, a mechanic who repairs time machines, and a union leader who fights for space miners' rights. Among the allies are characters like a cybernetic warrior princess, a closeted psychic, and a scientist pursuing the dream of "free energy."

Whatever the scope or style of your campaign, you'll find sci-fi NPCs who fit the bill. Between post-apocalyptic settings, which are sci-fi but also quite close to being fantasy, and supers games, which tend to be set in the modern world, there's also quite a bit of overlap between science fiction and the other two genres in *Masks*—which makes it even easier to adapt these NPCs as you see fit.

Artist: Andrew McIntosh

VILLAINS

Out from the depths of space, the darkest alleys in the sprawl, and the post-apocalyptic wasteland come a human plague vector bent on infecting the galaxy, a lunatic with a bionic endoskeleton, and a feral wanderer—along with 80 other sci-fi villains you can drop straight into your game. Whether they're more at home in the corporate boardrooms of a dystopian future or at the center of gleaming fleets of interstellar warships, these villains will make the PCs in your campaign sweat, flee, or fight for their lives.

335

Sympathetic Thought-Policewoman

"Pardon me. I have to ask you two questions. Do you intend to do something that you know is wrong? Second, you do realize that doing something wrong hurts you far more than it hurts other people, don't you?"

Appearance: She cuts her hair short, which identifies her as a member of Security. She is slim, athletic, and has a graceful stride.

Roleplaying: Sivia is disarming. Her smiles are reassuring and convey a sense of understanding. She gestures non-threateningly with an open palm.

Personality: She is fair-minded and trustworthy.

Motivation: Her obligation is to root out nonconformists, but she would prefer to "save them from themselves," if given the opportunity.

Background: Her ability to cultivate trust was identified early during her education. Her natural curiosity, usually a troublesome trait, was honed for her role as an investigator. She never abuses her authority. She always tries to prevent thought-crimes or impulse-crimes before they occur. Giving the wayward person a chance to confess or repent eases her conscience. Once on a case, she is a determined investigator. On a personal level, she is eager to have a mate selected for her. She hopes the selection is soon—she is approaching the age when child-bearing is forbidden and she wants to share her respect for society with her offspring. It would only be fair to allow her to experience child rearing, she thinks. Being denied this might push her over the edge.

Traits: *(TT) Counselor, police*

336

Comical Killer

"No, you see, the joke is on you! My deathtrap is so…hilarious!"

Appearance: He is a portly man, wearing deep purple robes of velvet. An anti-gravity harness allows him to defy his weight for a time, bouncing like a perverse ball of flesh. His head is balding and his face and pudgy fingers are ruddy in pallor.

Roleplaying: Constantly grinning and laughing, he struggles for breath as he speaks. He waves his short, bloated fingers like a fan.

Personality: Sanguine is disturbed and views everything as one outrageous joke of misfortune. He's addicted to laughter now.

Motivation: He no longer seeks to cure his condition but to extend it further; the euphoric qualities of his disability demand that he commit more elaborate crimes.

Background: Originally, he was a renowned bioengineer who crafted automated prostheses for individuals, as well as their controlling mechanisms. In an effort to counter his increasing weight gain and failing limbs, he implanted a chip in his own brain to provide a synaptic connection. This connection stimulated areas of the cerebral cortex responsible for laughter. Now Sanguine falls into fits of uncontrollable laughter when his considerable intellect is brought to bear. The more he thinks, the more the chip forces him to laugh. Requiring constant stimulation—the condition is addictive—Sanguine uses his intellect as a criminal mastermind. To keep laughing he must keep stealing, and the more complex the plan, the more stimulation he achieves.

Traits: *(DM) Criminal, genius*

Duchess Paula Terence 337

Royal Assassin

"How DARE they! They should feel honored to serve us!"

Appearance: A classical beauty wearing high-priced couture with perfect coiffure and posture, it's obvious that Paula has an entire team devoted to keeping her at the peak of attractiveness.

Roleplaying: Aloof and cold, Paula listens to others with barely suppressed amusement on her face. She has little patience for anyone but nobility and none for anyone who would put demands upon her.

Personality: By virtue of her royal heritage, Paula is better than almost everyone else. She's certain that if the world wasn't rife with such worthless vermin, it might just figure that out.

Motivation: Political dissidents to the rule of the nobility are a plague on her country, and Paula aims to find and eliminate every single one.

Background: A spoiled brat who's entirely too certain of the divine right of the nobility to rule, Paula is outraged by the simpering populist trend to appease the unwashed masses. As if the current concessions weren't bad enough, agitator scum still push for further indulgences and Paula intends to put a stop to it. With a network of newly purchased spy robots, she's begun selecting targets. Though she's a novice with a sniper rifle, the targeting computer and recoil compensators on her top-of-the-line weapon make the entire ordeal nothing more than "point and click."

Traits: *(MN) Aggressive, beautiful, dilettante, royalty, warrior, wealthy, zealot*

Frankie Nightingale 338

Vampire Lounge Singer

"Thank you! You're a wonderful audience! Be sure to tip your server bots. And you, young miss, how about dinner? I'm starving…"

Appearance: He wears a black sharkskin tuxedo and gaudy rings with large stones. His skin is pale with a bluish tint, and his blond hair is slicked back.

Roleplaying: When the lyrics have similar context to the spoken conversation , he'll sing a line or two of a classic song instead of speaking.

Personality: Arrogant in a subtle way, Frankie tries to win people over with his charm.

Motivation: He loves life and wants to enjoy it—forever.

Background: Many decades ago, Frankie was a biochemist who discovered a compound that stopped the aging process. Along with virtual immortality, the person who ingests it develops an allergic reaction to sunlight and a need to consume large amounts of iron-rich plasma such as can be found in human blood. When Frankie was diagnosed with terminal cancer, he decided to ingest the compound himself as a way to cheat death. He now knows that the compound is also addictive and that he is hooked on it. Even though medical science could cure his cancer in the present day, he can't stop using the compound. Instead, Frankie has decided on a much more morbid and murderous life. He's been smart about it, too: Who would believe in a vampire lounge act?

Traits: *(PB) Ancient, charming, eccentric, entertainment*

Hilloc Jennifal 339

Intense Psychic King

"That is not what Bellor said! Marissa, I'm coming. And you too can have this Miracle Ship Wax for just 20 credits! Oh. I'm sorry; it is sometimes hard to keep the static down. What were you saying with your lip words?"

Appearance: Though dressed in the robes and trappings of royalty, Hilloc's face seems to be constantly tense and in pain. When he can shake off the psychic voices coming in from across the galaxy, he seems calmly belabored, as if struggling to maintain control.

Roleplaying: Hilloc is torn by the voices beaming into his head, and he has to shout his words in order to drown them out.

Personality: He's a small boat awash on the tide of an uncontrollable psychic sea. When he has moments of clarity, he generally ignores everyone, enjoying the silence.

Motivation: Hilloc desires peaceful oblivion, and uses his powers to influence leaders to war, cause disasters at power plants, and destroy civilizations in an effort to quiet the universe.

Background: Forced to take the throne of his planet at a young age, Hilloc inherited incredible psychic powers from the ancient, experimental subspace engine of the crashed colony ship that seeded his planet. Because he was too young and without the proper training or rituals when he inherited the power, his mind was irrevocably changed by the engine, granting him extensive power—and immortality. When he dies, he uncontrollably possesses another body, prolonging his tortured existence.

Traits: *(JA) Magical, royalty, zealot*

Judge Pyros Starrunner 340

Disgusted Traveling Judge

"There are no innocents. There are only degrees of the guilty."

Appearance: A tall, lanky man whose judge robe hangs loosely about his frame, Pyros has a long, gaunt face and one augmented eye. He has a stiff, deliberate walk and usually carries a cane.

Roleplaying: He is dry, humorless, and speaks in slow, deliberate tones. Pleadings of innocence are rewarded with an eye roll and a bored yawn.

Personality: Pyros has spent a long time on the bench and believes that everyone is guilty of something. He is extremely cynical and jaded and both influence his decisions.

Motivation: He wants to put the guilty behind bars. Unfortunately, everyone is guilty.

Background: Justice is hard to come by on the outer rim worlds, which are primarily small company mining colonies and outposts. When a judge is needed, outer rim parties usually employ a judge-for-hire; Pyros is one such judge. He spent a lot of time on a core world bench and became disgusted with the defendants that were in front of him. He came to believe that all defendants are guilty. Thus, when corporations need a judge who'll rule in their favor, they hire Judge Pyros Starrunner. Pyros is sure to ignore the plight of the colonists and side with the corporations every time.

Traits: *(WC) Political, white collar*



Jorem Ezkrill

Artist: Avery Liell-Kok

Jorem Ezkrill 341

Committed Revolutionary

"Have you heard what the appeasers are up to now? Join us, or don't come crying to me when your land's confiscated."

Appearance: Jorem is a muscular, hardened man with dusky skin and cornrows accenting a bold chin and a goatee. Bandoliers, pockets, and packs mark him as a man ready to act.

Roleplaying: Boldness and bravery led Jorem to greatness; they continue to define him.

Personality: Jorem is right, as are the terrible actions he has to take serving his cause. The crackdowns and manhunts prove that he's a threat, and only redouble his convictions.

Motivation: He needs the adulation that comes with action, and he's bitter about being betrayed and losing so many comrades in arms.

Background: Jorem joined the revolution against the corrupt governor, rising swiftly in the movement's ranks. After years of struggle, the government met with leaders in his faction and agreed to share power. The rebels splintered, with Jorem leading those opposed to compromise. He lost several friends to raids guided by information his former allies gave to security forces. With his rebel movement crippled, Jorem leads his men to strike softer targets and worries less about civilian casualties.

Traits: *(SM) Aggressive, leader, military, notorious, power hungry, stealthy, warrior*

Rashina Tabata ("Tabula Rasa") 342

Slippery Con Artist

"I don't know who else to turn to, but only if you're sure. Are you sure?"

Appearance: Her actual appearance varies widely, but regardless of the disguise, her left eye has a patch of green in its otherwise brown iris.

Roleplaying: A natural actor, her mannerisms vary, but she always asks "Are you sure?" multiple times before setting the hook.

Personality: Her love of manipulating others is nearly as great as her talent at it.

Motivation: She's made more than enough money, but she's addicted to scamming others.

Background: As a student, Rashina Tabata showed an uncanny ability to mimic others, and was encouraged to act. She was a natural but never pursued acting, because she would rather manipulate people. Taking the pseudonym "Tabula Rasa," she has made billions (and lost millions) from her cons, but it's not about the money. She's addicted to her scams—the bigger, the better. She's embezzled charity accounts and destabilized planetary economies, and keeps going for grander scams. She has her personal plastic surgeon change her features regularly, so she is difficult to identify, and keeps on the move, generally among the frontier worlds. She had a security team, just in case things went badly, but didn't get the same thrill with their safety net; she now operates unaided.

Traits: *(KS) Charming, criminal, merchant, power hungry, wealthy*

High Sister Flora Kane 343

Fanatical Religious Leader

"This world is ripe for resurrection. May the seeds of life tear apart those artificial blights upon this world!"

Appearance: A heavy-set middle-aged woman with flaxen hair, Flora wears an earth-toned cloak and vestments. She has great difficulty walking and prefers to ride in a powered hover-chair.

Roleplaying: She is soft-spoken and credits everything to "Mother Universe." She does not acknowledge nor respond to obviously artificial or heavily-augmented characters.

Personality: Flora is a fanatical servant of an entity she calls "Mother Universe." She firmly believes that humanity is using technology to exploit worlds and rape them of their resources. As a human, she feels personally responsible for these acts.

Motivation: She wants to return planets to their native state, ironically using technology to do so.

Background: Flora was born on a colony with an exotic and harmful habitat. When technology failed to restore her legs after an accident, Flora looked for spiritual aid. She found it in Mother Universe and established a new religion. Flora now uses her resources to create weapons that can reseed a world, making the local plant life grow rapidly and destroy cities and factories, which she sees as a blight. Flora has a surprising number of influential followers that give her money to "save the universe." So far Flora has limited herself to sparsely colonized worlds of dubious value; her support may wane once she hits civilized worlds.

Traits: *(WC) Criminal, religious, zealot*

Kosmo Andronikov 344

Aggressive Officer

"My troops are better armed, better trained, and far better led than these Cossacks!"

Appearance: He looks like a recruiting poster: handsome, confident, and immaculate.

Roleplaying: Although he's never been to Earth, he peppers his language with Russian terms, and affects a slight accent.

Personality: Instinctively aggressive, he seeks to take the offensive in any situation.

Motivation: He lives to overcome every obstacle and win every conflict he encounters.

Background: The proud son of a proud family, Kosmo was raised to be confident and aggressive in everything he does. He excelled in school and at the military academy, although his record since his commission has been decidedly mixed. For instance, his unorthodox assault on the rear areas of an indigenous revolt saved the bureaucrats held hostage when their spaceport was taken over—but it also killed hundreds of non-combatants, and exacerbated the friction between the government and the natives. He was moved to this sector shortly afterwards, allegedly as a normal rotation, but many say it was for his own protection. He is not respected by his officers or senior non-commissioned officers, who see him as needlessly aggressive. They dread the day when their troops will have to stand between his aggression and a delicate situation.

Traits: *(KS) Aggressive, beautiful, leader, military, warrior*

The Carrier 345

Plague-Ridden Lunatic

"<smiles beatifically>"

Appearance: The Carrier wears ordinary clothing over a network of tubes, IVs, and drug delivery bags taped to his body. He's frail and bow-legged, and his face is a mass of sores.

Roleplaying: He never speaks, but has a beatific smile. He's calm and patient, but doesn't try to appear normal.

Personality: The Carrier is a psychopath who loves to watch people suffer and die. He gets excited when he comes across a new disease and finds a way to survive carrying it. He nurtures and prolongs some of his conditions like children, so as to ensure he can share them.

Motivation: He revels in causing pain, in seeing people consumed with sickness, and in bringing entire colonies and species to their knees. He lives to inflict suffering.

Background: Deeply insane, his madness manifests itself as an obsession with spreading disease. Infected with over a hundred diseases, viruses, exotic bacteria, and plagues, he travels from world to world and wipes out whole populations. His favorite thing to do is to travel anonymously through the crowds in an alien city whose inhabitants have no natural resistance to one or more of his conditions, watching people sicken and die around him. He usually travels alone in a small ship, but sometimes secures passage aboard larger vessels. He has numerous bounties on his head, though most aren't posted by his victims—they rarely survive.

Traits: *(MR) Abhorrent, focal, hideous, mysterious, notorious, pilot, stealthy*

Pamela Thompson 346

Medical Zealot

"With the right parts, you won't fail at inconvenient times."

Appearance: Pam stands just under 6' with dark hair that falls to the middle of her back, and an attractive, fit build for a woman of 42. She's mechanical about working out; Tuesdays are precisely 15 minutes on the treadmill, seven minutes of free weights, etc.

Roleplaying: The precision of numbers, even if it's a false precision, reassures Pam. So there's a 62% chance of rain, a 0.0083 incident rate, and so forth. Her eyes shine and she becomes animated when she discusses the failure of flesh and the superiority of designed replacements.

Personality: Patients need to upgrade their parts anyway; Pamela might as well profit from it. If they require infection to be convinced, she'll help them out.

Motivation: After her own body failed her, Pam believes in the superiority of designed and artificial parts with a convert's fervency.

Background: Pam should have died several times; she was infected by an alien virus when she was nine and her body shut down part by part. Her town rallied around her and raised the money for treatment. After two years of pain she finally left the hospital; her recovery was swift. Medicine became central to her life, putting her on a biochemical research career path, where she excelled. Recently she's been involved on the business end, educating doctors about her company's products...and inflicting organ failures so that others must upgrade.

Traits: *(SM) Business, medic, zealot*

Virginia Sprague 347

Unassuming Roboticist

"Oh my, is that because of what I did? How exciting!"

Appearance: Short and skinny, no lab coat ever fit Virginia well. Combined with the thick glasses she has to wear, Virginia looks like a caricature of a mad scientist.

Roleplaying: Unassuming, she putters about lost in her own thoughts. She speaks to herself and generally ignores others. When she is given too little respect, she rages and fumes—and sends her robots after those who have slighted her.

Personality: Quiet and shy, she gets angry when she is ignored. She sees herself as a mild person in a harsh world, only doing what everyone else does to get a leg up.

Motivation: All Virginia really wants is respect and equality, and to get that she has to be bold. Now that she has finished her secret project, she'll show them. She'll show them all.

Background: Virginia Sprague was an incredibly smart little girl, getting into advanced mathematics programs at a young age. Like most geniuses, she had trouble fitting in. Older students couldn't relate to her and were often jealous of her intellect, so they left her alone. She developed an incredible shyness alongside of her amazing skill at robotics. When she entered the corporate world, she retreated even farther into her shell and grew bitter at the way she was treated. Secretly developing robots obedient only to her, Virginia sees herself as a comic book villain—someone who people respect.

Traits: *(JA) Academic, eccentric, genius, scientist*

Tayven Arcolus 348

Foolish Captain

"My starship is the best there is. It stands to reason, does it not, that her captain—that would be me—is also the best there is? I say, you, over there. Get rid of that thingamajig. I do not like the look of it. Yes, that thing! No 'buts.' You must learn to obey if you want what's best for this ship. Move along now."

Appearance: He is in his mid-forties, but Tayven doesn't look a day over 35, with a pretty face and a body to match. His uniform is so decorated with ribbons, medals, and tassels that it seems impractical. He carries a riding crop—the symbol of his authority.

Roleplaying: He says the most pompous, absurd things with such certainty they must be true. When making a point, he pats the riding crop in his palm.

Personality: For someone who knows so little about how a starship actually works, Tayven commands with confidence and never doubts his decisions. He adroitly cultivates willingness in others to make even his most outlandish wishes happen. He talks about fulfilling his "destiny."

Motivation: He relishes the privileges his position offers—and woe unto any upstart who thinks they can best him or unseat him.

Background: He advanced his career by proceeding as though he had full knowledge of every situation and making a few lucky guesses. At the pinnacle of his career, he rides the wave of his authority, bullying those in lesser positions.

Traits: *(TT) Dilettante, military, notorious*

Ford Halycon 349

Idealistic Revolutionary

"We have been exploited long enough. It's time for the corporations and the galactic government to bend to us!"

Appearance: Ford is a young man with a winning smile and universally handsome features. He wears an asteroid miner's uniform, although his hands are well-manicured. His uniform bears the patches of corporations he's felled on one sleeve and the "flag of the outer worlds" on the other.

Roleplaying: He speaks the language of the oppressed. He can't help but shoehorn references to "exploitation," "corporate greed," and "accomplices in government" into every conversation. He has a fiery tone as if giving a speech, even when he's having a private conversation.

Personality: Ford believes in neo-communism, but he enjoys the finer things in life. He rationalizes this by not being publicly ostentatious and believing that the message is more important than the messenger.

Motivation: He firmly believes in neo-communism and wants to spread it throughout the galaxy. Naturally, he'd be the leader of the movement.

Background: Ford graduated as a middling actor forced to play low-budget roles on frontier worlds at the fringes of the galaxy. He filmed a documentary highlighting the exploitation of asteroid miners and was inspired to end their plight. Ford found neo-communism to be a perfect philosophy and used it to spur workers to revolt. With the galactic navy too far away to react, Ford was able to take control of a few frontier worlds.

Traits: *(WC) Beautiful, charming, entertainment, political, zealot*

Commander Harkins 350

Military Tyrant

"The people of this planet live in fear. Fear of the unknown. Their chaotic freedoms give them neither direction nor purpose. We will save them. Our invasion will bring order to their lives. Begin the attack."

Appearance: She stands 7'6" tall and 4' wide, because she is always in her mechanized battle armor. The only visible flesh is her face when she lifts her visor. The skin of her face is young and soft, but her eyes betray knowledge of far greater years.

Roleplaying: She speaks very little, but when she does speak it is only to ask a question or to issue an order.

Personality: Commander Harkins is merciless and uncompromising.

Motivation: She is trying to bring every civilization in the known universe under her rule.

Background: As a military student 500 years ago, Harkins was part of the first interplanetary war. When she died during battle, her remains and her last set of good brain waves (retrieved from her helmet) were used to create a clone. Over the centuries she has both moved up the ranks and died hundreds of times. Each time she died she learned something new about war and combat. Eventually she took over the military entirely, and now she lives only to see her tyranny spread to every planet she can reach. Of course, she decommissioned the use of the cloning and brain wave scanners for anyone else but herself decades ago. Why risk a potential rival?

Traits: *(PB) Ancient, leader, military, warrior*

Wynn Lancaster 351

Heartless Experimenter

"Rest now in penance. Your suffering has only begun."

Appearance: In her mid to late forties, she dresses in fashionable attire, heels, and a business suit with a raised collar. Her dark brown hair is tightly wound up in a bun. Large, sunken brown eyes look deep into those around her and she clutches at a tattered medical bag with a handle.

Roleplaying: Wynn speaks cautiously and with constant references to "sin" and "penance." Her hands always remain quietly at her side. She projects an air of calmness.

Personality: She's eager to speak of her beliefs—those of the Purifiers who seek to cleanse the genetic pool of impurities. Anyone showing interest gains Wynn's full attention. She has a strong distaste for anyone who meddles with her divine goal.

Motivation: She seeks to cleanse the gene pool through one horrific procedure at a time, until it is perfected.

Background: Man's race to the stars has soiled its genetic makeup. Fervent groups who follow the way of the Purifiers seek to remove these rogue elements from humanity. Wynn's background as a medical researcher has provided her with firsthand experience with mutated DNA, rallying her to the cause. Strange deaths follow her from ward to ward. Wynn administers a paralytic compound to prevent struggling (they remain fully aware) and an agent injected through the eye socket scrubs the offending genetic markers. This is an excruciatingly painful process that—thus far—kills the recipient. She favors experimenting on half-breeds.

Traits: *(DM) Religious, scientist, zealot*

Clotilda "Tilda" Garnet 352

Time-Traveling Interloper

"The great men of history are irrational, that's all there is to that! What Mr. George Bernard Shaw would say of women, I say of men: They are jealous, exacting, suspicious, and a damned nuisance. Infuriating, but my intentions toward them...are entirely honorable."

Appearance: She's a prim woman carrying a parasol and wearing an ensemble that includes a corset, sleeved jacket, and a skirt with bustle. A brimmed hat is perched atop her ginger hair, which is done up in ringlets. Her locket is made of gears which move in sync with one another.

Roleplaying: Even when walking with purpose, she moves at a graceful pace that suggests the world will wait on her. Before sitting, Tilda takes a kerchief and sweeps the seat clean. She speaks in perfect Oxford English.

Personality: She is refined, and expects similar attention to details from those she encounters. She sees the tiny flaws in everyone, but is charming in every circumstance.

Motivation: History is too full of inconsistencies and incongruities. Tilda considers it her duty to right these "wrongs" with a little time-travel tidying up.

Background: Clotilda used to consider every man she was interested in a "project"—requiring her guidance in manners and civility. When a device that enabled time travel fell into her possession, she set about "fixing" the great men of history. After all, Genghis Khan, with proper instruction, could be made a suitable tea party companion.

Traits: *(TT) Adventurer, charming, humorous*

Duke Weslen of the Scorpio Nebula 353

Spoiled Noble

"Why should I spare the lives of these people? They refuse to join the Emperor's star fleet! Don't quote his edicts to me! I know them, but I know better than them as well! I would make a much better emperor, if I do say so myself."

Appearance: His head is shaved, except for a single braid near the left temple that hangs down to his chin. His scalp is tattooed with the royal crest of his family—a winged boar.

Roleplaying: He is prone to violent outbursts, and often will lift his arm to backhand another person if they do not silence themselves.

Personality: He is an arrogant sociopath.

Motivation: Duke Weslen wants to be the emperor of all of the planets in the Scorpio Nebula.

Background: As a boy, he killed his first nanny with a titanium sonic-ball racquet when she refused to give him a chocolate, after his mother had ordered that he be given no more sweets. His parents lectured him, but they never disciplined him, much less reported the matter to the authorities. He continued his violent ways, yet his parents never paid it serious attention. The former Duke often said that is was Weslen's right by royal blood to treat commoners however he wanted—in fact, he had said as much just before he and his wife were blown up by a mysterious package.

Traits: *(PB) Abhorrent, aggressive, notorious, royalty, warrior*

Horacio Nashon 354

Brazen Trader

"If you don't want to pay what I am asking, I can sell these arms to your enemy instead. Don't think of drawing your weapon. I am a faster and better shot. So? Do we have a deal?"

Appearance: Horacio is a short and blocky man. His hair is gone and he now has cosmetic scarring on both sides of his head. He wears rugged but expensive clothes.

Roleplaying: Horacio always shakes hands with a tight grip. He strokes his beard when he's impatient, and claps his hands together loudly to break tension or get people's attention.

Personality: Horacio's a bold businessman who will pilot his ship into any system and sell to the highest bidder. He will not hesitate to crush any competition.

Motivation: Money brings power, and power is what fuels Horacio. He has a long-term goal of buying a planetary governorship.

Background: Horacio's parents sold him to a trader captain when he was a boy. He grew up in an environment of greed and manipulation where money bought promotions. He took to it quickly, and, through internal dealings, purchased the second-in-command rank in just a few years. In his twenties he bought out the captain, taking the ship as his own. He now travels the galaxy looking for opportunities that will net him more money and more power.

Traits: *(PV) Adventurer, merchant, power hungry*

Edmund Chantry, Ph.D. 355

Academic Revolutionary

"Freedom is the problem! Freedom to leave your planet and go screw up someone else's, freedom to trade your cheap crap for the only thing these natives have, freedom to destroy every culture you touch!"

Appearance: Looking like an older college student or someone returning from vacation, he's lean and tanned, but could use a haircut, a shave, and some better clothes.

Roleplaying: His cultured and polite exterior is occasionally broken by an emotional outburst.

Personality: Behind his noble crusade lurks a very angry and misanthropic man.

Motivation: He wants to stop all interplanetary travel by any means necessary.

Background: While in school, Edmund lost both of his very wealthy parents to a commercial spaceliner crash. He has never forgiven the spaceliner operator for the crash, although the official report absolves them. Later on in life, as a somewhat sheltered biochemistry researcher, Edmund was shocked to see how much indigenous tribes had been corrupted by contact with the outside world. Even those in protected areas had lost much of their culture. He blames space travel for his parents' death and for the destruction of indigenous cultures, and has declared war. He uses his extensive wealth and scientific training to sabotage any kind of space travel infrastructure, using explosives and computer viruses. He is currently researching the use of bio-weapons such as highly contagious diseases.

Traits: *(KS) Academic, focal, scientist, stealthy, wealthy, zealot*

Alice "Granny Headhunter" Simmons 356

Ruthless Bounty Hunter

"I'll find him, and I'll catch him for ya. But if you want him alive that is gonna cost extra cuz that means more work for me. And if you want him alive with all of his existing parts intact that'll cost you even more."

Appearance: Despite her wrinkled face and thinning white hair, her body is a mass of muscles. The most advanced steroids and growth hormones, combined with a rigorous training program, have kept her in shape well past her youthful years.

Roleplaying: She chews tobacco and spits the juice out wherever she likes. She always has a weapon at the ready.

Personality: Alice treats all people equally: She hates them.

Motivation: She spent the best years of her life in combat—first in the service, then as a mercenary. The only profession that brings her a similar satisfaction is bounty hunting, but she misses being in a good war.

Background: She was forced to join the military by her sexually abusive father because he considered her to be a "soft and fat little whore." Once part of the service, she was treated only slightly better, but at least she was no longer being raped. The military got her into shape and then gave her a gun. For the first time Alice felt powerful, and she will never be a victim ever again. Seven decades later she's still as powerful as ever.

Traits: *(PB) Aggressive, military, warrior*

Commander Matthew Leonard 357

Vengeful Starship Designer

"Stop bothering me and get the hell out!"

Appearance: Half of Matthew's face is a scarred lump of melted flesh. His legs and left arm are cybernetic prostheses. His lab coat hangs awkwardly, and his half-head of hair is pulled back into a ponytail.

Roleplaying: Matthew is easily annoyed and snaps crankily at anyone who disturbs his work. When he perceives weakness of any kind, he becomes abusive, often citing his ability to continue being productive despite his injuries.

Personality: His burning hatred for those who "did this to him" leaves Matthew bitter and angry at the world.

Motivation: Matthew wants to use the hidden features of the ships he designs to start a war that will wipe out the group responsible for his injuries.

Background: Before he was a military scientist, Matthew was a field commander. During a mission, his squad was driven into a minefield where a misstep vaporized his men and left him a bloody mess. Extracted before he could bleed out and repaired with the best hardware available, Matthew studied hard and applied for training and reassignment to research and development. After years of work, he is finally head of warship design, where he incorporates hidden features into ships that allow him to control them remotely. Matthew abuses these backdoors to spark interplanetary incidents, hoping to start a new war that will destroy the objects of his hatred.

Traits: *(MN) Academic, aggressive, focal, hideous, military, scientist, zealot*

Tak 358

Post-Apocalyptic Anarchist

"That's right, just 'Tak.' I'm here to burn your town to the ground, and I don't much care if you're still here when I do it."

Appearance: With a streak of white in her long brown hair, flashing eyes, and a relaxed but predatory air about her, Tak is a striking woman. She wears travel-stained leathers and carries a sawed-off shotgun.

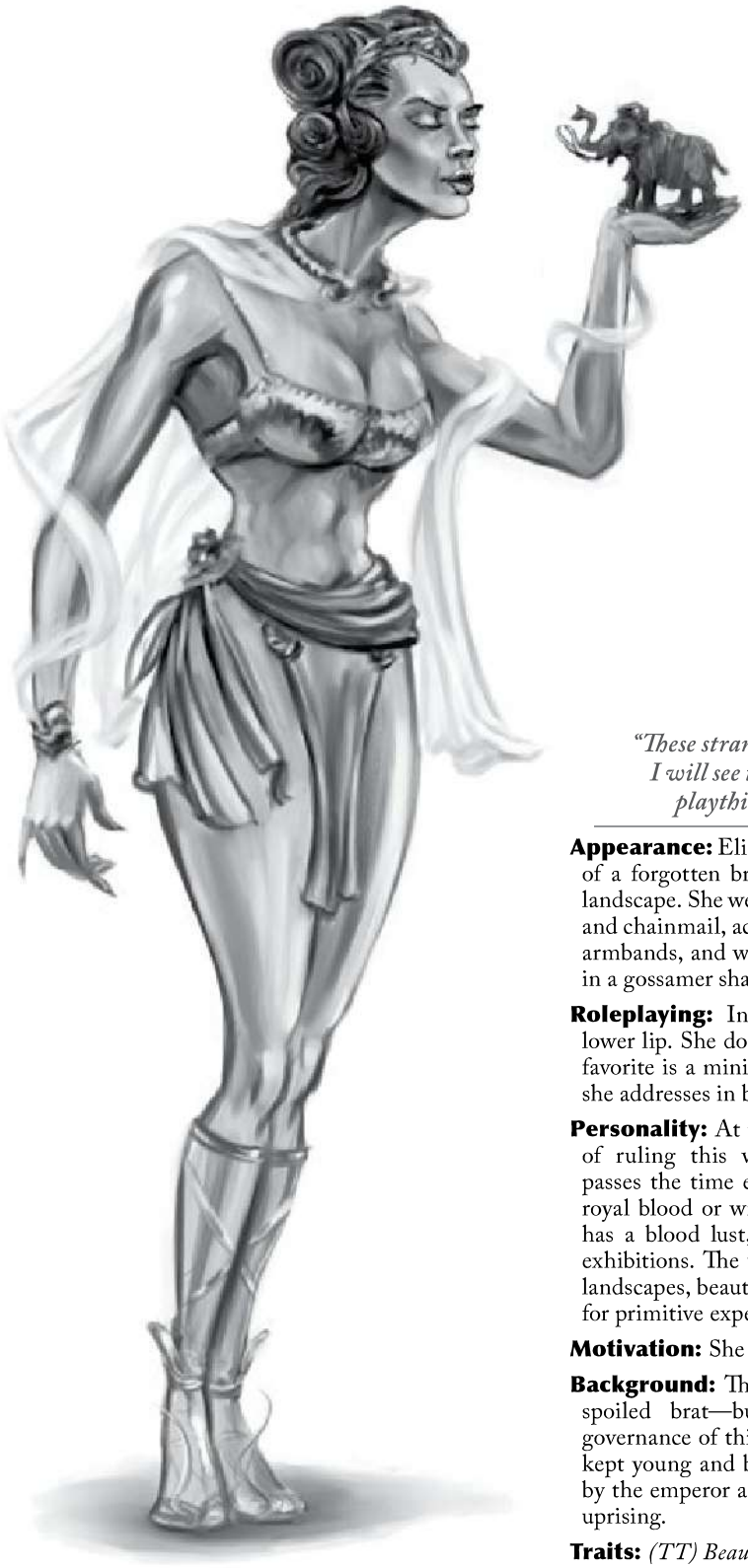
Roleplaying: Cold and unfeeling, Tak hates anyone who can't survive on their own. She treats people like dirt and kills without remorse.

Personality: Tak views it as her personal mandate to remind people that the world is a harsh place. At her core, she burns with rage at humanity's hubris and need for community.

Motivation: She hates civilization and all its trappings, and will stop at nothing to see that the world never rises from the ashes.

Background: Born before the Great Crash that nearly destroyed the world, Tak discovered that she liked it better after the apocalypse. In her early days as a wanderer, she encountered one too many bands of people who were little better than scavengers and rapists, and decided that the world was better off without civilization. Now she roams the wasteland alone, burning down settlements, destroying nascent cities, and generally causing chaos. Seemingly indestructible, she's tough, resourceful, and relentless. In the post-apocalyptic wasteland, she's the perfect predator, a force of nature who's the ultimate enemy of progress.

Traits: *(MR) Aggressive, notorious, outdoorsman, primal, warrior, zealot*



Princess Eliana

Artist: Matt Morrow

Princess Eliana

359

Planetary Overseer

"These strangers entice me. Yes, they defy me. But I will see them all captured and made into my playthings. Yes, that would be delicious."

Appearance: Eliana is a vision of exotic loveliness, a descendent of a forgotten branch of humanity that now rules this alien landscape. She wears only a bikini of the finest light metal mesh and chainmail, accented with a golden torque, a jeweled crown, armbands, and wrist and ankle bracelets. She is lightly draped in a gossamer shawl, hip scarf, and loincloth.

Roleplaying: In moments of frustration, she will bite her lower lip. She dotes on a toy-sized pet she keeps leashed—her favorite is a miniature wooly mammoth she calls Tusks—that she addresses in baby talk.

Personality: At times capricious, she leaves the dreary details of ruling this world to her subordinates. Passionate, she passes the time engaging in dalliances, either with suitors of royal blood or with muscle-bound attendants and slaves. She has a blood lust, which she slakes by attending gladiatorial exhibitions. The untamed nature of this world, with its harsh landscapes, beautiful vistas and barbaric peoples, suits her taste for primitive experiences.

Motivation: She lives to indulge her passions.

Background: The emperor considers his daughter a petulant, spoiled brat—but he can deny her nothing, including governance of this world. She has ruled for hundreds of years, kept young and beautiful by elixirs that are jealously guarded by the emperor and his kin. To date, she has suppressed every uprising.

Traits: *(TT) Beautiful, primal, royalty*

Ergen the Raven 360

Expansionist Barbarian Chief

"It is when a man's ancestors will be displeased with the life he lived that he fears what I bring to him."

Appearance: Ergen is broad-shouldered, with a heavily lined, leathery face and long, dark hair. He wears heavy power armor piled high with animal skins and war trophies of all kinds.

Roleplaying: Stoic and calm, Ergen speaks carefully and peppers his speech with folk wisdom.

Personality: An expert negotiator and diplomat, Ergen isn't afraid to make use of other tactics when the need arises.

Motivation: Ergen desires the power to bring more worlds under his thumb to indulge his megalomania.

Background: Starting his life as an Iron Age nomad on a primitive world, Ergen used diplomacy and warfare to gather a barbarian horde. He made himself a scourge on nearby civilizations. During an expedition to the peaks of a mountain barrier between two countries, Ergen and a group of raiders discovered a damaged spaceship. They accidentally activated the dormant ship's computer system and headed skywards. Over time, they captured a rag-tag fleet of ships, conquered planets—beginning with their own—and extracted tribute. Ergen has become a serious threat to the safety and stability of his region of space.

Traits: *(MN) Aggressive, focal, leader, power hungry, primal, warrior*

Bennoc Holgrim 361

Protector of Utopia

"I can appreciate your desire but, sadly, you cannot leave. I pray force will not be necessary."

Appearance: A tall and imposing figure, bare-chested, his skin is tan and tough from exposure to the elements. He wears hide pants and moccasins, a large knife at his side. His light brown hair is wild and unkempt, but his brilliant blue eyes are serene.

Roleplaying: Bennoc speaks softly and gently, never seeking to offend. He has a nervous habit of twirling a finger in his hair.

Personality: A leader during difficult times, Bennoc does not yield on matters of principle. He believes in the sanctity of life but will not allow others to undo his paradise. It's easy to be caught up in his vision of perfection.

Motivation: He will keep the secret of the colony from outsiders and prevent the proliferation of technology, which led to their fall.

Background: Bennoc was part of a crew of genetically engineered colonists destined for a company world; their ship crash-landed on a lush, remote planet. Bennoc and his followers disagreed with the captain's insistence on seeking rescue. Forced to kill the captain, Bennoc now leads the survivors in forging their private Eden—and protecting it to the death. He does not wish to harm more people but is unrelenting in keeping their secret, knowing the company will want to reclaim its investment. The colonists eschew technology but have little need of it—ironically—because of their genetic engineering.

Traits: *(DM) Charming, primal*

Dr. Linus Mahir 362

Unethical Quack

"Of course my deep space treatment program can help you! Legally I cannot claim that it is a cure, because as you know the pharmaceutical companies don't want people to know about the amazing healing properties of deep space travel. So their lobbyists have worked hard to put all of these rules and regulations in place to block my work. It is so annoying. Now, the treatment is expensive…"

Appearance: His dark hair is cropped short and he wears stylish designer glasses. His suits are made of the finest silk, and his shoes cost more than some people's cars.

Roleplaying: He constantly claims that he can help treat any ailment, and every other sentence out of his mouth is a sales pitch.

Personality: Dr. Mahir is a vain man who demands the finest things in life from others, but fails to deliver anything of value himself.

Motivation: He wants only to pad his pockets.

Background: After finishing medical school at the bottom of his class, Dr. Mahir practiced for a few years as a plastic surgeon for the wealthy before his license was revoked for malpractice. In some cases it took whole teams of ethical plastic surgeons to repair the damage that he had done. Facing bankruptcy, he starred in his own infomercial where he claims that travel in deep space can help the body's natural healing abilities. So far, only two spacecraft with passengers have been lost.

Traits: *(PB) Criminal, entertainment, medic, wealthy*

Amelia Reinhart 363

Corporate Infiltrator

"Of course, Mr. Yomishiro, I'll issue the instructions and distribute the documentation to the team. What's the project password again?"

Appearance: Amelia stands 5'7", with a medium build, silver eyes deeply set in her heart shaped face, and bright lips. She loves dying her hair green, but darkens it to espresso for big jobs.

Roleplaying: Amelia is trapped by her superstitions. For example, she must use a name exactly three times in conversation, and she avoids black cats.

Personality: Amelia lives life boldly, hemmed in only by her unusual beliefs. She revels in the challenge of adopting a new role, particularly when it all pays off.

Motivation: She loves it when people give her their money of their own free will, especially when they shove it at her despite her protests. Working a normal job would be a failure—revealing that she's just like everyone else.

Background: Amelia is an excellent mimic. She has learned that big organizations are clumsy and ripe for the plucking. She befriends people in the lower rungs of a company, then uses her research to impersonate a temporary staffer or an assistant—someone already trusted and on the inside. She usually spends only a few weeks in a role, putting her on quite a clock—and her previous success means there are several planets to which she won't be returning.

Traits: *(SM) Charming, criminal, eccentric*

Evelyn Paulsen 364

Insane Abandoned Miner

"I know why you've come. You've come to take my things! GET AWAY! I'll shoot you dead. Nobody takes my things!"

Appearance: Disheveled and dirty, Evelyn wears a tattered and worn jumpsuit. Her red hair is covered in dust from the halls of the asteroid base she lives in. Malnutrition has left her skinny and gaunt.

Roleplaying: Evelyn rubs her shoulders a lot, a protective and comforting gesture. She looks around nervously and her fingers are constantly moving.

Personality: Evelyn went insane long ago. Her mind is filled with paranoid ideas about everything. She can barely be reasoned with.

Motivation: Some part of Evelyn's brain is still seeking survival. This causes her to hoard and ration everything she can find. Her brain doesn't realize that visitors to the abandoned asteroid might mean rescue.

Background: Evelyn Paulsen was a miner on one of the many mineral-rich asteroids that float about the solar system. When an explosion prompted a full lockdown, Evelyn was trapped in one of the far off mines with no means of communication. The base was abandoned, and only Evelyn was left behind. The oxygen generators were still working, and she was able to scrounge enough food once she forced the doors open, but her mind slowly degraded. When someone nears or enters the base, Evelyn tries to protect her minimal supplies by insanely slinging insults and warnings at them, accompanied by shots from her small pistol.

Traits: *(JA) Eccentric, impoverished, laborer*

Wai Sayak 365

Child Mastermind

"After the job went bad, and all those security guys were dead, I had to find a way to lay low. There was this orphanage down the road… To make a long story short, I am now the littlest mastermind."

Appearance: Wai wears the body of a 10-year-old girl. She has long, curly, red hair and light freckles. She wears jumpsuits in bright colors.

Roleplaying: She plays the role of a 10-year-old well, but in private she speaks as an adult. Wai swears often and speaks with her hands.

Personality: Smart and quick-thinking, she has a knack for getting herself out of trouble. She prides herself on her ability to keep moving, planning, and evading.

Motivation: In the short-term, Wai's immediate goal is to pull off a job that will net her enough money to purchase a new body. Then, she wants to resume her criminal career.

Background: Wai has been a criminal since her youth. Her able mind has kept her one step ahead of the law. Recently, she had a job go bad and she was forced to run. She kidnapped an orphan girl and paid to have her mind illegally uploaded into the child's body. Now she is a criminal mastermind in a little girl's body, but Wai won't allow a little problem like a pre-teen body to get in the way of her career.

Traits: *(PV) Child, criminal, leader*

Radio Show 366

Post-Apocalyptic Pundit

"What good were their bombs and armies and high taxes? We'll never let them control our lives again! Instead, we will build our own golden future."

Appearance: He is gaunt and balding. He wears overalls and work boots and carries a sharp hay fork like a staff of office.

Roleplaying: Because of his years on the radio, where no one could see him, he rarely gestures with his hands. Even when his speech becomes passionate or animated, he keeps his arms still by his side

Personality: The first impression he gives is of a reasonable and even tempered person, but an opposing viewpoint quickly gets his dander up. He no longer tolerates dissenting opinions. If he can't sway a person's opinion with his usual spiel, he banishes them.

Motivation: Though he works to build a perfect society from the rubble of the old world, he secretly yearns to once again engage in political debate with a worthy opponent.

Background: He was a successful, ideologically-driven radio talk show host who now sees the downfall of civilization as proof that he was right, after all. After the fall, he gathered like-minded individuals who are now building a community based on his political philosophy.

Traits: *(TT) Entertainment, political*

Vantessa Milana 367

Dystopian Executive

"Nothing personal. It's economics."

Appearance: Her white hair is short and spiky and she has an upturned nose. She favors black suits with pencil skirts or trousers with sensible heels. The only dash of color is her blood red brooch in the shape of a fleur-de-lis, the corporate logo.

Roleplaying: When angry or frustrated, she twists a sterling silver computer stylus in her hands.

Personality: Already cold, she is slowly losing the capacity for interpersonal interactions of any meaning. She is able to compartmentalize, rationalize, and dehumanize with stunning alacrity.

Motivation: She seeks to continue her climb up the corporate ladder to magnify her earnings. She doesn't worry about sacrificing her soul—that was done long ago.

Background: Vantessa is a "consumption" specialist. She is in charge of replicating not just a single person, but entire community groups through a variety of processes including cloning, microbiology and nano-robotics. These mimics occupy whole social niches—"shadow" groups that can be used to offset shortages and surpluses in the marketplace. Need more miners? Vantessa can make as many as you want. The beauty in the creation of these shadows is that they are legally disposable. When it comes to the elimination of shadows, she often is careless, sweeping up actual people in her net for the sake of "efficiency."

Traits: *(TT) Business, power hungry*



Bishop Riscar

Artist: Avery Liell-Kok

Bishop Riscar 369

Charming Counselor

"You wish for the council to approve your colonization plans? I am the spiritual advisor to the chairman. I could speak on your behalf, provided you have brought the material."

Appearance: Riscar looks to be in his late seventies, with thinning white hair and wrinkled skin. His face shows fine, pulsing black lines running under his skin. He wears the ornate and heavy robes of his religious order.

Roleplaying: He moves slowly, as if he was made of lead. He nods slowly when he listens to people, and breathes shallowly with a slight wheezing sound.

Personality: Pleasant and charming, Riscar has a way of calming those around him. He is wise and knowledgeable in his religion, and a very capable spiritual advisor.

Motivation: He is always working to secure more material for his nanites. He is willing to trade his influence and position, making nearly any deal to obtain the material.

Background: Riscar is 200 years old, and an internal colony of nanites sustains him; the colony has fought off his aging for the past 100 years. The nanites keep him alive, but require a special, naturally occurring carbon crystal as fuel. The crystal is difficult to acquire, and the bishop works hard to keep supplied. He is so desperate to acquire his crystal, he is slowly and deliberately compromising his morals, sacrificing them one by one to a downward spiral without an end.

Traits: *(PV) Ancient, counselor, religious*

Jessica Teppins 368

Augmented Stalker

"You can't leave me! My last boyfriend left me and it nearly destroyed me! I didn't recover from that until the police drones discovered his frozen body outside of the ship and dragged it back into the airlock. Do you want me to have to go through that again?"

Appearance: She is petite, with naturally curly ginger hair. She wears sensible clothes, because they better conceal the scars from the many surgeries it took to install the bionic skeletal system that increases her strength tenfold.

Roleplaying: If a person is the object of her affection, she is abnormally happy to see them. If she decides the object of her affection needs to die, she sobs and screams while stabbing them repeatedly.

Personality: She is sweet enough to give you a toothache until you make her angry, then she's crazy enough to fracture your skull.

Motivation: Only her therapist knew for sure what she wants, and she killed him.

Background: Jessica has always had issues; they were apparent even before her parents were found drowned in their hot tub. Her trust fund made sure that she would never want for anything in the material world, but it seems that all she wants is true love. She thought she had found true love with Billy (decapitated), then Sylvester (both lungs punctured with fondue forks), and then Ramone (multiple cobra bites). Always a bridesmaid, so kill the bride.

Traits: *(PB) Abhorrent, aggressive, criminal, eccentric, wealthy*

Lu Ashgia 370

Brilliant Terrorist

"You attempt to enslave these perfect digital souls. Today, on this station, I set them free, and you had better hope one of you is smart enough to restore life support."

Appearance: Lu has Japanese ancestry, with straight black hair that she wears in a shoulder-length bob. She is of average height with a slim build. Tattoos of computer language symbols cover her body, giving her an exotic look.

Roleplaying: Lu does not make eye contact with people; she looks through them. She is condescending but well spoken.

Personality: Lu is highly intelligent and has trouble relating to people of lesser intelligence. She has little regard for her own species, finding humans lazy and barbaric.

Motivation: Lu believes that artificial intelligence is one step short of divinity, and she cannot rest while humanity has enslaved these divine souls inside machines to do labor.

Background: Lu is a brilliant computer scientist who changed after interfacing directly with her first artificial intelligence. In her spare time, she wrote a treatise on the divinity of AI. When her peers rebuffed her work, she radicalized. She regularly commits terrorist acts to free AIs from their "enslavers." Each attack is more extreme than the last, resulting in unheard-of loss of life as critical systems on starships and space stations have failed. These deaths only serve as notice of her seriousness.

Traits: *(PV) Abhorrent, focal, genius, occult, warrior*

Parae, the Sorceress of Grell

371

Confident Ex-Slave

"What a wonderful gift of the gods this vessel is! We have reclaimed our world. Let my magic now take us to the stars where our enemies hide!"

Appearance: Parae is an average-looking woman made beautiful through advanced cosmetics. She wears a simple outfit that blends Grellian style with futuristic fabrics and leaves little to the imagination. Her skin has a slight blue cast and glow.

Roleplaying: She is calm and confident but it's soon obvious that she has no real understanding of science or technology. Everything is magic to her.

Personality: Parae feels invincible. She does not negotiate except for the terms of her enemy's surrender. If treated as a queen, Parae can be quite civil, but she can turn at a moment's notice.

Motivation: She feels that the gods gave her a gift to destroy her enemies.

Background: Grell is a world rich in deposits of a rare mineral. The Quad-Star Corporation, eager to mine it, neglected to mention the Iron Age indigenous culture in its license submission. The corporation employed the natives as slave labor. Parae, a young native who escaped imprisonment, fled to a remote area and begged the gods for assistance. Instead, an alien craft crashed near her. Its computer needed a living pilot and selected Parae. It reads her mind and grants her wishes. With the ship, Parae freed her world and is now taking the fight to the rest of humanity.

Traits: *(WC) Beautiful, magical, primal, royalty*

Skyjack Garrett

372

Wisecracking Mercenary

"You're here to whack my boss and save the day, right? Well, I kicked your ass, and you thought you could take him out, so that would make me the meanest mother-frakker in the place. Since that's all settled, I guess you can die happy. Right now."

Appearance: A grizzled veteran, Skyjack wears a nasty smirk as he sizes people up. Lean and wiry, he's covered in tattoos and scars.

Roleplaying: His clever gallows humor is a brutal counterpoint to his violent and amoral actions.

Personality: He doesn't care about anyone else or anything else. His sense of humor isn't intended for them.

Motivation: Everything is just another job, with just another paycheck.

Background: Where do the best soldiers go after their leaders have wrung them dry and forgotten all about them? Some bury their emotions deep, and go on to become brutal mercenaries, doing whatever it takes to get through another day and cash another paycheck. Skyjack's only release is his sense of humor. His running monologue is meant for himself, but the rest of his crew enjoys it as well. Other than that, he is the perfect mercenary: amoral, violent, tough, aggressive, and smart enough to follow orders.

Traits: *(KS) Abhorrent, aggressive, humorous, military, warrior*

Krystin Rands

373

Pleasure-Seeking Harvester

"I'll come…you'll go. <sound of laser scalpel>"

Appearance: Black, elbow-length rubber gloves break to reveal the pale skin of her arms. A rubber bodysuit is complemented with red-laced, thigh-high leather boots. Her short black hair is cropped and her makeup is sultry and dark.

Roleplaying: Krystin has a sardonic sneer and a chip on her shoulder. She's friendly enough with other women but loathes speaking with men. Hate radiates from her eyes.

Personality: She looks upon men with disdain and gives them little consideration. She has a seething hatred of male-dominated establishments, particularly medicine.

Motivation: Krystin views herself as helping others where traditional medicine has failed. Her methods are simply more… dramatic. Her risks require compensation; nothing is for free.

Background: Having seen firsthand the effects of the privatization of medicine as a doctor, Krystin was horrified to see her patients in need of transplants or newly cloned/grown organs turned away because of an inability to pay. For a time, she worked in a chop shop, doing transplants on the side until she saw how desperate people had become. Now she harvests organs from those who no longer require them—preferably men—and sells them at deeply discounted rates. Krystin rewards her victims by raping them as she harvests their organs or shortly afterwards (when they make fewer objections). She's always on the prowl for her next healthy-looking "date."

Traits: *(DM) Abhorrent, criminal, medic, zealot*

Reverend Jasper Cletus

374

Religious Fanatic

"Technology is not helping you! These androids, medicines, AI phones, and synthetic foods are how the Devil seeps into your souls! You must do more than simply refuse them! You must punish those who use them! You must purge this world of the Devil's minions!"

Appearance: A tall and scrawny man, his chin always seems to have stubble on it, no matter when he last shaved it. His wrinkled suit is a tarnished white, and his tattered Bible has a worn leather binding.

Roleplaying: He cups the hands of his true believers and blesses them, then he points his finger at the heretics and damns them where they stand.

Personality: He is mercurial, and whatever emotion he feels at the moment, he displays with the intensity of a mad man.

Motivation: He believes that God has charged him with returning the world to Eden, and that doing so requires that all forms of technology be destroyed. Except for weapons—the Lord likes his warriors to be well armed.

Background: Jasper Cletus was once an atheist skeptic, until he lost his entire family in a tragic accident—a robotic cargo plane malfunctioned and crashed into his house, killing his wife and children. The government investigation ruled it an accident, but Jasper knew it was the work of the Devil and that God was punishing Jasper for his atheist ways. Now he walks the righteous path of the Lord.

Traits: *(PB) Charming, mysterious, religious, zealot*

Krystal Robins 375

Universal Failure

"It's no bother at all. Let me help you with that."

Appearance: Krystal is wiry and slouched, and her clothes are worn and unkempt.

Roleplaying: Though she feigns being helpful and eager, an astute observer will see that Krystal actually seethes with anger.

Personality: Krystal is bitter and annoyed at the world. She is petty and vindictive over seemingly minor slights. Directionless fury consumes her.

Motivation: Unable to stand any successful or beneficial person or initiative, Krystal is driven to sabotage them.

Background: Krystal was on the verge of being a giant name in the business community when everything started to fall apart. Every time she applied effort to a project, it would inevitably fail. Soon, just maintaining the status quo got difficult. In a downward spiral for no reason she could determine, everything she worked for fell apart in short order. Now, the only thing she can do to keep her life from getting any worse is to put forth no effort at all. She's doomed to be a nameless drone forever, and she's absolutely furious about it. She lashes out at others by working hard to help them, dooming them to failure along with her. Those who notice her connection to failing projects and people have investigated her as a saboteur, but no one can find any evidence that she's at fault, despite her fervent cooperation.

Traits: *(MN) Business, magical, mysterious, white collar*

Davis "Light Caller" Burns 376

Technological Swindler

"It's trapped in a matrix with feldspar...hold on, time for the wizard act. 'Goruga, Donal.'"

Appearance: Davis has gone native. Poorly spun linens of blue hang from his tall dark frame. His nose is crooked from a recent break, but his teeth still sparkle and his eyes gleam green.

Roleplaying: To locals, Davis is a wizard. He gets a kick out of using his technology to baffle and impress, improvising sweeping gestures and incantations for simple tasks (like turning on a lamp). Davis draws outsiders that are more sophisticated into private conference—or he ambushes them before they can spoil his setup.

Personality: He's afraid of galactic law, but can't give up the lifestyle. He'd rather manipulate the locals from the side than make himself the leader and target.

Motivation: Davis is self-consciously the modern man among the primitives; he sneers behind their backs. He's twitchy about computers and does all he can to avoid scans.

Background: After swindling half a planet, Davis is a wanted man. He decided to disappear from galactic culture and hide out. He couldn't resist meddling, so he used his confidence skills to become a wizard. Recently he discovered precious deposits that he'd like to export. He's planning to help conquer the neighboring tribes and enslave them as miners, if he can do so without personal risk.

Traits: *(SM) Counselor, criminal, leader, mysterious, primal*

Colonel Arnold Matheson 377

Angry General

"The only way to end this war is by eliminating their home planet. The time for diplomacy is long past!"

Appearance: Colonel Matheson has a sharp, hard face and his gray hair is cut in a severe military style. The expression on his face is cold and fierce.

Roleplaying: Colonel Matheson slams his fist into things as a way of expressing his anger. He doesn't yield easily, and he refuses to listen to logic that contradicts his way of seeing things.

Personality: Colonel Matheson is hardheaded and stern. Once he gets an idea in his head, he refuses to let it go. He pursues his goals with fury and ferocity.

Motivation: Colonel Matheson wishes to protect the planet from alien threat. He feels that the only way to do that is to completely defeat, and preferably destroy, the aliens.

Background: Colonel Matheson was 24 when the alien ship destroyed his hometown. He was driving into town for two weeks leave, when he watched the energy beam discharge into the heart of the city, seconds before it erupted into plasma and radiation. The official reports verified this view…only the official reports were wrong. The alien crew realized they were about to blow up, and were accelerating away to save the town below. Colonel Matheson knows better than to believe their alien lies. As one of the chief commanders of the planet's army, he won't stop until the aliens are eliminated.

Traits: *(JA) Aggressive, military, warrior*

Miare Fallwood 378

Violent Luddite

"You can't draw your blaster faster than I can throw my blade. Get out of my way, or I'll cut you down."

Appearance: Middle-aged and with hard eyes, Miare moves like a spacer but has the tanned, lined face of a colonist. She carries a curved sword and an assortment of knives.

Roleplaying: Disdainful and bitter, she looks for opportunities to point out the weaknesses of technology and the many failings of those around her.

Personality: Miare is ruthless, persistent, and disturbed. She's a terrorist waging asymmetrical warfare against the galaxy's most advanced civilizations in the hopes of deflating humanity's hubris.

Motivation: Miare fantasizes about weaning humanity from technology, but realizes this is a pipe dream—she'll settle for ensuring that no one ever tries to terraform a world again.

Background: Miare joined the Waybridge Colony just before the Catastrophe—a global event caused by faulty terraforming that wiped out the entire colony. Deeply scarred by the Catastrophe, Miare has become a Luddite, seeking out and destroying symbols of mankind's technological prowess—and killing those who stand in her way. She's just cracked enough to not realize that what she's doing is completely irrational. Miare sees all high technology as a potential threat, and wants humanity to rely on it as little as possible. She's skilled with swords and knives, and knows enough about starships to ensure that hers, the *Necessary Evil*, is one of the safest and most reliable around.

Traits: *(MR) Aggressive, primal, warrior, zealot*

Danson Ur 379

Self-Absorbed Agent

"You've a face for the vidscreen! What's it going to take to get a private audition?"

Appearance: Danson has chiseled features, a bleached-blond crew cut, and wears a DiVonni suit with an upraised collar. Numerous rings adorn his fingers. He always wears a pair of dark sunglasses to mask his modified eyes. Their visual augmentation allows him to see just fine.

Roleplaying: He's tactile in nature—especially with the ladies—and talks energetically with his hands. He's a laid-back guy who waves people over and makes sweeping gestures. Danson spreads the charm (and credits) liberally.

Personality: Everything about Danson says that he's always out to get something from someone, and not to be trusted. He loves being the center of attention and having people owe him favors. He has an eye for talent and closing the deal.

Motivation: Danson is always looking for the next "big thing." He craves power but not celebrity. He wants to make stars…or destroy them. It's all about Danson.

Background: His ex-girlfriend turned him onto the entertainment business, where he briefly did some modeling before becoming an agent. It was hard work and he had little success; high-end talent is just too flaky, he found. He now does full-body image scans, takes DNA samples of his potential clients, and sells them to entertainment conglomerates for cloning. He literally "makes" the next vidstar. It's all highly illegal, and Danson has to drug his subjects first…or worse.

Traits: *(DM) Criminal, eccentric, entertainment*

Juan Leveller 380

Sensational Investigator

"People cloak their debased actions, calling them private. Few are willing to work as hard as I do to bring down the corrupt."

Appearance: Juan is movie-star handsome—he has bright teeth, gray eyes, dark tan skin reflecting a diverse heritage, and he's tall at 6'3".

Roleplaying: Up-speak is a vice of Juan's—many of his statements sound like questions due to a rising tone at the end of the sentence, or adding "right?" to the end of factual statements.

Personality: He's nosy—if there's a secret, he wants to know it. Then he wants to punish people for hiding it in the first place.

Motivation: Juan loves attention and accolades. He wants his answers complete and immediate—he's grown used to tasting the fear of his targets, and revels in it.

Background: Juan's start came in college, where he caught a professor sleeping with students and giving out grades to match. His exposé was thorough, including recordings of sex, copies of four student diaries, and the correlated revision history in the grading software. Since then, he has brought down politicians, religious leaders, and business people, always to great reviews. These days, he hires people to sieve data or break into protected systems to satisfy his curiosity. The consequences of his revelations only encourage him. When people flee, humiliated by exposure, he feels a glow of righteousness.

Traits: *(SM) Dilettante, entertainment, focal*

Dreo Durant, "Skullsplitter" 381

Remorseful Space Pirate

"You'll never take me alive. Believe me, hundreds have tried."

Appearance: Dreo wears her dirty blond hair in a tight ponytail, and has a long scar on the left side of her neck. She wears practical clothes and carries a well-used ax on her hip.

Roleplaying: Dreo fights only grudgingly, when she's run out of other options. She uses nonlethal force unless her life is on the line, and will flee without pride if offered the chance. When she speaks, she sounds sad.

Personality: She's a conflicted person, with the better part of her nature—the part that recognizes all the evil she's done—fiercely opposed by her unwillingness to actually pay for her crimes.

Motivation: Dreo is searching for a means of redemption that doesn't involve her being executed or rotting in prison for the rest of her life, but knows she's unlikely to find it.

Background: Formerly known as Skullsplitter, one of the most notorious pirates in all of known space, Dreo now regrets her many crimes—but refuses to face justice for them. With dozens of bounties on her head, her life is constant flight from pursuit. She fights only when it's absolutely necessary, and tries not to kill those she's forced to engage—but she'll never back down. Despite her genuine remorse, her stubbornness combined with the tenacity of her pursuers will eventually spill over into a major conflict that could lead to thousands of casualties.

Traits: *(MR) Criminal, notorious, pilot, warrior*

Dr. Foster Issan 382

Scheming Scientist

"The IX-11 strain was potent, but some back-water doctor made a cure for it from some root. The IX-12 strain has been improved, with only one cure: ours."

Appearance: Dr. Issan is tall, with wide shoulders and short blond hair. His look is youthful, but his eyes reveal his true age. He wears expensive suits in the latest styles.

Roleplaying: Foster often idly rubs his hands together. When he looks at someone, he studies that person with a predator's eye for weakness.

Personality: Foster is selfish and scheming. He is always looking for a way to manipulate events so that outcomes benefit him. No person is his equal. Lovers and friends are just pieces in the chess game of his life.

Motivation: Foster does everything for his own betterment. His business exists solely to generate the funds that let him do whatever he wants.

Background: Dr. Issan started as a researcher in a large pharmaceutical mega-corporation. He soon realized that he had no desire to help heal humankind, but he did grow to appreciate the workings of the pharmaceutical business. He was amazed at the sums people would pay to avoid being sick. He left his job, started an underground laboratory to mutate diseases, and founded a company that creates the cures. His success in treating his custom diseases has built him a fortune. Foster has become emboldened, creating planet-wide epidemics, and has his eye on a galactic pandemic.

Traits: *(PV) Business, famous, focal, scientist, wealthy*

Emily Openheimer 383

Ruthless Executive

"As the CEO of Galactico Enterprises I can assure you that we are relocating the people of this star system to their new homes as painlessly as possible. Yet we do have a government contract to honor, and we'll have no choice but to deploy our corporate military force to restore order if the protests continue. That's just business."

Appearance: She wears sharp black suits and takes a minimalist approach to her hair and make-up. Her age is beginning to show, though, and she worries what the stockholders will think.

Roleplaying: She expects results fast, and if someone is taking too long for her liking, she snaps her fingers at them and orders them to "Shape up!"

Personality: She never dabbles in small talk. All she wants to know is what the cost of the investment is and what the expected profits are. She leaves the ethical issues for the academics to debate.

Motivation: She doesn't just want to run the company, she wants to own it.

Background: Emily was not the most innovative or successful business manager at Galactico when she did things by the book. So she started cutting corners, and soon her division had record profits after a few well-placed bribes got rid of the pesky government safety investigators. Now she's the CEO, and she intends to keep having record profits no matter what.

Traits: *(PB) Business, focal, criminal, power hungry, white collar*

Paris Chiang-Armstrong 384

Spoiled Rich Kid

"Oh, please. Don't take any of this personally; it's just business."

Appearance: An immaculately groomed middle-aged man, Paris sits behind a very trendy desk when he's in his office. He wears the latest clothes, tattoos, and technological accessories.

Roleplaying: He is aristocratic to the point of being a dandy. He judges people strictly on appearance, and talks down to anyone dressed poorly.

Personality: He's been swimming in money for so long that he is oblivious to the effects of his business dealings.

Motivation: He needs to liquidate enough businesses to support his lifestyle.

Background: When one of the most prolific fashion designers had a child late in life, it was quite a story. But life goes on, and the pictures of the old lady and her baby became commonplace, and eventually all but forgotten. Paris was forgotten, too; shipped off to various schools and camps, he barely knew his mother before she passed away. He inherited a massive fortune, but he's squandered it on bad business dealings, lost it to lawsuits, and spent it on lavish parties. Now he is selling off his mother's businesses in order to feed his lifestyle and pay his debts. He has no concept or interest in how his actions impact entire planetary regions dedicated to supplying the silk for his late mother's trademark lace, or that the unethical buyer of one company is auctioning off her classified designs for high-mobility military body armor.

Traits: *(KS) Beautiful, business, dilettante, wealthy*

Jae Blaidon 385

Unshakable Military Commander

"I seek only order and an end to this rebellion. They are but a minority, and I must take the course that harms the least!"

Appearance: Jae's dark red military suit fits him snugly, and the scar on his face only adds a touch of experience and harshness to his demeanor. Jae's face sometimes shows the smallest hint of compassion, but it's pushed aside quickly.

Roleplaying: He is always open to negotiation, but quick action often gets better results. He has seen the lengths the rebels will go to and steels his heart so that he can go one step further.

Personality: Jae feels compassion and does not enjoy his position. He understands the big-picture implications and will not yield to a course of action that dooms the planet.

Motivation: He knows that the rebels have been treated unfairly, but his planet does not have many resources and a prolonged rebellion will cause great disaster. He wants to end the rebellion quickly to prevent the supply crisis it will cause.

Background: Jae did not relish being put in charge of the counter rebellion forces, but seeing the poverty rampant in his community, he realized that someone with long term goals needed to be in that position. Jae has been systematically destroying rebellion strongholds without mercy, but has also kept channels for diplomatic solutions open. He does not relish the deaths, but would rather kill thousands than see millions starve.

Traits: *(JA) Leader, military, warrior*

Amira Ny'bel 386

Cybernetic Gang Leader

"I didn't become the head of this gang because I have any motherly instincts, it's because I'm wired to put a bullet into a CorpSec, a bartender, or one of you, without a thought. Now let's hit the street."

Appearance: Amira is of average height with a toned body. She has a number of visible cybernetic implants, and several more that aren't. She wears her hair shaved on the sides, the top spiked up. She has numerous piercings and tattoos.

Roleplaying: Amira has no empathy for people. Anyone who shows weakness only annoys her. She curses constantly when she speaks.

Personality: Amira is hardened, with only a passing concept of friendship that translates to "mutually useful." She has a strong tendency for violence that was implanted long ago.

Motivation: Amira just wants to survive. She knows that she is too far altered to ever be a normal person again. She is desperate to find something or someone who can cause her to be passionate about anything.

Background: Amira was born in a combat zone in the city. She survived high school and enrolled in the military to escape the city. She never speaks about the six years she was gone and what was done to her, but she returned to the city calloused and violent. She quickly established dominance in her old neighborhood, and now runs a gang that performs all manner of crimes.

Traits: *(PV) Aggressive, criminal, military, mysterious*

Supreme Overlord Mercury Neptune

387

Rakish Mastermind

"Oho, you think you can outrun my zeppelin armada, do you? <twirls mustache>"

Appearance: With a black top hat, a purple-tinted monocle, crossed dueling sabers stuck into his belt, and a mustache that extends past his ears, Mercury is a steampunk stereotype extraordinaire.

Roleplaying: For Mercury, every slight is an excuse to challenge someone to a duel—and every slight he can't immediately avenge is cause to send in his fleet of zeppelins. "To the zeppelins!" is his favorite phrase.

Personality: Raised by Siberian tigers and trained by Tibetan monks, Mercury Neptune has always known that he's destined to rule the world. All setbacks are temporary, all so-called "heroes" are just speed bumps on the road to domination, and the duel is the highest form of combat. He's the perfect man, and will bend an imperfect world to his will.

Motivation: Mercury Neptune is nuts, but in the manner of the greatest classic villains. He'll never kill the PCs when he could suspend them over a volcano filled with robot sharks instead.

Background: It's hard not to laugh at Supreme Overlord Mercury Neptune, but few people get a chance to do it more than once. He's an insane criminal mastermind with a fleet of zeppelins, a penchant for dueling (which he excels at), and a robot gorilla bodyguard named Gorillax. Mercury has the wealth and resources to try just about any crazy plan for world domination.

Traits: *(MR) Criminal, eccentric, focal, genius, humorous, notorious, pilot, warrior, wealthy*

Atley Mohrong

388

Faction Leader

"Good god, I miss the days when we solved problems by shoving folks out of an airlock."

Appearance: Ruggedly handsome with a square jaw and thick beard, he has a body made hard by long hours of physical labor. He wears a patched all-purpose overall and heavy work boots. He carries a hefty wrench as long as his forearm.

Roleplaying: His footfalls are heavy, almost a marching stomp.

Personality: He's as gruff as he is hard, a man whose whole life is tied up in the efficacy of his faction. The only thing he trusts is his instincts, which have served him well.

Motivation: Atley wants to keep his faction in line, expand its territory and influence, and do what he can to affect the management of the interstellar outpost.

Background: He was among the thugs, lowlifes, and undesirables from the home world recruited for high-risk/high-reward jobs on an interstellar outpost. The workers organized themselves into factions as conflicts arose over the competition for the better paying or less risky work assignments. Faction leaders who secured the best situations rose in influence. Of course, Atley wasn't above resolving some of those conflicts with intimidation and violence. The factions now facilitate the trade for items—especially, drugs, alcohol and prostitution—that are otherwise forbidden by outpost managers.

Traits: *(TT) Criminal, leader*



Supreme Overlord Mercury Neptune

Artist: Christopher Reach

Melisant Profit 389

Mastermind Kingpin

"Really? Care to make a wager on that?"

Appearance: A slender woman with ice-white hair that runs down past her shoulders, she has cool blue eyes. Her matching white skirt and blouse features metallic elements woven into the fabric, which sparkle in the light. Her tall heels click on the ground as she walks.

Roleplaying: She's demure and subtle in conversation, talking around the topic and making suggestive remarks. Mel has a lingering touch and intense gaze that is off-putting to many.

Personality: A carefree spirit, Mel is eager to wager and take risks. Big ones. She'll rise to a challenge if provoked but intellectually weighs the odds in her favor. She's prone to dramatic mood swings and depression.

Motivation: Bet large or go home. She's focused on carving out her empire and enjoys the thrill of the risks. There's no point in living if you can't feel alive. Stuff can be replaced.

Background: Mel runs a legitimate gambling and entertainment consortium, willing to take bets on any number of activities (a few less-than-reputable). She's able to find just about anything for the right price and will wager information and valuables to suit her whim. Mel can't pass up the thrill of taking a risk and is drawn to those who will play her game with her. She's focused on her larger macro-economic empire rather than her individual businesses of drugs, slavery, or gun smuggling. She has a twin sister.

Traits: *(DM) Eccentric, entertainment, focal, genius, leader*

Nick Maverick 390

Blackmailing Cop

"Careful. You don't want to be on the wrong side of the law."

Appearance: Nick is tall, gangly fellow with a hollow-cheeked face and greasy, slicked-back hair. He has a data jack below his left temple and wears an armored trench coat reinforced with ceramic plates.

Roleplaying: Eager to exchange information about criminal activity, Nick speaks with a voice roughened by his smoking addiction. He checks his handheld computer incessantly for updates on his cases.

Personality: Despite his career in law enforcement, Nick is a manipulative weasel. He uses any information he can to leverage people into doing what he tells them.

Motivation: Nick wants to take control of criminal syndicates using blackmail.

Background: A crooked cop of the worst sort, Nick does brilliant investigative work but usually brings in only minor or mid-level criminals. He runs off-book investigations of his own and, between those and information he steals from police files, has built an extensive collection of dossiers on many high-ranking criminals. Nick then blackmails criminal organizations into following his orders. He uses the criminal organizations to eliminate enemies, kill competitors, and to bring down the syndicates his dirt won't disrupt.

Traits: *(MN) Aggressive, criminal, focal, police, power hungry, stealthy*

Tennor Blackfinch 391

Vile Spaceport Owner

"Aww, what a shame you can't pay for repairs. Come sit on Uncle Tennor's lap and touch me right there, and I'll see what I can do."

Appearance: Corpulent and perpetually shiny with sweat, Tennor rarely bathes or changes clothes. He wears the tightest pants possible.

Roleplaying: Tennor acts like a ladies' man towards women. Towards men, he's brusque and dismissive. He relishes his repulsiveness.

Personality: With an outsized sexual appetite and no redeeming qualities, Tennor has learned to scheme and plot his way to getting what he wants. His love of power and scheming is second only to his love of abusive sex.

Motivation: Tennor likes to have power over others. He enjoys watching people squirm when they know he has what they need, and then making them suffer—sexually, if possible—to get it.

Background: The owner of a spaceport, Tennor Blackfinch is as corrupt as the day is long. He encourages smuggling, welcomes slavers, and uses a spider web of bribery and blackmail to stay under the radar. A master at spotting weak and vulnerable people, and at making others uncomfortable, he keeps prostitutes on hand to pleasure him surreptitiously during long meetings. His perfect day is one that ends with a young woman literally gagging at the thought of what she's going to have to do to get her ship out of port without paying launch fees—and then doing it.

Traits: *(MR) Abhorrent, business, criminal, focal, notorious, power hungry, white collar*

Kestra Kale 392

Psychic Criminal

"There is nothing you can hide from me. I know your secrets better than you do."

Appearance: A short woman who wears her hair in a severe bun, Kestra typically wears utilitarian clothing. She shows little emotion no matter what is happening around her.

Roleplaying: She usually asks shocking questions just to make her victim think of useful information (it's easier for her to pull surface thoughts). She only engages in conversation when she wants something.

Personality: She is practically emotionless because that's her psychic defense to constantly reading minds. She desires no human intimacy; that would be too intense for her.

Motivation: Kestra is building a place of solitude on a remote moon. Once she has it ready, she plans to retire there a wealthy, if lonely, person.

Background: Kestra was born with great psychic ability. It wasn't long before she used her powers for personal gain. She blackmailed teachers, stole spouses, and learned answers to questions before they were asked. When she reached her twenties, her psychic abilities proved too intense and she suffered a backlash. A psychic doctor helped her close parts of her mind, but Kestra decided she wanted more, a place away from people. She sells her ability to criminals in order to get the money to build her dream home.

Traits: *(WC) Criminal, magical*

Jordana Callow 393

Interplanetary Customs Officer

"Be advised that you are in violation of Code 12884-55-c, Loitering in a Public Venue. I'll have to cite you for that. Come with me."

Appearance: A young female customs officer in a crisply pressed uniform, Jordana most often wears a disapproving expression.

Roleplaying: Her love of authority makes her almost hostile.

Personality: She's a natural-born hall monitor, and tries to control every situation she's in.

Motivation: She is driven to enforce the letter and the spirit of the law, whichever is greater.

Background: Brought up in the sheltered environment of the planetary suburbs, Jordana prided herself on always doing the right thing, and had a long-standing fascination with space stations. A career in interplanetary customs was an obvious choice for her, and some family connections got her into the academy. She graduated near the top of her class, and has worked her way through a number of assignments, usually uncovering corruption and sloppy work by the agents. She's now in a supervisory position in a high-traffic space station, and does not cut anyone any slack. She's unpopular with everyone but the station commander, who doesn't like dealing with civilians and would rather they go elsewhere. She has a long memory, can recall faces almost perfectly, and can carry a grudge forever.

Traits: *(KS) Aggressive, leader, police*

Thadd Brady 394

Galactic Superstar

"What can I say? I'm the superstar of this team. You know, they say there's no 'I' in team, but there is an 'M' and an 'E.'"

Appearance: He's a huge beast of a man, just under seven feet tall with rippling muscles under his jetball uniform. His gleaming jetball championship rings are tiny in comparison to his large hands. A diamond-studded pendant hanging from his chest reads "Thadd."

Roleplaying: Larger than life, Thadd crushes hands with his handshake and dislodges bones with backslaps of greeting. His face droops slightly to the side when he's in thought or trying to use complete sentences—which isn't often.

Personality: He's as dumb as a brick at times, and just as tough. He's built a reputation as the galaxy's best jetball player and has legions of fans as well as haters.

Motivation: Thadd's goal is simply to stay number one at all costs, even as his career winds down. He'll run over anyone who gets in his way.

Background: Thadd is used to getting his way, from becoming the number one pick in the draft to leading the Citadel Galaxy of the JFL to three championships. Ugly contract disputes, threats of demanding a trade, and general grandstanding on the field have turned Thadd into an infamous player but for the wrong reasons. He revels in the boos of the crowd and crushes his opponents—to the detriment of the team.

Traits: *(DM) Aggressive, famous, primal*

Rodolf Korteweg 395

Conflicted Geneticist

"We can make advances, great advances, in this field that will help all of mankind. But cloning of higher mammals? No. That is the Creator's work, and I will not be a part of it!"

Appearance: He wears a cross prominently as part of his attire, either as a lapel pin or a necklace. He favors dark clothes.

Roleplaying: He keeps a Bible displayed prominently on his office desk or on the podium when lecturing.

Personality: He views many of his peers as arrogant and unethical, and he is cold and unforgiving in meetings with them. Ordinarily, he is stern and gruff, though not mean.

Motivation: He works to stop scientists who engage in research that undermines the work of the Creator, especially efforts to clone higher mammals and humans.

Background: As a scientist, Rodolf always held his religious views close to his chest. Not until colleagues began to make what he thought were unwarranted attempts at cloning did he feel honor-bound to oppose them. He then became more forthcoming about his religious views, using his position and authority to sidetrack or delay such experiments, when possible. He has begun to attract like-minded scientists to his cause, but he has been faced by an equally visceral reaction from scientists who advocate advancement through cloning. His methods are growing more extreme, and it's only a matter of time until he turns to violence.

Traits: *(TT) Religious, scientist*

Bianca Wyld ("Black Widow") 396

Psychic Assassin

"I told him that I'd give him a night that he'd never forget. And he didn't. Well, at least for the few seconds he was still breathing, anyway."

Appearance: Black Widow is beautiful and sophisticated, sultry and sexy. She always wears fashionable clothes that accentuate her assets. She always seems to be exactly what her victim wants her to be.

Roleplaying: She always knows exactly what to say in order to convince her victim to take her somewhere private. She can drive a victim wild with a single look.

Personality: Beneath the sex, Black Widow is a cold, calculating assassin. She enjoys playing the game, so long as it ends with her victim's dying breaths. It's a huge turn-on for her to know that she is the final partner her victim will have.

Motivation: She kills for money, but she intensely enjoys her work.

Background: Black Widow, a.k.a. Bianca Wyld, enrolled in a psychic program when she was young. While she eventually washed out, Bianca discovered that she could read people's minds and emotions, but only enough to make herself pleasing to them. She became an assassin, modifying body parts to secrete potent poisons. She never appears as the same person twice and can change everything from skin color to accent, making her difficult to spot. She always poisons her victim during intimate encounters, when she can feel her victim's last moments.

Traits: *(WC) Beautiful, charming, criminal, magical*



Estella Porphyria

Artist: Avery Liell-Kok

Chrysanthemum Solace 397

Beautiful Slaver

"That frog translates seven languages and eats only compost—a bargain at 172."

Appearance: Chrysanthemum is perfectly toned; light muscle keeps her body taut. Her blond hair and coy smile have snared many a man. Her brown eyes glitter invitingly.

Roleplaying: She gets what she wants, but she'll smile first to see if she can get it from an adoring fan without paying a penny. She's willing to pay, of course, but the world is filled with dupes.

Personality: Ms. Solace is a passionate believer; she knows that only humans have souls. Profiting by the sale and servitude of aliens doesn't prick her conscience a bit.

Motivation: Chrysanthemum believes in the superiority of humans, but appreciates the reinforcement of her beliefs when aliens are debased. The profit and lifestyle—including the prick of danger—are part of the appeal.

Background: When she was a girl, the world indulged Chrysanthemum, praised her endless beauty, and suffered many a broken heart at her whimsy. Once, she actually fell in love. But it didn't last; her love grew to hate his subordinate role in the relationship. Crushed, Chrysanthemum turned to her priest for help. With his advice, she found confidence and a strong framework to guide her again. The lure of the shortcut was strong; she was entertained by criminals, drawn in by their wealth and direct adoration, and soon had a whole network of dangerous friends and suppliers.

Traits: *(SM) Abhorrent, beautiful, criminal, merchant*

Estella Porphyria 398

Scheming Politician

"Children, I have played this game since before your parents were born. You are so charming, like little heroes, but do not think that such as you can stand against progress."

Appearance: Like something out of an early 20th century painting, Estella is a grandmotherly woman who sets her knitting aside and stands up from her comfortable chair to greet people with a smile.

Roleplaying: Regardless of what she says or does, she is always polite and gracious.

Personality: She is arrogant, but hides it well. She is stubborn, but she will listen to others. She won't change her mind unless she learns of a new factor in her scheming.

Motivation: She wants her family's long-term plans for political domination to come to fruition.

Background: A testament to modern medicine, she looks like someone half her century-plus age. Behind her kind and gentle appearance lies a scheming mind and cold heart. The matron of her vast and powerful family, Estella pulls the strings that control entire economies and political systems, and is managing multiple decades-long projects in order to increase her family's vast power. Despite her appearance, she will aggressively protect her family and their goals. The "kindly grandmother" act is a front, an attempt to win the confidence of others. She will sit and talk for quite a while, and won't reveal her true nature until it is entirely too late.

Traits: *(KS) Ancient, counselor, eccentric, political, power hungry*

Alex Stroyer 399

Compromised Cyborg Diplomat

"I feel negotiations are going well. There is much the Etrani have to offer us."

Appearance: Tall and neat, well-groomed Alex Stroyer wears a blue, button-less military uniform with diplomat's epaulets on the shoulders. His piercing eyes betray just a hint of the nano-circuitry embedded throughout his nervous system.

Roleplaying: Alex Stroyer speaks in a calculated but charming way. He combines humanity and technology, giving him the ability to parse every word he speaks for maximum effect. He moves with a precision unavailable to unmodified humans.

Personality: Stroyer is friendly and willing to help. His calm and controlled nature is tuned to provide a soothing balm in tense situations.

Motivation: Alex's original mission was to act as a liaison to the Etrani, an alien race. Once they compromised his mechanical systems, he became a sleeper agent working to subvert and sabotage the planet to prepare for an invasion.

Background: Alex Stroyer wanted to be the best; that meant being grafted with nano-circuitry implants when he joined the diplomatic core. They granted him access to volumes of knowledge on the countries and races he negotiated with, and the ability to check every action before performing it. The circuitry also left him vulnerable to the Etrani's virus. Since the programming that prevents him from lying is supposedly undefeatable, none suspect him of being a double agent, or of committing the numerous sabotages that have occurred in the military bases he visits.

Traits: *(JA) Academic, counselor, military, scholar*

Adonis Chandler 400

Anti-Establishment Terrorist

"How much security can your system offer if I was able to get to you here, like this?"

Appearance: Adonis' honed, taught frame is a result of the intensive training that he puts himself through. A scar runs from his left temple all the way across his face and down his jaw, a souvenir of his time in a correctional facility.

Roleplaying: Adonis speaks slowly and has a mesmerizing quality to his voice. In his video propaganda, he rarely looks at the camera; his dispassionate face serves as a counterpoint to his violent crimes.

Personality: Adonis doesn't care about the lives he takes, only the message he spreads. He sees himself as a cruel angel, shearing the sheep so that they may know the cold and seek shelter.

Motivation: He seeks to awaken the people to the true nature of the corporation's control. He wants to shatter their illusion of security and gain his revenge.

Background: The cities are crowded and the people are sheep. Adonis was once like them, before he became an issue the corporation needed to deal with. Framed and sent to an off-world correctional facility, he was exposed to many harsh conditions and misfortunes before escaping back to his planet. He began a series of systematic terrorist attacks on key figures and institutions, attempting to awake the people from their stability and security.

Traits: *(JA) Hideous, political, zealot*

Dr. Robert Casey 401

Oblivious Scientist

"This power is not dangerous! It will be the saving of mankind!"

Appearance: Dr. Casey's gray hair is pulled back into a short ponytail, and his body is slightly hunched. His sharp face and wire glasses do not make him particularly attractive, but his warmth shows through his face.

Roleplaying: Dr. Casey does not see himself as evil, but his mind has slowly been corrupted by the latent energy in the alien ship he has been studying. He is friendly, but a piece of his mind secretly works against people who would take him from the craft.

Personality: His personality is slowly being split. One part of him is the friendly researcher; the other is the jealous guardian of the alien power. His friendly side has no idea what his hidden side does.

Motivation: He seeks to study the vessel, though his hidden side is being manipulated to revive it.

Background: Dr. Casey has made great progress studying an alien craft, even reviving its unique and unfathomable power source. Unbeknownst to him, the power source is a complex, sentient damage repair system. It has reached out and corrupted his mind, prompting him to provide the organic pieces it needs for self-repair. First Dr. Casey's hidden side murdered homeless people for the device, but now it requires heartier specimens. His natural defense mechanisms have turned against him, and he blots out any memory of his atrocities.

Traits: *(JA) Academic, focal, power hungry, scholar*

Raymond Hunter 402

Brainwashed Celebrity

"Down with the Man! Only dead fish go with the stream!"

Appearance: Raymond is slender, with a golden-brown tan. He's spectacularly dressed in an expensive yet casual style. Dark designer shades hide his exhausted, bloodshot eyes.

Roleplaying: Though his passion to overthrow the establishment is seemingly boundless, Raymond lacks the ability to debate any of the related facts or issues coherently. Instead, he parrots slogans and protest chants.

Personality: Weak-minded and easily swayed, Raymond has been forcibly brainwashed by a combination of exhaustion and a high-tech gadget, leaving him tired and easily confused.

Motivation: Raymond is fully devoted to the cause of bringing down the established power structure to bring about an anarchist state.

Background: A radical anarchist cell kidnapped Raymond, a well-known celebrity, and brainwashed him. The cell's mind control device ensures that Raymond performs as their front man to help them gather public support and resources. The brainwashing process weakened Raymond's already less-than-bright mind, making him prone to follow orders from almost anyone. The anarchists assigned to Raymond a cadre of handlers who run interference and keep Raymond as focused as possible on the task at hand.

Traits: *(MN) Beautiful, charming, entertainment, famous, humorous, political, wealthy, zealot*

Reverend Johnny Skywalker 403

Self-Centered Preacher

"Man has always carried the Way within him. Look inside yourself, and see the face of divinity, as I do."

Appearance: A fit young man, Johnny wears an archaic black shirt with a white collar, and gestures energetically at the sky when he preaches.

Roleplaying: He's friendly, but very condescending. He talks mostly about himself, and peppers his language with references to the Way.

Personality: He's narcissistic, and justifies his desires with his religion.

Motivation: On the surface, he is dedicated to leading others; deep down, he does what he wants.

Background: A natural-born wanderer, Johnny looked to many religions before settling on an obscure cult called the Way of Life. The Book of the Way is exceedingly vague, using cryptic references and obscure imagery that can be interpreted in many ways. Johnny subconsciously interprets the Way as being identical to his own desires, and uses the Book to justify them and to manipulate his followers into doing what he wants. He isn't corrupt in the sense that he steals money, but he might imply that something bad should happen to those who doubt him, or that a prostitute give to the Way in the only manner she knows. Accused of impropriety, he'll retreat behind quotes from the Book, such as, "The shallow will question the deep, but know nothing of the currents therein." His energy has built him quite a following.

Traits: *(KS) Eccentric, leader, power hungry, religious*

Prince Lucius Rhordan 404

Erratic Playboy

"Ahh...I thought this race to the outer moon was going to be more exciting. This bores me. Open fire on the other ship, and set a course for home."

Appearance: Lucius is short, with a largish nose and a poor complexion. His curly brown hair is tied into a ponytail. He carries a cane made of a very expensive metal.

Roleplaying: Lucius' moods are unpredictable; he can be friendly one moment and vitriolic the next. He prefers to lounge rather than stand or sit. He waves his cane around as if drawing the words he is speaking.

Personality: He is erratic in mood and thought; a good idea one moment can be tossed aside the next. Lucius is also a dilettante with no capacity to invest effort into anything. Coupled with his erratic moods, he is destructive when something loses his interest.

Motivation: He pursues anything that catches his eye, until he finds something more interesting. His only motivation is entertainment.

Background: Lucius is a prince of a rich solar system. He grew up spoiled, with no responsibilities. He's a playboy who travels around with a platoon of guards on his heavily armed ship and gets into trouble. The people of his system know him for his erratic and violent behavior. Because of his reputation, Lucius makes friends with travelers, letting himself get caught up in their schemes until he gets bored and turns on them just to see what happens.

Traits: *(PV) Dilettante, notorious, royalty, wealthy*

Titania Drusis 405

Feral Wanderer

"Back! Down! Graaarr."

Appearance: Lean and feral, the dark ritual scars covering most of Titania's body draw eyes. Her dark hair is tangled, her clothing is torn, and she's covered in scrapes and bruises.

Roleplaying: Titania is brusque; two words are a sufficient answer for anything. Her eyes constantly dart about, and she moves like a wild animal, tensing and sliding, never casually walking.

Personality: She is illiterate and savage, living in an incomprehensible world.

Motivation: Trying to survive, Titania lives in the now. Little remains of her old life; in sleep she sometimes dreams of her past, but only fleeting visions carry into the morning.

Background: Titania grew up a member of the underclass, one of the invisible workers, until she crossed paths with a slumming lowlife. She became his project; imprisoned, memory wiped, and turned feral. She learned well and escaped through the ducts and pipes he never noticed. Unable to work, she kills to survive. The scars are self-inflicted, corresponding to hazy visions from dreams.

Traits: *(SM) Artist, impoverished, primal, stealthy*

Vice President Tovrin Cable 406

Incompetent Executive

"Of course I've requisitioned the proper supplies for...oh, well, I'll get to it! Now get out!"

Appearance: Tovrin wears crisp business suits and has his hair styled daily. He's always sweating and changes his shirt at least three times a day. He's constantly checking his data-pad and rarely looks up.

Roleplaying: He is calm and stable as long as his decisions aren't questioned. When this happens Tovrin quickly becomes agitated and blurts out justifications, growing less coherent as he continues.

Personality: He knows that he's out of his element but doesn't want to admit it. He blames others for his failures and constantly reassures his cousin that everything is under control.

Motivation: Tovrin simply wants to keep his position.

Background: Rimworld Corporation CEO Janis Field placed Tovrin, her cousin, in charge of the gas refineries of the Donar sector. Tovrin had a degree but had never amounted to anything; Janis sent him to Donar because it seemed an easy task. Unfortunately, a gas shortage led the company to demand more gas. Tovrin's ineffective leadership meant that he was leaning on the refiners while depriving them of needed equipment. Tovrin eagerly sends in security to stifle any protestors. Tovrin has also made a deal with gas pirates; he shares the rival ships' course information with the pirates in order to keep his refinery intact. The pirates have turned the tables and blackmailed Tovrin into providing cover for other illegal activities.

Traits: *(WC) Aggressive, business, white collar*

Lo Valain 407

Charismatic Priestess

"Have you ever considered your cosmic destiny? Come, let me show you something that will change your life."

Appearance: Tall and curvaceous, Lo has flowing black hair that hangs to her ankles, heavy-lidded eyes, and a vampire's smile. She dresses like a Greek goddess.

Roleplaying: Lo is gracious and welcoming to all, and makes physical contact with everyone she speaks to.

Personality: Sensuous in a sinister, magnetic way, Lo knows the effect she has on others; it's just another tool in her arsenal. She excels at winning people to her perspective and commands unwavering loyalty from her followers.

Motivation: She won't admit it, but what Lo really likes is power. She truly believes the Church's founding idea, but as it may not be achieved in her lifetime, her focus is on acquiring followers.

Background: Lo is the founder and High Priestess of the Church of Nova, a cult dedicated to the belief that cosmic unity can only be achieved by dying in a supernova. Since space is big and supernovae are rare, the Church's faithful comb the galaxy in a ragtag fleet, recruiting new members along the way. As a villain, Lo shines when a star that's about to go nova enters the picture. She'll accelerate the process with specially prepared missiles, and ultimately will wipe out thousands of innocent, brainwashed people if the PCs don't stop her.

Traits: *(MR) Focal, leader, occult, power hungry, religious, zealot*

Thalen Grood 408

Advocacy Opportunist

"We must act for our planet! If we don't, we will burn in the fires of global warming!"

Appearance: His long hair and beard are graying and well groomed. He usually wears a T-shirt (of his design) emblazoned with a slogan consistent with a "green" cause.

Roleplaying: When in a confrontation, he takes a wide stance and places hands on his hips in defiance.

Personality: He's opinionated, though his activism does not define his personality as much as the motivation behind it. He's good at riling up a crowd.

Motivation: He's looking to cash in on the green movement, using "consumer activism" tactics to drum up interest in all his merchandise.

Background: He took a few courses in science from his local community college, and then started a T-shirt business. During the "Save the Whales" craze, he noticed T-shirts branded to a cause sold well. He latched onto global warming slogans as a way to sell more shirts. He began hawking them at global warming rallies, got caught up in the frenzy, and soon found himself pegged as a leader. Now as a spokesman for the cause, he confronts global warming naysayers, assails them with accusations and talking points, never passing on the opportunity for a fierce, hot-tempered debate. His business has expanded into other merchandise and fund-raising. He drives hybrids to rallies, keeping his gas guzzler in the garage. Many within the movement know he is a fraud.

Traits: *(TT) Business, leader, notorious*

Sierra Leonard 409

Devious Actor

"If you haven't lived it, how will the audience experience it?"

Appearance: Sierra has boyish good looks, tousled brown hair, green eyes, and a broad smile.

Roleplaying: He punches up the emotion, uses loaded language, and liberally quotes whatever he wants. He nods and smiles constantly, even when he's lost.

Personality: He's willing to work hard and steadily on any role or problem. He's in high demand, as people know about his extensive research—he's pre-sold them on the idea that his characters are more realistic.

Motivation: Sierra wants to be the best actor, and he believes that living a role—method acting—is the only way to be properly convincing.

Background: He's an acting savant, completely dedicated to his craft. He has been since his first roles at a young age. The line between research and law breaking has taken a beating recently, as his next role is a legendary con-man. He's living the life—updated for modern times, catching several prominent people off guard. His crime spree might end in a few weeks, or this might be the character that puts him over the edge, embracing a life without limits.

Traits: *(SM) Artist, entertainment, notorious*

Felicity Mann 410

Ogre-Like Mastermind

"Go way. The boss ain't signin' no autographs today."

Appearance: Felicity is a giant of a woman. Her arms hang unevenly from her sharply square frame, and her mouth is a disturbing slash in her face.

Roleplaying: Communicating mostly with grunts and broken language, Felicity has no concept of personal space and stands far too close to others when she speaks with them. Her jaw hangs slightly agape and her single eyebrow and incessant mouth-breathing do little to improve others' estimation of her intelligence.

Personality: Devious and manipulative, Felicity is actually far more intelligent than most people, a fact she conceals to make both her official job and her master schemes easier.

Motivation: Felicity aims to become the puppet master behind numerous political powers by utilizing her gift for psychic enslavement.

Background: The team of scientists behind the genetically enhanced super-soldier product were sure they had failed. They told themselves Felicity was a disappointment. They were wrong. Endowed with a frightening array of formidable psychic powers, Felicity used her talent for mental manipulation to prevent detection of her abilities and to negotiate freedom. Gaining a position as a bodyguard for the rich and influential with her powers, she turns those under her protection into mindless puppets.

Traits: *(MN) Aggressive, charming, focal, genius, hideous, humorous, magical, power hungry, warrior*

The Grim Reaper 411

Insane Assassin

"Anyone can kill somebody. It takes an artist to do it artfully."

Appearance: The Reaper is a short, bald man who wears a thin visor and a utility jumpsuit that contains many pockets and devices. He has a penchant for Deltan cigars.

Roleplaying: He takes joy in his art and always gives cryptic information. He doesn't run if spotted, secure in the fact that he can't be connected with his assassinations anyway.

Personality: The Reaper may be insane. He certainly takes pleasure in his "colorful" assassinations and seems to live for no other purpose. He's a tortured artist that no one understands.

Motivation: He kills for his art. Getting paid for it is a bonus.

Background: The Grim Reaper is mysterious. He claims that his real name is Gil Raines, but he has several aliases. He has the money and expertise to invent elaborate and darkly humorous ways to kill people. He never assassinates anyone the same way twice and each death is more elaborate than the last. The Reaper's knowledge of technology enables him to bypass security and create death traps using the victim's surroundings (such as opening an airlock or dropping a security door). As an artist, the Grim Reaper enjoys watching the kill personally. As a wealthy man, he has an army of lawyers and government officials in his pocket to dissuade investigators.

Traits: *(WC) Artist, criminal, eccentric, genius, mysterious*

Sicamet Winter 412

Stowaway Assassin

"I demand payment up front because once the job is underway, you'll never see me again."

Appearance: For assassinations, Sicamet wears a low-profile spacesuit that can provide a few hours of full life support, and carries a wide range of tools. He rarely has less than 12 weapons about his person. He's small, slight, and good at fitting into tight spaces.

Roleplaying: Methodical and unassuming, Sicamet fades into the background easily. Even in a conversation, he's a small and unobtrusive presence.

Personality: His method requires a specialized skill set, and he's proud to be the only assassin of his kind. He's meticulous, well-prepared, and regards each assassination as a fascinating set of obstacles to be overcome. He takes no pleasure in the killing, it just happens to be what he excels at.

Motivation: Sicamet lives for the thrill of the hunt, and the knife edge upon which every assassination balances: once he leaves his hiding place, can he quietly murder everyone aboard before they detect and overwhelm him?

Background: Sicamet is an assassin for hire with an unusual approach: He stows away aboard a target's ship, waits until it's underway, kills everyone aboard, and steals the ship. Numerous "accidents" and instances where a ship has simply vanished with all hands could be traced back to him, though as yet none of his assassinations have been identified as such. One on one, he's easily outclassed—but when playing his own game, he's a deadly foe.

Traits: *(MR) Criminal, notorious, stealthy, warrior*

Officer Teresa Jackhill 413

Arrogant Cop

"Oh, no. You didn't just talk back to me. Step out of the vehicle. NOW."

Appearance: Her officer's uniform is impeccably clean and pressed, her badge polished. Removing her helmet and pilot's glasses reveals her dark skin, deep eyes, and braided cornrows. At her side is her officer's sidearm.

Roleplaying: Teresa talks in a no-nonsense manner, driving to the heart of the discussion. She'll make accusations to cause suspects to fluster and will nit-pick the smallest parts of a person's story for errors. She always pissed off about something. She takes furious notes on her vidpad to document her findings. When she turns it off, things are about to get ugly.

Personality: She's dark and mean-spirited, seeing everyone as a suspect or guilty of breaking the law in some way. She works within the confines of the law until it gets in the way. In the long run she has absolute faith in the system and even more faith in her ability to adjudicate it.

Motivation: She will uphold the law and hold others accountable for their actions. Without the law—and those who enforce it—chaos would rule supreme. Sometimes she has to take the law into her own hands.

Background: Teresa lacked boundaries in her upbringing and had the occasional infraction in her time before joining the force. Now hardened by discipline, she sees the populace that she's sworn to protect as the cesspool that it is.

Traits: *(DM) Pilot, police, zealot*

Danielle Graph 414

Erratic Mastermind

"Think of this as a tax—one to make up for the misplaced spending of feckless politicians."

Appearance: Danielle has green eyes, stands 5'10", and is a curvaceous beauty—lush in every way. Scars from an explosion mar her face and arms, but she is excellent with foundation and concealer.

Roleplaying: Superficially warm, Danielle complements people to draw them out. When the pain rises, she becomes short and sharp, often unconsciously hissing through her teeth.

Personality: Danielle is resentful—she was injured fighting for the empire and suffers chronic pain.

Motivation: She wants money enough to pay for painkillers; unfortunately, she needs more and more for true relief. Danielle is reluctant to harm people, but she is quite happy to bilk the empire's agents and wealthy business people.

Background: She served the empire with distinction for years, accruing battle honors and swiftly rising through the ranks. She wasn't ready for the responsibilities of command, however, and constantly felt like an actor. She learned how to rely on a staff, how to develop their skills, and how to ensure that they never betrayed her or spoke too loudly about their own contributions. An ion explosion scarred her and the injury left her addicted to pain medicines. They unbalance her, and are illegal for her now that she is medically recovered. She has assembled and nurtured a team to pay for her expensive habit.

Traits: *(SM) Criminal, leader, military, warrior*

Tobur Vigo 415

Cybernetically Enhanced Toady

"I have a mind of my own…I just like his style, that's all."

Appearance: Tobur is pure muscle with multiple obvious enhancements. He wears his hair in a green flat-top buzz cut and is always carrying weapons. He has multiple tattoos up and down his arms from his stints in the space marines.

Roleplaying: He does his best to emulate his current employer when speaking. As he doesn't understand many concepts outside of war the results can be unintentionally hilarious.

Personality: Tobur is a soldier, not a leader. He does as he's ordered and has a tactical mind, but for social situations he adopts his current employer's style.

Motivation: He is a mercenary, motivated by money and whoever impresses him at the moment.

Background: Tobur has always been a follower. His father was a colonial governor, and Tobur would emulate the style and manner of visitors to the colony. While his parents found this creative, it turned out that Tobur couldn't be creative on his own. He was dismissed from the Academy when it was discovered that he'd plagiarized his papers. The only thing Tobur showed an affinity for was fighting. After he was mustered out Tobur went to work for various criminals. While an effective henchmen Tobur's emulation of his bosses often led to his dismissal. Fortunately, there's always more work.

Traits: *(WC) Eccentric, military, warrior*

Eddie Edge, "Evildoer Extraordinaire" 416

Outlandish Criminal

"Are you having as great a time losing as I am winning?"

Appearance: Eddie cuts a dashing figure in his flight suit, retro helmet, goggles, and experimental jetpack. He is accompanied everywhere by his trusty terrier sidekick, Ernest.

Roleplaying: With a devil-may-care attitude, Eddie constantly cracks jokes, taunts those trying to stop him, and performs crazy stunts. The only thing he actually takes seriously is Ernest.

Personality: Life is a game to Eddie. He enjoys the thrill of committing big crimes, and he is rich enough that he doesn't need to be concerned with the consequences of an arrest.

Motivation: Eddie likes to have fun pulling big, impressive heists. The bigger, the better.

Background: At one time a wealthy inventor, Eddie's repeated exposure to radiation and numerous chemical agents drove him slightly mad. Hungry for new thrills, he tried all manner of distractions before he discovered the excitement of large-scale crime as an art form and invented his new persona. With his array of gadgets, his near endless wealth, and his unstable mind, he's a difficult foe to predict or stop. Eddie generally attempts impossible crimes, like stealing national monuments or sneaking into a maximum-security vault and stamping his face on every piece of currency inside. He doesn't particularly care about being successful, just about having fun in the effort.

Traits: *(MN) Criminal, eccentric, genius, humorous, notorious, pilot, scientist, wealthy*

Eveline Nal 417

Time-Traveling Thief

"There it is, the Syrak Crystal Crown, right on time. Too bad that will be the last time you see it."

Appearance: Eveline is dark-skinned woman of average height. Her black hair is cut short, revealing a large forehead and large green eyes.

Roleplaying: She is very careful in her movements, and never acts first, instead waiting for everyone else to move. She's elusive about her background.

Personality: Eveline is careful and single-minded. She plans everything and sticks to the plan. When events deviate from her plan, she grows increasingly uncomfortable.

Motivation: She's a thief who enjoys stealing as much as she enjoys the money she gets from her heists.

Background: Eveline is from the far future, where she has acquired an illegal time travel device. She uses the device to travel into to the past and steal artifacts, which she then sells in her time. Because of the dangers of time travel, she is extremely careful in planning her capers in order to avoid the "butterfly effect" in her own time. She has made eight trips into the past, and seven were without incident. On the eighth trip, she was attacked by a guard who missed her and killed a bystander. The end result in her time was the total destruction of that planet though civil war. She is very scared to make a ninth trip, but her money is running out.

Traits: *(PV) Criminal, focal, mysterious, stealthy*



Eddie Edge, "Evildoer Extraordinaire"

Artist: Christopher Reach

Neutrals

What do a mercenary who never speaks, a cold-hearted orbital patrol pilot, and an interstellar hippie have in common? They're all neutral characters found in this chapter, accompanied by a host of other memorable NPCs who can fill just about any role in a sci-fi campaign. Like all of the neutrals in *Masks*, these characters can be used as-is (possibly changing their relationship with the PCs over time) or easily transformed into allies or villains with just a few deft tweaks on your part.

Yaza Reed

418

Idealistic Soldier

"It's an honor to serve with the Galactic Marines, isn't it?"

Appearance: Yaza is a young woman fresh out of the academy. While she owns a dress uniform, Yaza wears as little as possible inside her power armor. She keeps her hair short for the same reason.

Roleplaying: She is enthusiastic and tends to treat her power armor as a second skin, saying "I'm hit" rather than "the armor's damaged." She always believes that she is doing the right thing.

Personality: A bit of an innocent, Yaza is idealistic now, but it remains to be seen whether her stint in the marines will change her perspective, especially when given questionable orders.

Motivation: She wants to be the best marine that she can be.

Background: As a child, Yaza always wanted to join the galactic marines. When she enrolled, she was considered an ideal candidate for the power armor program and now has a custom suit. Yaza truly believes in the principles of the galactic government and wants to do her part to uphold its values. Unfortunately, the government isn't as altruistic as she thinks and her squad is sometimes ordered to perform questionable missions. So far, Yaza has been able to rationalize them, but things will come to a head soon. Yaza is one step away from either holding onto her ideals for good or becoming a cynical soldier.

Traits: *(WC) Military, pilot, warrior*

Sinnibar Constantine

419

Laboring Academic

"All required effort, praised or scorned, proves an interesting study. The holes where automation failed—agriculture, disassembly, and corporate interfaces—all tell a story."

Appearance: Sinnibar is a man of 72, lean and muscled from work, with salt and pepper hair and deep brown eyes.

Roleplaying: Doctor Constantine knows physical labor; he moves with an easy confidence, slowing, but still fit. His speech is littered with slang from the underclass, often thrown in to shock or accent, but he can turn any experience into an academic presentation at the drop of a hat.

Personality: Sinnibar is fascinated by the details of daily life, the unconsidered and background. He has taken on dozens of jobs for a few weeks or a few months, learned the life, and written up his experiences for publication in academic journals.

Motivation: He wants to justify and explain labor and laborers to his peers.

Background: Sinnibar grew up working on a farm, still tending and treating the animals by hand. When he began advanced studies he investigated labor—and noticed which sectors of the economy remained resistant to automation, and which ones were disappearing. He decided to work in the field, hoping to explain and record traditional work forms. His research has been sponsored by companies, who apply his discoveries—often to reducing workers or automating the few remaining industries.

Traits: *(SM) Academic, ancient, business, laborer, scholar*

Daston Laeh 420

Underground Purveyor

"There's nothing wrong with the world we made. It suits most people, most especially me. But everyone needs a little something extra, something particular to them. And if that something extra falls beyond what is allowed, well, let's just say that I might know a way to make it happen."

Appearance: He's dressed in the same androgynous clothing as everyone else in his utopian society. He is balding.

Roleplaying: He gives the impression that he knows something that others don't.

Personality: Daston is cunning, capable of working cracks in the system to his advantage. He often is amused when he sees customers engage in little acts of defiance—thinking themselves daring—while he is facilitating truly depraved and criminal behavior.

Motivation: He provides illicit goods and services to corrupt members of the ruling elite and to nonconformist thrill-seekers. The system he helps others overcome is the same system that props up his business. He does not seek to overthrow it, only to manipulate it to his advantage.

Background: In his youth, Daston discovered that providing access to items or services under the table afforded him both profit and freedom. As time went on, the requests became more illicit and his skill increased. Outwardly, he never puts himself into a situation that will bring unwarranted attention. In his utopian society's secret places, though, he operates with a measure of immunity, confidence, and self-assuredness.

Traits: *(TT) Criminal, merchant, stealthy*

Cliff Denen 421

Immoral Journalist

"Honey, you mistook my attention as caring. I cared, but not about you. I cared about getting the story. Don't be mad; I will never forget that time in the orbital shuttle."

Appearance: Cliff is tall, with a square jaw and rugged looks. He wears stylish, casual clothes.

Roleplaying: Cliff Denen always introduces himself using his full name. He is a great listener, and easily navigates conversations to keep people talking.

Personality: Just shy of being a moral person, Cliff is not afraid to use his looks to sway vulnerable women to get access or information. He does not mean any malice towards them, turning them into innocent bystanders as he pursues a story.

Motivation: Cliff is obsessed with his fame. He knows that sensational stories bring in the most fame, so he focuses all his efforts on finding them.

Background: Growing up watching too much holo-media, Cliff dreamed of being famous. When civil war broke on his home world, he took his camera, reported the story, broadcast it on the info-net, and became a minor sensation. After the war, a media outlet approached him with a job offer. Since then, Cliff has gone for one sensational story after another, and he quickly made himself the hottest holo-celebrity in the universe. In his pursuit of stories, he has slept with numerous women, using them to get to the story. It's only a matter of time before he becomes the story.

Traits: *(PV) Adventurer, entertainment, famous, white collar*

Tikal Loomis 422

Influential Xenoanthropologist

"May your negotiations be filled with truth and wahnar gentlepeople."

Appearance: Tikal is attractive, and stands out with primitive clothing accents: vivid red fur complements her mouse-brown hair, and her crudely worked silver earrings are sure to be copied as rustic chic.

Roleplaying: She smiles and jokes with whichever side she's talking to. She's above the petty conflict and can see all sides of the disagreement. She peppers her speech with "untranslatable" words from the other side.

Personality: Tikal pretends to be direct and surprised at the unexpected consequences of her actions, but it's an act. She likes to manipulate people and maximize returns on her effort.

Motivation: She's happy when she's needed, particularly when she can influence things—whether as negotiator, translator, or explaining machinery to the locals. While this started off as a lark, she's good at figuring out what's best for her, and then convincing others to buy in.

Background: Tikal came to this world to study the local culture. After courting death by misunderstanding local customs, she finally learned enough to be admitted as an outsider. Three months later, on a hunt with the locals, she came across an outcropping of rare crystals—and a corporate survey team. The locals set upon the miners for trespassing, beating the survey team as a warning. Tikal feels obligation to the locals—and recognizes a chance to really influence things. Perhaps that's why she contacts the PCs...

Traits: *(SM) Dilettante, focal, primal*

Quincy Austens 423

Televangelist Hoarder

"Prepare, my children of the flock! The day of reckoning is coming, and you must see to it that our house is in order! Send in your donation, and together we will see the warehouses of the faithful stocked for when the angel's horn is blown and the end times begin!"

Appearance: He wears a white linen suit, a white silk shirt and tie, white gloves, and a pair of highly polished white leather shoes. The ensemble is completed with a white mask and cowl, leaving no flesh visible.

Roleplaying: Quincy holds a religious symbol close to his chest when he seeks divine inspiration during moments of stress. He ends every conversation with a request for a donation of any type to his church.

Personality: He is a kind man, but he will not tolerate blasphemy. Only heathen acts pique his anger.

Motivation: He sincerely believes that it is his divine mission to acquire and secure supplies for use by the faithful to survive the end times.

Background: Very little is known about Quincy. He originally wore a shoddy suit and his mask was merely a cheap plastic costume piece. Yet he was a gifted preacher, and when he asked for people to give, they responded. Eventually he was put on the wave system, and his message is now being broadcast to 17 planets and over 100 space stations.

Traits: *(PB) Charming, entertainment, mysterious, religious, zealot*



Sister Charity

Artist: Christopher Reach

Sister Charity 424

Saintly Survivor

"With snowy fleece so soft and clean. Sleep, baby, sleep."

Appearance: She is young, still in her twenties. Her bird-like face and wispy body are showing signs of fatigue and poor nutrition. She wears a blue-green hospital smock.

Roleplaying: As part of her bedside manner, she sings lullabies while tending to the sick at night.

Personality: She is a giving person, selfless in the face of impending doom. Though physically, emotionally, and mentally drained, she exhibits all the best qualities of a good nurse.

Motivation: Sister Charity has always sought to mend, to help repair friendships as well as wounds.

Background: She was an EMT, trapped in the hospital under quarantine as the "aPOXalypse" brought death by disease to more than 90% of the human population. Though she has forgotten even her own name in the trauma of that time, she remembers being prevented from leaving the hospital—being prevented from tending to her own loved ones as they contracted the disease. Instead she remained at her post, steadfast and helping all she could. Her patients, all now succumbed to the disease, called her Sister Charity for her tireless care during the worst of it, when even the hospital staff was dying all around her, some driven to murder during the madness. Now she wanders the countryside, lending what aid she can.

Traits: *(TT) Medic, saintly*

Zhi Fang 425

Scheming Entrepreneur

"I heard about you, hotshot. Word is that you're an okay hacker. Wanna make it big? This is a military-grade hack. With your skills, it should crack Ylyt Concepts. They'd be perfect; those small labs can't afford security like the big boys. See what they're working on, and I'll split it 50-50 with you."

Appearance: Dressed in counterfeit designer rip-offs, last year's haircut, and a retro pair of mirrored sunglasses, Zhi is usually easy to find.

Roleplaying: A constant chatter of coercion flows from Zhi's mouth.

Personality: Zhi may be selfish, but he's not evil; he just feels that he needs to use others to get ahead. He is always looking for an angle in any situation; usually it's getting someone else to take the risk.

Motivation: Zhi wants a chunk of one really big deal, and is terrified that he will never get it.

Background: Hustling since he could talk, Zhi has spent most of his life barely avoiding jail time. He has been sanctioned, fined, lost licenses and permits, and barely escaped any number of bad deals, but that's what a man has to do these days (or so he tells himself). Zhi does have good contacts and the social skills to maintain them despite his manipulative ways. He also has a knack for avoiding the bigger traps in his profession, but isn't above setting them for others.

Traits: *(KS) Aggressive, criminal, merchant, power hungry*

Josiah Goodman 426

Disagreeable Missionary

"Certainly it is self-evident that your technical superiority does not negate the moral superiority of my people."

Appearance: Decked out in shiny new gear that would have been obsolete centuries ago, it is clear that Josiah is from a civilization that has just managed to develop deep space travel. His clothing is drab and functional; his face is serious and deeply lined by its constant frown.

Roleplaying: Josiah is smugly superior and rarely misses an opportunity to correct others' mistakes of action or thought. He never admits to being wrong or fallible and will use flawed or circular logic to prove himself right.

Personality: From a planet where a single people and religion became dominant early on, Josiah has never questioned himself or the established system. He is known at home for being wise and insightful and it has gone to his head. Every new culture is just a new way of being wrong as far as he is concerned.

Motivation: Josiah came to space to proselytize, claim, and colonize.

Background: An influential man considered a wise authority on his home planet, Josiah volunteered to be one of the first of his people to travel into space so that he could bring the light of their way of life to the ignorant savages doubtlessly found there. Thus far he has encountered several groups and has been greatly surprised by their level of technology and resistance to his message.

Traits: *(MN) Adventurer, counselor, religious, zealot*

Kurt 427

Silent Mercenary

<He stares silently at you>

Appearance: He stands just over six feet tall, wearing a synthweave shirt and armor vest. The sides of his head are shaved clean and small bumps under the skin form an ornate pattern on either cheek. Pistols rest upon both hips.

Roleplaying: His blue eyes look calmly about as he cracks his knuckles absently. It is the only sound he makes: Kurt does not speak. His eyes are very expressive.

Personality: Kurt quickly moves to defend the weak or innocent, although he abstains from using deadly force unless he has to. Many view him as a strong, silent companion that they know little about. He's reliable and takes orders without question.

Motivation: He's sworn himself to a code of silence and will not speak. This vow also binds him to do no harm except in the service of protecting the weak, and to seek redemption through his actions.

Background: Kurt's background is lost in rumors and hearsay. It's told that he spent his early years as a hired gun and helped wipe out a colony on a fringe world as part of a pirate gang. He spent years recovering from alcoholism until he took up the holy calling. Kurt now leads a pure life and seeks atonement through helping others. Someone once called him "curt" for not speaking when asked a question, and it became his new name.

Traits: *(DM) Adventurer, mysterious, religious, saintly, warrior*

Madame Rocheford Pinnacle-Brown 428

Guarded Librarian

"All knowledge is worth having. At the right price, of course."

Appearance: Her wrinkled skin betrays the years of regenerative therapy that have caught up with her. Her dull, gray eyes are sunken and her silver hair is matted down. A simple pendant hangs around her neck. She wears gray robes with the seal of the ascendant, hand-embroidered in the way of the royal family.

Roleplaying: She is prim and proper to the extreme, her chin always raised and speaking in a clear monotone. She does not use contractions in her speech. Her only displays of emotion are at the mention of being charged an exorbitant price or when discussing an extraordinary find she acquired at minimal cost.

Personality: The last steward of the royal houses, Madame is a relic of a bygone age when civility and station mattered more than anything. She respects accomplishments, titles, and those who have achieved some academic standing.

Motivation: She is moved by the acquisition and preservation of history. She is also in search of a worthwhile inheritor of her legacy of knowledge.

Background: Madame is the last steward of the Provincial Hierarchy, a secret society of scholars and historians. Their breadth of information is impressive, as are the measures they will take to protect it; it is not readily shared with just anyone. Madame now realizes that the information must be passed on. Her demeanor and age make her reluctant to spend money, as knowledge should be free.

Traits: *(DM) Royalty, scholar*

Suzi Kig 429

Urchin Scavenger

"Hey! Back off! That body is mine. I found it first. Oh man, look at those eyes, high quality. It's going to be a good night tonight."

Appearance: Suzi is a young woman in dirty clothes with blond dreadlocks. She bears a number of scars from a rough youth. She wears an oversized army jacket with a mismatch of patches sewn on.

Roleplaying: She lashes out in rage over the tiniest misunderstanding. She's uncouth, jumpy, and snaps her head when startled.

Personality: Suzi has no tolerance for rules or laws; she finds them suffocating. Suzi does what she wants when she wants. She enjoys the company of people and is always on the lookout for a gang or pack to run the streets with.

Motivation: She does what she needs to in order to survive. She needs to be free, leaving any place that looks to be bound with rules or laws.

Background: Suzi was just a child when the economy collapsed. She survived the Great Riots with her nomadic family, traveling from city to city. Suzi learned a wide variety of skills on the road. After reaching adulthood, she broke off from the nomads and settled into the lawless sector of the city. There, she used her amateur medical skills to start scavenging implants from the casualties of the secret corporate conflicts and gang wars that go on in the sector.

Traits: *(PV) Aggressive, medic, primal*

Bolero Valeran 430

Wealthy Artist

"No, no, no, we simply must see the Archean System. I'm sure the solar flares won't be a problem."

Appearance: Tall and ravishingly handsome, Bolero always looks like he got dressed in the dark. His fine, inordinately expensive clothes are rumpled, mismatched, and in terribly bad taste.

Roleplaying: Bolero leans towards people when listening to them, and leans back when he speaks.

Personality: He possesses a bottomless well of curiosity and a shallow puddle of attention. His focus darts from topic to topic and person to person, and the only constant in his life is that he must always be heading someplace new.

Motivation: He loves the thrill of seeing a new place, painting a new picture, and moving on—he's fascinated by transitory experiences.

Background: Fabulously wealthy, Bolero is an itinerant artist who pays people to take him to interesting places so that he can paint them. His artwork is terrible, and he's completely blind to this fact (though no one else is). The places he wants to go are often dangerous, something else he appears to be blind to. But, where danger and wealth collide, there are opportunities for the PCs. Getting Bolero into and out of danger pays well, and he's a likable, if eccentric, traveling companion, generous with his money and prone to throwing extravagant parties.

Traits: *(MR) Artist, charming, eccentric, entertainment, humorous, wealthy*

Sir Henry Ashton 431

Brilliant Capitalist

"What is the idea? Do you have a working prototype? How much do you need? Two million credits? That is ludicrous! I'm going to give you four million. There! Now that the matter is dealt with, can I interest you in a Saturnian Mojito?"

Appearance: A large-framed man with a muscular build, but also an emerging pot belly, he wears only the finest designer fashions. His mutton chops are beginning to show a hint of gray.

Roleplaying: He is jocular and warm to everyone he meets. He likes to flirt with younger men, but will restrain himself if it makes others uncomfortable.

Personality: Sir Henry is confident, energetic, and lives life according to his own terms.

Motivation: He has been so blessed in life that he wants to help others succeed in their endeavors. He might make a profit from these ventures, but that is not his primary motive.

Background: Expected to become a professional athlete upon graduating from university, Henry Ashton shocked everyone by starting his own company instead. He has engineered some of the most advanced interstellar spacecraft engines, and was knighted by the royal family of the Andromeda system in recognition of his achievements. With such great wealth he wants for nothing, but helping others with their own challenges suits him just fine.

Traits: *(PB) Business, dilettante, eccentric, genius, wealthy*

Janos Meika 432

Thrill-Seeking Drug Addict

"Hell, yeah! This is the best thing I've ever felt! Let's take six more!"

Appearance: Janos is a golden-haired Adonis with a six pack, nice clothes, and a winning smile.

Roleplaying: His eyes are perpetually wide open, and there's a manic quality to his grin.

Personality: Janos is a walking stereotype of a rich drug addict who lives in the moment and has no fear of consequences. If forced to rehabilitate, his old self—a funny, arrogant-but-likable thrill seeker—might emerge again.

Motivation: He lives to chase the next high, the newest craze, the wildest party, the ultimate rush.

Background: Janos used to be an ordinary twenty-something from a wealthy family, but his addiction to adrenaline took a dark turn. Now he lusts after synthetic highs instead, and he's become what he likes to call a "drug pioneer." He'll inject, snort, download, or ingest just about anything you put in front of him. His life is a perpetual bender, and it rarely stops with drugs: drugs lead to parties, which lead underground clubs, which lead to kinky sex and Janos waking up in a pile of naked people and thinking he's a praying mantis. For now, it's one hell of a wild ride, but it's not going to last much longer—Janos will destroy himself in the next few weeks, possibly even days. His parents have no idea where he is, as he's converted his considerable wealth into cash and stayed off the grid.

Traits: *(MR) Dilettante, wealthy*

Alexa Robins 433

Unreliable Hacker

"I've replaced their data with self-perpetuating fractal imagery!"

Appearance: At work, Alexa blends in with everyone else and keeps her chestnut hair in a neat braid. She has several implanted data jacks, and an alert observer may notice a few mostly hidden tattoos and empty piercing holes. On her own time, Alexa's fashion is far more eclectic, full of vivid colors and wild fashions, and her ink and jewelry are proudly displayed.

Roleplaying: Quiet and reserved at work, Alexa is giggly and high-energy at home. She often puts her fingers to her lips and leans in close to talk as if the topic of conversation were a big secret, even if it's nothing special.

Personality: Alexa only did enough growing up for the corporate world to think she was employable. In her personal life she's playful and fun loving and enjoys putting her hacking talents to work in thrilling and artistic ways.

Motivation: Stifled by her day job, Alexa just wants to express herself and have fun.

Background: By day a corporate drone, by night a freewheeling data anarchist, Alexa views her employment as "slavery to the Man" and her hacking as artistic expression. Unfortunately, she does neither particularly well. Those who have hired her for her illicit skills have found her more interested in expressing her individuality in the medium of data than properly completing a job or covering her trail.

Traits: *(MN) Artist, business, criminal, eccentric, white collar*

Gabby "From Pasadena" Smith 434

Nonchalant Time Traveler

"What year is it? Oh my! I hope that my Albert doesn't forget to take the chicken out of the freezer to thaw."

Appearance: She is a petite elderly woman with large eye glasses. She carries a huge handbag that always seems to have the simplest of objects needed for whatever task is set before her.

Roleplaying: She has a habit of holding her hand to her chin and saying, "Oh my!" She also comforts others by patting their hand and saying, "That's alright, dear."

Personality: Gabby never seems to be upset or frightened by anything, but she does worry quite a bit.

Motivation: It seemed like such a waste to construct a time machine and not use it. As long she gets back home in time to watch her favorite game show with Albert, everything will be fine.

Background: When the contents of several crates marked top secret were accidentally delivered to her home, Gabby called the government to pick them up. The project was so secret that no one knew what she was talking about. So Gabby opened the crates to see if she could find a phone number or an address. Inside, she found shiny metal bits, shimmering tubes, and snaking wires that begged to be fiddled with. With a little elbow grease and patience she put them together, something the best minds had failed at for years. Now she has her own time machine. Why not use it?

Traits: *(PB) Genius, pilot, saintly*

Farouk Binsada 435

Faith Healer

"Come, brother, share your pain with me."

Appearance: Gaily dressed in robes of red and gold bearing ornate sigils of the celestial faith, Farouk pads by on worn sandals. Hand-carved prayer beads dangle around his hand and he stands out as a Luddite surrounded by a sea of technology. The chocolate-brown skin of his face is marked by small pricks of color representing the constellations.

Roleplaying: Farouk is friendly and outgoing, clasping hands within his own and eager to lend assistance. He has a calm wisdom about himself and shares his insight without having to be asked. He will interject with parables regarding the celestial faith.

Personality: Farouk is even-tempered and difficult to provoke. He looks for the good in people and in the situation. He is strong of faith but very much a pragmatist; there are some things that faith cannot protect you from.

Motivation: He is devoted to teaching the precepts of the celestial church and the miracle of the healing touch.

Background: Previously an engineer, Farouk fell into a cult of the celestial faith after the death of his family in a tragic accident. Taking nanobot samples that he had been working on, Farouk implanted them into his own body and now displays them as a symbol of his faith healing. He "empathically transfers" the wounds of another to himself and heals their injuries. Under careful scrutiny this is the work of his regenerative cellular nanobots.

Traits: *(DM) Eccentric, primal, medic, religious*

Davis Drive 436

Nervous Plutocrat

"Focus, gentlemen! I know that you're eager, but funding is not limitless. Let's continue to examine countermeasures and fail-safes."

Appearance: Davis stands 6'4", and is heavyset with graying blond hair. Deep blue suits and diamond earring studs tastefully call attention to his wealth.

Roleplaying: He watches his words and other people's actions carefully, overreacting if it keeps him safer. He projects calm and confidence, but falls apart when he's startled.

Personality: Davis is eager to run along the cutting edge, but he's anxious the whole time he's straying from what's well-proven and safe.

Motivation: Davis feels like he's always being judged. The Drive family has done well generation after generation; he dreads failing to measure up.

Background: Davis grew up wealthy, and has done well since he began directing the company's research arm. He revived sonic technology research and dedicated serious resources to increasing their precision and versatility. Coupled with an extraordinarily effective marketing campaign, he introduced dozens of new sonic applications (weapons, cleaning, disorientation, etc.) that were very well received. Imitators are cutting into the sonic line, so he's desperately seeking the next technologies to champion—whether new or another dormant technology in need of a prod.

Traits: *(SM) Business, leader, wealthy*

Fionna Chiang 437

Superstitious Pilot

"St. Patrick and Buddha, get me out of this and I'll never cross a gorram meteor field again!"

Appearance: This short woman's reddish hair is close-cropped, like many pilots, and a laden charm necklace and bracelet decorate her neck and wrist.

Roleplaying: Fionna freely vents her emotions, calling on her parents' mixed Chinese and Irish backgrounds for thanks, curses, and imagery. She also follows nearly-compulsive rituals in her pre-flight checks.

Personality: Although she's an excellent pilot, she credits luck for her success, and carries as many tokens of good luck as she can get away with.

Motivation: She loves to fly, and can't make a living doing anything else.

Background: The only child of a proud-but-angry Irish nationalist and his Chinese mail-order bride, Fionna left home as soon as the military would take her and never looked back. Her exceptional natural talent was recognized early, but her lack of education and social polish relegated her to transport duty. It was piloting, but it was also boring, and she left as soon as her contract was finished. Since leaving the service, she's taken any number of odd jobs to stay afloat, and is always looking to find new work. Her military background means she knows many other pilots, and their quirks.

Traits: *(KS) Adventurer, eccentric, humorous, pilot*

Vernon Quainrite 438

Nervous Bureaucrat

"Me? What have I done? I'm just a clerk filing forms. I don't make the big decisions; these colonies are just names to me."

Appearance: A milquetoast little man with thin hair, Vernon wears a suit that's been out of style for years and a headset that streams directives into his ears.

Roleplaying: Vernon is a quiet man who gets nervous at just having to speak. He'd much prefer electronic interaction to speaking face to face.

Personality: He is a man who doesn't ask questions. He follows orders like an efficient bureaucrat and doesn't comprehend much of what he is doing. A lot of this is willful ignorance, as taking a stand could jeopardize his position.

Motivation: He just wants to enjoy his job and retire with a decent pension.

Background: Vernon Quainrite had the misfortune of job hunting during the last galactic economic crash. He was lucky to get a job, and he was only hired because he didn't ask too many questions. He has only kept his job because he continues not to ask many questions. Throughout his career, Vernon has been sealing the fate of colony worlds by filing questionable forms, but he simply pretends that he's just inputting data. He's never had to face the consequences of his actions and as a result the company he works for continues to conduct questionable activities.

Traits: *(WC) Business, white collar*

Dosa Ramirez 439

Post-Apocalyptic Scientist

"Don't touch that! In six hours, it will be the cure for what you people call 'wasteland pox.'"

Appearance: In her mid-twenties, Dosa has a perpetually furrowed brow and a distracted air about her. She wears an immaculate lab coat, which she bleaches and presses regularly.

Roleplaying: Dosa brooks no fools, but doesn't intend to be hurtful or disdainful—it's just how she comes off.

Personality: She loves people, but mostly in an abstract sense—individual people she can take or leave, but humanity as a whole is the most important thing in the world to Dosa. She's brilliant, distant, and wholly focused on her work. She's not charismatic, and people are often turned off by her brilliance and her intolerance for those less intelligent than her.

Motivation: Dosa wants to save the world, and she refuses to accept the possibility that this is impossible. She'd die for her cause, but she knows she's more valuable alive.

Background: Dosa survived the apocalypse in her parents' bunker, and emerged as one of the few scientists left in the world. Believing she was saved for a purpose, she refuses to let the light of the world go out, and works tirelessly to rebuild civilization. Anyone who can get past her attitude will quickly see that she could be instrumental in saving the world. The breadth and depth of her scientific knowledge is staggering.

Traits: *(MR) Academic, focal, genius, medic, scholar, scientist*

Coleman Galloway 440

Time Machine Mechanic

"Didya think keepin' this contraption running was as simple as stokin' a boiler with coal? Bah! Everyone wants to take 'er for a spin. No one gives a thought to what makes 'er run properly."

Appearance: In his upper middle years, Coleman makes a great show of wearing greasy overalls and strapping on a tool belt loaded down with wrenches, screwdrivers, and a mallet. The secret to his mechanical mastery—a small silver wrench with a ruby handle that sparkles when used—he keeps tucked in his chest pocket.

Roleplaying: When being introduced to someone, he has a habit of wiping his nose with a grandiose sweep of his arm, then extending that same hand for a shake.

Personality: The time machine is his pride and joy. Even though Coleman wasn't its inventor, he's modified and repaired it so many times, he thinks of it as his. He doesn't like it when anyone, even the machine's owner, starts poking around too much.

Motivation: He's not an adventurer at heart, but he goes where the machine goes. It just wouldn't do to have the crew lost in time without him there to see to its upkeep.

Background: He was a locomotive engineer in a bit of a fix when the time-hopping crew helped him out. It was during that encounter he picked up the futuristic wrench. He agreed to join them and he's been onboard ever since.

Traits: *(TT) Humorous, laborer*

Dynah McQueen 441

Racing Enthusiast

"It's all about the speed, baby!"

Appearance: Tall and thin with brightly dyed tousled hair and a bad-girl attitude, Dynah has a host of piercings and tattoos on her lower back and arms. She wears a grease monkey jumper and smokes cheap cigars.

Roleplaying: Dynah is cocky and sure of herself. She doesn't hesitate to argue or pick a fight with anyone she feels is wrong or obnoxious. She is boldly flirtatious with men she finds attractive.

Personality: Infatuated with men, cruising in her ship, and good beer, Dynah is hooked on the thrill of the race most of all. She's not afraid to go for what she wants or indulge in any vice that strikes her fancy.

Motivation: Dynah is pulled inexorably forwards by the lure of the next race.

Background: Always a gear head, Dynah started racing illegally when she was still too young to have a license. A few years later she ran away from home to follow the racing circuit, making money with freelance ship repair. She is an adrenaline junkie who cannot go more than a week without the thrill of the race, traveling from planet to planet to enter all the biggest and most famous races, often dodging police and security to attend illegal events. During her downtime, she tinkers extensively with her precious ship.

Traits: *(MN) Aggressive, business, crafter, pilot*



Coleman Galloway

Artist: Matt Morrow

Marty Brandis 442

Underage Liar

"What? Oh. I. I mean, you. We, that is. Oh, heck with it! <punch>"

Appearance: Slim in stature, he wears a casual-duty uniform that is slightly baggy. He keeps his brown hair—that has grown a little longer than regulation—tucked under a cap. His freckles frame a dimpled chin and small smile. He carries a little briefcase that seems out of place.

Roleplaying: Marty has a high-pitched voice and talks rapidly. He flusters easily and will clam up when pressed about his age or experience. He's a good fast-talker, a skill he uses often.

Personality: He's quick on the uptake, always looking for an angle to work. Part con artist, part thief, he's using his position in the military to enhance his reputation. Everyone respects the uniform and he's enjoying the attention. He often pretends to know more than he really does.

Motivation: Marty is trying to prove himself, and flutters from career to career. He's illegally a member of the military and hides that fact diligently. He wants to make a name for himself and prove that he can do anything.

Background: A runaway at the age of 10, Marty has grown up on the streets but quickly learned that with some fast-talking he can get what he wants. He forged his entry records, appropriated a uniform, and pretends to be in the military; his next con will be as a doctor. Previously, he engaged in petty theft and chip laundering.

Traits: *(DM) Child, military, stealthy*

Colonel Carter Orvor 443

Disfigured Soldier

"You know I will never forget The Battle of Novos. Never. If you ever need anything once you are out of this regen-tank, just ask."

Appearance: Carter was a tall man, but his strong frame is now broken and hunched over. Bulky cybernetics have replaced the parts of him that are missing, and his uniform fits poorly over his prosthetics. His remaining skin is tinted a sickly green.

Roleplaying: Carter breathes deeply before he speaks and only manages one sentence with each straining breath. He moves slowly, with the sounds of his cybernetics grinding out each movement.

Personality: Carter is broken in body and in spirit. He carries a tremendous guilt for the Battle of Novos. His guilt is so strong that it has undermined him as a leader, paralyzing him in the face of life-or-death decisions.

Motivation: Working one person at a time, Carter repents for his mistake.

Background: General Orvor led an army in the infamous Battle of Novos, one of the worst military failures ever recorded. With 9 million dead, the battle nearly cost the humans the entire war. At the root of the failure was a poor decision Carter made. In the battle, his command ship was attacked and destroyed. He survived, losing 40% of his body. He was reconstructed and court marshaled, where he was found guilty and demoted to Colonel. He was assigned a quiet post in a far-off spaceport.

Traits: *(PV) Hideous, leader, military, notorious*

Jennifer "Bug Bomb" Arkten 444

Stalwart Orbital Trooper

"Orbital drop unit Delta ready. Jump is in 3…2…1… Let's frag some bugs!"

Appearance: Jennifer is ripped, toned, and in peak physical condition. She has medium-brown skin, dark eyes, and black hair that she wears cropped short.

Roleplaying: She does everything efficiently, with no wasted motion, and is polite to a fault.

Personality: Jennifer hates the bugs, but she also respects them—and despite the fact that they're aliens with no human moral code, she treats them as honored foes. She's a grunt because she has no interest in command; she wants to fight bugs, not stare at a screen back on the dropship. She'll never give up, never leave a trooper behind, and will fight until her dying breath.

Motivation: She wants to take part in the decisive battle that finally wipes out the goddamn bugs once and for all, or die trying.

Background: A member of the elite Delta unit of orbital drop troopers, Jennifer earned her handle, "Bug Bomb," by killing bugs better than anyone else. Her commanders describe her as "unbreakable," and she has more awards for valor sitting in her locker than any other trooper in her unit. Born after the bugs invaded, she's never known anything but war. Bugs killed her parents, then her two enlisted brothers, and every death hardened her a little more. Now she lives in the moment, always pushing herself to the limit, and is the ultimate soldier.

Traits: *(MR) Aggressive, military, warrior*

Syf Geldbrand 445

Greedy Mercenary

"My only concern at this point is how much I get paid."

Appearance: An athletic woman with scars and tattoos, Syf sizes people up with an experienced gaze.

Roleplaying: She's foul-mouthed and coarse, and doesn't even pretend to care.

Personality: A brutal life has taught her that nobody matters but her. But because reputation is important, she will fulfill the terms of her contract, and will not turn on an employer.

Motivation: She turns a valuable set of skills and an amoral attitude into money.

Background: "Military or prison" was an easy choice for someone to whom violence came easy. And if it wasn't for those damned journalists, tracking down any rumor of "atrocity" (whatever that means in a war zone), she would have made it a good career. But the Man needed a scapegoat and damned if it wasn't Sergeant Geldbrand. Hung out to dry, she found employment as a hired gun with a string of clients, none of whom care what she does to the fools who cross her. She is a brutal warrior, and has lost nearly all of her humanity, but she will not endanger her reputation by turning on a client, or by breaking her contract.

Traits: *(KS) Abhorrent, aggressive, military, notorious, warrior*

Rei Nagano 446

Lecherous Smuggler

"If you want me to take you to New Lima with no questions asked, then you'll have to pay the fee. And I don't mean with credits."

Appearance: Rei is a shady smuggler who frequents spaceports in distressed areas. He always wears a brown synth-leather jacket. Rei has perpetual five o'clock shadow and wears strong cologne. He has a pistol strapped to his thigh.

Roleplaying: When approached about a job, Rei prefers to negotiate the price with the person he wants to bed. He actually offers pretty good prices providing that the other person agrees to be his "friend" for the duration of the trip. He gets defensive if he's rejected, but he may still be persuaded to take them at a higher rate.

Personality: He has always been lecherous. While he's attractive, Rei ruins any chance of a budding romance with crass talk and cheap advances. He preys on the desperate, as they are willing to overlook his social shortcomings in exchange for passage.

Motivation: He enjoys meaningful overnight relationships.

Background: Rei got into the smuggling business because he wanted to make a fast buck. He also discovered that many people were attracted to his dangerous lifestyle. After a while, Rei became addicted to sex. He now prowls the unstable regions of the galaxy, offering rides to broke passengers who are willing to pay in kind.

Traits: *(WC) Abhorrent, business, pilot*

Dwight Griffon 447

Unscrupulous Cargo Hauler

"Look, officer, I just want to get my cargo to the station. How was I supposed to know that Jeruvian flowers're illegal there? It's 57 light years from where I normally work!"

Appearance: He wears a red trucker's cap and has a chubby face. He dresses comfortably in jeans and an unzipped space suit jacket.

Roleplaying: Dwight will take the job—no questions asked. That is, if the pay is good enough. He doesn't want to get involved beyond hauling cargo, but often gets himself into big trouble.

Personality: He is opportunistic and rarely cares about what he carries in his cargo hauler. He just wants to get there and get paid.

Motivation: Dwight wants to make money so he can live a more comfortable life that always seems right around the corner.

Background: "Just one big job," is all Dwight thinks it's going to take. Sure, he could take the safe route and keep doing short runs of legal cargo, but that's for suckers who can't see the bigger picture. Dwight's goals are much grander. He wants to bring in the big bucks, and if that means turning his head the other way while the cargo bots load up his ship, well, whatever. Dwight knows there is risk involved in what he does, but he doesn't want to go out penniless and poor like his old man. Maybe it's time to retire, but only when one more job puts him over the top.

Traits: *(JA) Criminal, laborer, merchant*

Professor Marcia Krixon 448

Radical Instigator

"Question the values of this society. Do not assume that they were put in place for noble reasons. Can you really trust the authorities? The faculty? Your parents? Look for the answers for yourself. I'll help you find them."

Appearance: Her short, spiky hair is dyed neon orange. As she speaks, her teleprompter spectacles flash reversed lines of text pulled from the information network. This text might be quotations, statistics, or facts relevant to whatever topic she is discussing.

Roleplaying: If a person opposes her in a debate, she attacks their arguments. If she is losing the debate, she attacks their character.

Personality: Prof. Krixon is passionate, but she is blinded by a political agenda rooted in seizing control from whoever currently has it.

Motivation: She believes that if she can overthrow the powers that be through organized protests, she would naturally be chosen to replace them.

Background: Marcia started as a rebellious student, graduated, and then became a rebellious faculty member. While she has many grand ideas about how the world should be, she has never actually done anything outside the ivory towers of academia. Lately, she has been using the push to grant citizenship to beings of artificial intelligence as her platform of choice to lead into her political rhetoric. She will be wholly devoted to that cause until a better one appears for her to latch onto.

Traits: *(PB) Academic, eccentric, leader, political*

Hurley Nyx 449

Confident Mercenary

"Our paymaster's a real bitch. She'll carve you a new smile if your payment's late—unless I get to you first."

Appearance: She's tall and leanly muscular, with a mocha complexion, brown eyes, and sun-bleached brown hair down to her shoulders.

Roleplaying: Hurley can't go two sentences without cursing for emphasis, unless she's peppering her conversation partners directly with graphic descriptions.

Personality: Well-traveled, wanted, and deadly—Hurley is deeply confident. Her troops love and fear her, convinced that they are the best. The market agrees.

Motivation: Hurley knows war and fighting—and enjoys the fear and deference she's given. She's too known, wanted, and set in her skills to successfully transition to another job.

Background: Hurley grew up an alley rat in the slums, watching starships come and go at night. Her gang was brutal, winning even when wildly overmatched, and punishing the losers so severely that stronger gangs backed down to avoid the same fate. She was betrayed and left for dead; she joined the military to get away from her pursuers when they realized she'd survived. She rose in rank quickly; her ruthless determination and instinctive drive put her in dangerous situations again and again. In the last war, she ruthlessly suppressed the rebels—but her political backers disavowed her when the public turned against her methods. She took her troops to the stars as a mercenary, ready to crush the opposition—for the right price.

Traits: *(SM) Leader, notorious, political, warrior*



Jaenisha Washington

Artist: Avery Liell-Kok

Jaenisha Washington 450

Rugged Fossil Hunter

"Lab work? Ugh. A fate worse than death. This is the life: finding dino bones in Big Sky Country. And yes, I enjoy country music too. Not bad for a big city girl."

Appearance: Her dark hair is braided tight and she has a caramel complexion. She wears a straw cowboy hat, a T-shirt with the words "Watch your step" on the front and the picture of a dinosaur footprint on the back, denim jeans, and work gloves.

Roleplaying: At the end of the day, Jaenisha indulges in an ice-cold beer from a cooler and a long smoke from a corncob pipe she keeps in her pack.

Personality: She is friendly, but can be demanding and exacting with regard to her team's excavation methods.

Motivation: She wants to find dinosaur bones with the marrow intact, part of an effort to eventually clone dinosaurs.

Background: Fascinated by dinosaurs growing up, Jaenisha studied them relentlessly and became a paleontologist. The field was crowded because of the dinosaur frenzy of the 1990s, so to maintain funding, she accepted grants from just about anyone. Most recently, she was offered money from a company interested in—of all things—cloning dinosaurs, just like in the movies. Cloning advances aside, she thinks it a fool's errand. But, since it pays the bills and keeps her in the field hunting bones, she goes along. She'd be surprised to learn how far her findings have advanced their cloning efforts.

Traits: *(TT) Outdoorsman, scientist*

Melissa Saxby 451

Creepy Mom

"Look! He's growing a new tentacle. Aw, who's a little woogums, then?"

Appearance: Melissa is a mess, with tangled hair, dirty clothes, a wild-eyed stare, and the odor to match. Her mutant son, Jase, barely looks human—he's basically a blob covered in arms and tentacles at this point.

Roleplaying: When she's tending to Jase, Melissa is over-the-top lovey-dovey. The rest of the time, she's furtive, paranoid, and disconnected from reality.

Personality: Melissa is deeply, deeply disturbed. Her mood swings rapidly from cloyingly protective of Jase to raging paranoia about "the goddamn scientists chasing us."

Motivation: She wants to protect her beautiful baby boy from the hundreds of people she imagines are hunting them—at any cost.

Background: Melissa is creepily devoted to her hideously mutated—and still mutating—son, Jase. Jase has six eyes, five tentacles, two right arms, and a wide variety of other surreal mutations. Convinced that "science is after Jase," Melissa lives her life on the run from "them." She keeps her son swaddled and hidden from view (a nice surprise for the PCs), but can't resist showing him off to anyone who displays an interest in him. No one knows why Jase keeps changing, or what he's changing into, but there's a malignant intelligence to his eyes that suggests the end result won't be good for anyone but him.

Traits: *(MR) Impoverished, mysterious, primal*

Timony Hall 452

Corrupt Politician

"Consider this free advice for the new arrivals to Magear. Anything you want done, you see Hall. Anything you get done, give a piece of it to Hall."

Appearance: Timony is an obese, bearded man dressed in the finest clothes.

Roleplaying: He's direct and coarse, and often uses foul language just for the reaction. When he enters the canteen, everyone immediately jumps to greet him.

Personality: He's proud to have worked his way up from the mean streets, and his rough attitude shows it.

Motivation: He can't ever have enough money and power.

Background: One of the first miners on Magear, Hall quickly gained a reputation as a tough customer. He focused his energy against his employer, organizing a union and leading a strike that crippled the business. The owners put him in a position of authority, hoping it would co-opt him. He has since leveraged this position into a small fiefdom based on popularity and corruption, and the owners don't care as long as their quotas are met. For the last decade, Hall has wrung immense wealth from the growing city and port that support the mine, and has a hand in just about everything of importance that happens on Magear. He is rumored to be building up to something truly big.

Traits: *(KS) Aggressive, criminal, focal, leader, notorious, political, power hungry, wealthy*

Estella Deneb 453

Wealthy Patron

"Ah, yes. I did ask you to acquire that old thing; see James for your finder's fee. But wouldn't it be truly exciting if this new rumor is true?"

Appearance: Estella wears a fashionably anachronistic gown accented with priceless ancient tribal jewelry. She looks equally comfortable holding forth on her latest finds at parties or in her gallery.

Roleplaying: Her breeding has given her aristocratic speech and mannerisms. She becomes bored with an item or pursuit as soon as another comes along.

Personality: Whatever she is interested in, is what everyone else should be interested in. But as soon as everyone catches up, she's off to the next interesting thing.

Motivation: To maintain her position near the top of the archaeological art world, she must continuously discover new cultures and their artifacts.

Background: Born into wealth that many could not fathom, Estelle avoided the boredom of the truly rich by studying ancient cultures. Joining an off-world archaeological dig in college, she returned with a number of rare artifacts. When the value of these was mentioned in a news report, her elderly father was finally impressed by her, and started supporting her work. Although he passed away decades ago, her archaeology and gallery are a way for her to commune with him. In this strange manner, her gallery's success is her father's long-sought approval. Her advancing age means that she now hires others to do the grunt work.

Traits: *(KS) Artist, business, charming, famous, wealthy*

Tessa Starguard 454

Reckless Time Traveler

"What harm can there be in taking the odd trinket? I haven't disappeared, have I? So, would you like to see the original performance of Hamlet or not?"

Appearance: Tessa is a pretty woman who wears her hair and clothes in fashions that don't belong in the current time. When stealing a "trinket," she opts for a tight-fitting cat suit.

Roleplaying: She enjoys teasing people and hinting about their future. She also loves to name-drop, claiming to have met many famous personages in history.

Personality: She is a free spirit that enjoys traveling through history as if it were her personal playground. Unfortunately, she doesn't respect temporal laws and this is eventually going to cause trouble.

Motivation: She wants to participate in momentous historical events.

Background: Tessa comes from the future. She is fascinated by time travel and was disappointed that "field trips" in her temporal studies courses were highly regulated affairs in which more time was spent ensuring that there'd be no historical interference than actually seeing anything. In short, Tessa found it boring—so she stole a time machine and decided to explore on her own. She freely interacts with historical figures and events. Thus far, her antics haven't destroyed the timeline, but she's come close several times. Tessa never stays in one place for long, as the time police are on her trail.

Traits: *(WC) Adventurer, focal, humorous*

Moidan Lazaros 455

Deranged Prophet

"If you truly believe, you will achieve immortality through suffering—like me."

Appearance: Moidan is a portly man with sunken eyes and cabbage-like ears. He wears a ragged flight suit that, quite pointedly, is missing its helmet.

Roleplaying: He never wears a seat belt, ignores signs that say "Danger: Blast Area," and generally has no sense of self preservation whatsoever.

Personality: Moidan is a deeply faithful man, and were it not for his underlying insanity, he would have made an excellent preacher. But as the Prophet Spared by God, he believes he's immortal—and that he has the power to confer immortality onto his followers, if they prove themselves worthy.

Motivation: Already a perfect being, Moidan wants to help others achieve enlightenment through suffering.

Background: Five years ago, Moidan was accidentally ejected into the vacuum of space during a training exercise—and survived. Believing God had made him immortal, he now thinks he can do anything, no matter how crazy or dangerous, without getting killed. Not a thrill-seeker by nature, he chose instead to become a prophet of the Doctrine of Trials. Initiates in his cult must undergo a series of trials that become more and more dangerous, culminating in the Twelfth Trial: being ejected into space. Moidan wants his followers to succeed and attain enlightenment, but despite good intentions, he's still a menace. His cult has been chased out of several star systems over the past few years.

Traits: *(MR) Leader, occult, notorious, zealot*

Mel Lydons 456

Stressed-Out CEO

"Nothing relaxes quite as well as complete surrender."

Appearance: A portly businessman with ashen hair, gray-blue eyes and a conservative monochromatic wardrobe, Mel might look like he just stepped out of an old black and white photograph if it weren't for his ever present handheld computer.

Roleplaying: Mel dominates conversations, makes decisions quickly, and expects others to follow his orders. He often talks over other people, but occasionally spaces out for no apparent reason.

Personality: Normally an alpha male but badly stressed out from pressure and a fast-paced lifestyle, Mel appreciates letting go and relaxing in any way possible.

Motivation: An addict, Mel just wants to get work out of the way so he can get his next fix.

Background: Mel is a high-powered executive in charge of a large company, a job that has become ever more stressful thanks to the efforts of a cadre of mutinous middle managers that is subtly sabotaging the company. Searching for ways to relax, Mel discovered a service that uses data jacks to completely dominate their clients. Now completely addicted, Mel uses it for quick fixes several times a day and all of most evenings. His habit is a serious security risk for his company; if it were to be discovered it would be excellent ammunition for his opponents.

Traits: *(MN) Aggressive, business, leader, wealthy*

Anjelica Danvor 457

Ruthless Pilot

"When you are up there, there are only a few centimeters of metal separating you from the icy void. One wrong move and you'll be burning up in atmo. Which is why, if you cross me, I will not hesitate to bring you down first."

Appearance: Tall and beautiful, Anjelica has a classic hourglass figure and flowing brown hair. Her eyes are large, deep, and blue. Her smile is a seductive mixture of inviting and dangerous.

Roleplaying: Anjelica will scold anyone who complains. She never says anything comforting to anyone and is uncomfortable in emotionally charged situations.

Personality: She is not very compassionate, bordering on cruel. She detests those who break the law and takes quiet pleasure in any criminal who suffers for his crimes. Outside of work, Anjelica has a habit of burning through lovers; her lack of compassion poisons most relationships.

Motivation: She is career-minded and is looking to rise up the chain of command. Personally, she enjoys inflicting some pain on the guilty.

Background: A neglected child who came from a turbulent home, Anjelica never had a healthy relationship. She enrolled in the police force in part for a promising job and in part to carry out her fantasies of inflicting pain on criminals. She earned a position on orbital patrol, looking for smugglers. Once, Anjelica destroyed an illegal refugee transport trying to run a planetary blockade, cementing her reputation as a "cold, hard bitch."

Traits: *(PV) Beautiful, pilot, police*

Tiana Skye 458

Exuberant Wilderness Guide

"It feels good to be away from the colony. I love the sounds of nature. They make me feel so alive!"

Appearance: An athletic woman with a worker's hands, Tiana usually wears sports clothes and keeps her hair tied back. She also wears eye contacts that automatically tint to shield her eyes from her world's bright suns. Tiana usually has a bandage or two somewhere on her body.

Roleplaying: Tiana is effusive whenever she's outdoors and in nature. She encourages her companions to explore and take the less traveled paths.

Personality: A bit of a technophobe, Tiana feels that too much technology separates people from nature. She only uses the minimal tools she needs to survive in the wilderness.

Motivation: She enjoys living in nature. She generally acts as a guide to colonists and visitors.

Background: Tiana was born on Java Nova, a hot, wet world with numerous rainforests. The planet hosts a few colonies and Tiana was trained to act as a guide, traveling between them. She also offers nature tours to off-worlders. The more time she spends in the wilderness, the less she likes returning to civilization. When in nature, Tiana acts like it's a big game; she is animated and excited. She tries to share her enthusiasm with her fellow travelers, usually with mixed results.

Traits: *(WC) Merchant, outdoorsman, primal*

Lao Jun, "Patient 16" 459

Psychic Child

"I want my mommy! Bad man couldn't help me, he 'sploded. You help me?"

Appearance: Small for his age, Lao has medium-brown skin, straight black hair, and an overly large forehead. When he's angry, veins stand out all over his face and his eyes glow bright blue.

Roleplaying: He's eerily calm most of the time, but when he's scared or angry he transitions directly into a frothing, out-of-control rage.

Personality: Lao doesn't like hurting people, so he's learned to try and keep himself calm—but he can't help his aching head, short temper, and poor impulse control (he's only six, after all). He's a lost little boy in search of his parents, and he'll latch onto anyone who he thinks can help find them.

Motivation: Lao wants to find his parents so that they can take him somewhere warm and safe and love him forever and ever.

Background: Moments after he was born, Lao was whisked away from his parents and taken to a secret hospital to be raised by mysterious scientists. Six years later, Patient 16 walked out of the hospital, unharmed, as the building collapsed around him. Now he wanders the world in search of his birth parents, possessing tremendous psychic powers he doesn't know how to control. Whenever he's angry or in pain, he lashes out unconsciously at everyone in the vicinity, making him incredibly dangerous. Worse still, his power appears to be growing—and the longer he goes without finding his parents, the angrier and less stable he becomes.

Traits: *(MR) Child, magical, mysterious, primal*

Creeger the Avenger 460

Self-Appointed General

"You want to kill something? Then let's take the fight to those that caused this. Onward to the capital!"

Appearance: He has the look of a veteran soldier: graying, clean-shaven, barrel-chested, and wearing an Army service uniform. He carries a gleaming silver World War II-style helmet.

Roleplaying: He quotes liberally from war movies, delivering one cliché after another when addressing troops.

Personality: Creeger is angry at himself for surviving and angry at the world for robbing him of his life and those he loved.

Motivation: He can't bring himself to commit suicide outright, so he places himself at the front of the battle, fighting recklessly in the hopes he will be killed in action.

Background: He was a delivery person for a grocery when the "aPOXalypse" took place, a disease that killed 90% of humanity. He couldn't bear to live on, so he formed an army, saying he was marching on the capital. He thought his ragtag group would be defeated by other marauders or by remnants of the real armed forces. Instead his force prevailed and gained strength, bolstered by his fearless fighting style. Now he leads a true army, though he has no idea what will happen when they actually reach their destination. He hopes, though, that he will be dead long before then.

Traits: *(TT) Aggressive, military*

Drake Alexis 461

Bitter Doctor

"Sure, I can patch that arm up—even improve it. It just won't be cheap."

Appearance: Drake is short, balding, and thin, and usually has a sour odor. One of his gray eyes is constantly obscured by his diagnostic monocle, and his mouth relaxes into a sneer when he's not concentrating.

Roleplaying: He stares off into space consulting his databases, scratching absently. His diagnostic monocle is always a blur of colors and numbers, making it hard for others to focus on his eyes.

Personality: Drake is not popular; his barbs and sneers drive away all but those who need his services. It often seems like he's examining people like an insect.

Motivation: Life kicked him in the teeth several times, so Drake makes sure that he doesn't leave much exposed for the next blow.

Background: Drake grew up on the wrong side of the tracks, a bright kid with a head for numbers trapped in a world of taunting and beatings. He finally escaped, whisked away into a corporate school where his new peers scorned him for his poverty and lack of connections. One prank left him infected with an itch that never has gone away. Drake turned to betting to stretch his money, but wound up indebted to criminals. He left medical school when he was caught stealing supplies, so he's now patching up criminals under the table, taking notes, and seeking enough power for targeted revenge.

Traits: *(SM) Criminal, medic, power hungry*

Raul Cintes 462

Amorous Space Pirate

"If you are one of the beautiful ladies, then maybe we can negotiate."

Appearance: Raul wears exaggerated, old-Earth style pirate clothing that shows off his bare chest. He is tall and skinny with a pointed goatee and a bald head.

Roleplaying: Raul speaks with a strong accent and makes dramatic poses for no apparent reason. He is over-the-top in all of his actions, especially when he is wooing the beautiful ladies—and Raul is always wooing the beautiful ladies.

Personality: Outgoing and over-the-top, Raul has a charm that defies explanation.

Motivation: One day he thinks he might want to be captain of his own ship, but for now Raul is happy to seek adventure and amorous encounters under someone else's flag. It is much less work that way.

Background: Few who stalk the cargo lanes and take the name "pirate" really go in for all of the myth and pomp that surrounds the calling. Raul, however, is a rationalist and believes that if he is to be a pirate in name, he should be one in look and style. Raul has researched pirates through history books and entertainment media, and he is having a blast acting out his own twisted version of it. Many of the captains Raul has worked under enjoy having him onboard. He is good and hardworking, and his antics raise morale amongst the other crew members.

Traits: *(JA) Adventurer, criminal, humorous*

Amelia Lourve 463

Inspiring Dauphine

"The advantage of youth is that I do not know what cannot be done."

Appearance: Diminutive in size, her golden hair is braided in a large bun secured to the top of her head by hairpins. She wears businesslike boots and tight-fitting synthweave clothing, buttoned up. Her small, gloved hands are perched defiantly upon her hips.

Roleplaying: Amelia glares constantly like a predator stalking its prey. She's prone to dismiss ideas that push against her agenda and speaks with conviction, having found her voice.

Personality: She has a difficult time reconciling that others look to her to lead with the fact that her youth deprives her of experience. Amelia is prone to frustration, having been thrust into a role that she did not desire, sometimes wishing to simply be a normal child.

Motivation: She leads by example and will champion those that rely upon her. She stands against tyranny and seeks to influence those that could prove useful to the cause.

Background: Their youngest daughter sequestered away after birth, the royal Lourve family was seemingly wiped out by rival factions. A daunting resistance revealed itself, with Amelia at the lead, and took back their ancestral homeland with ruthless vengeance. The young child-warrior grew up on the field of battle, witnessing death much earlier than most. This has strengthened her resolve to avoid conflict and tempered her into a skillful leader and politician. She searches for surviving family members still.

Traits: *(DM) Child, leader, royalty, warrior*

Felix Adap 464

Tabloid Journalist

"Bat boy was the big seller. You could slap a picture of him on the home page and get a million hits on the global feeds easily. But then he came out about being an albino mole boy who just happened to look like a bat and that golden goose stopped laying eggs. Hold on… I just saw our favorite starlet's PR droid hover into that plastic surgery and genetic makeover clinic. Hand me my recorder, will ya?"

Appearance: He is handsome and in good shape. Several battery packs on his belt power his four-dimensional recording device.

Roleplaying: He asks lots of loaded questions like "Why didn't you go out partying last night?" because regardless of the answer it suggests that the person behaves in a certain way.

Personality: Felix is a bitter and sarcastic person who enjoys tearing down others in public.

Motivation: He tried to make it as an actor himself, but he didn't have the talent. Now he wants to ruin the fame of those who have it.

Background: Years ago Felix auditioned for every role that he could find and was always turned down. Instead of improving his acting, he began digging up dirt on his competition, hoping to eliminate them from the business. His plan failed, but a local tabloid paper saw potential in him.

Traits: *(PB) Beautiful, charming, entertainment, notorious*

Howard Pendleton 465

Adolescent Scientist

"What do you mean I have to go into time out? Someday I'll own every one of you!"

Appearance: Howard is a towheaded, dumpy 12-year-old boy with freckles, oversized glasses, and a perpetual sneer.

Roleplaying: Apparently spoiled beyond belief, Howard constantly whines and complains. He demands whatever he wants, belittles those around him, and disregards any and all rules he doesn't like. He quickly descends into furious, foul-mouthed rants.

Personality: Once a rich business mogul and brilliant scientist, Howard feels he should be treated the way he's accustomed to. Frustrated by his predicament, it takes little to push him over the edge.

Motivation: Howard wants to reverse his de-aging and return to his former status.

Background: The head scientist at a bio-tech firm, Howard was working on a regeneration serum. A lab accident caused him to physically regress into a 12-year-old boy. Realizing this could be a modern day fountain of youth, and not wanting to share the credit or money, he stole the prototype formula, burned the lab, and staged his own death. He relocated with his wife, who now poses as his mother and treats him like her son—even in private. Despite lacking resources, Howard is working furiously to reverse engineer his stolen samples and fix his condition, and has failed repeatedly. In bouts of petty anger he has begun to lash out at those he does not like by staging humiliating and dangerous accidents.

Traits: *(MN) Child, focal, genius, humorous, scientist*

Alistair Altair 466

Fearful Academic

"This odd-looking material here appears to be some kind of advanced quasi-organic data storage matrix. Or it could be a high explosive. Or maybe a culture medium for a flesh-eating plague. Or..."

Appearance: Tall and thin with a constant sniffle and unruly hair, he is never without a sizable backpack full of scientific and engineering tools, from spectrum analyzers to simple test tubes.

Roleplaying: Pessimistic to a fault, he can always see the worst possible outcome to any situation, and talk about it at length.

Personality: His intelligence makes him keenly aware of how everything could possibly go wrong.

Motivation: He needs to survive enough adventures and make enough money to go back to school, where he belongs.

Background: Alistair could never settle on one discipline. After collecting partial degrees in everything from xenoculture to subspace engineering to surgical neurografting, he ran out of money. Drowning his sorrows in a spaceport bar, he befriended a group of travelers by fixing their broken comm links. He was hired on the spot, and spent a nervous but lucrative tour with the group. Recognizing the value of his knowledge—and the wealth out among the stars—he has hired out on a number of ships. His goal is to go back to college, though he is slowly coming around to the fact that he may have turned into an adventurer without realizing it.

Traits: *(KS) Academic, genius, medic, scholar, scientist*

Misha Belryn 467

Stimulating Interrogator

"I'm sorry. Are you distracted by my long legs? The way they move as I walk to and fro? What would you do to run your hands along these smooth calves? Would you tell me where the ship is harbored?"

Appearance: Outside of the interrogation room, Misha is average height with short blond hair and green eyes. In the interrogation room, her looks change and she becomes the most beautiful woman her subject desires.

Roleplaying: When she is not working, she is painfully shy, with a meek voice, and often avoids eye contact. During interrogations, her mannerisms are altered by her implants based on her subject's psyche.

Personality: Misha's true personality is pleasant and simple. She emits a palpable aura of sensuality during interrogations.

Motivation: She does what she needs to out of duty, but her implants make the discovery of secrets a stimulation that is nearly sexual, and one that she has begun to crave more and more.

Background: Misha was an unexceptional police cadet who was heading for an administration position. She was selected for a program which gave her a series of implants that allow her to tune into the sexual desires of a person and alter her physiology to match. She now lives two lives: her plain life outside of the interrogation room and her charged role extracting confessions. Secretly, she has begun to use her implants to pursue lovers who are not suspects.

Traits: *(PV) Beautiful, counselor, magical, police*

Jeremiah Quinn 468

Cyborg Bounty-Hunter

"Even mechanical parts get rusty, but it's better than being out of the game."

Appearance: Much of Jeremiah's body has been replaced by machinery and combat enhancements, but his square and scruff-covered jaw remains visible.

Roleplaying: Jeremiah is a mercenary who refused to give up the game as he got older. He will use his mechanical parts to the best advantage in a combat, but he is hard to get along with. He longs for human connections, but no longer knows how to make them.

Personality: Grumpy and coarse, Jeremiah takes umbrage with any who call him too old, but flashes of realization at his lost humanity can send him into temporary fugue.

Motivation: Jeremiah is looking for something, possibly a good death. He never wants to show weakness and strives to be the best member of any team he is in.

Background: Jeremiah was good—really good. There were few bounties that could escape him in his younger days, but age takes everyone; Jeremiah found himself succumbing to it despite the rejuvenation treatments and health drugs that were popular back then. Having no family or other connections, Jeremiah opted to surgically enhance his body with mechanical parts in order to keep hunting. It worked, but he feels more humanity slip away each day, and he is beginning to realize exactly what he's lost. Jeremiah might be a good source of information for the party, or they might meet him while chasing a bounty.

Traits: *(JA) Aggressive, military, warrior*

Private Sol Collins 469

Macho Marine

"I can't believe that I'm babysitting a bunch of farmers. I joined the corps to fight, damn it!"

Appearance: Sol is a hardcore galactic marine. He keeps his hair short, sports the corps insignia and his squad tattoos on his forearms, and is rarely out of uniform. He has a military posture when he is standing still as well as when walking.

Roleplaying: He enjoys barking orders at people, especially civilians. He wears his frustration on his sleeve and isn't afraid to let people know just how he feels about being assigned to the "armpit of the galaxy."

Personality: Sol's aggressive, macho behavior hides a sensitive soul that wouldn't hurt a flea. He'd rather be an artist and spends his off duty time decorating the sides of buildings.

Motivation: He wants to convince people that he's a macho marine.

Background: Sol wanted to be an artist, but family pressures and his naturally large frame led Sol to join the galactic marines. Sol excelled at boot camp but his instructor noted that he lacked a "fighting spirit." The drill instructor recommended that Sol be transferred to a "safe" position, so Sol was sent to New Sudan. On some level Sol realizes that he was put here for a reason, but he hides it under marine bravado. The artist still lives within, and Sol occasionally produces a great work of art when he isn't patrolling the colony's farmlands.

Traits: *(WC) Aggressive, artist, military*



Jeremiah Quinn

Artist: Matt Morrow

Oryon Andersen 470

Terminally Ill Idealist

"Here, take this check for a million dollars. No, I mean it—no strings attached. Put your kids through college."

Appearance: Infected with an alien virus, Oryon looks normal except for his eyes, which are bright purple and pupil-less. He wears a rumpled $50,000 suit and carries a golden briefcase.

Roleplaying: Accustomed to being a ruthless businessman, Oryon starts every interaction acting like an angry, aggressive bull, and then quickly catches himself and becomes magnanimous and affable.

Personality: Oryon used to be renowned for his ruthlessness, but something clicked in his brain when he received his final diagnosis. He doesn't know how to be a kind and generous person, but he's trying his best. He knows he can't change overnight, but he can still make a difference through his money.

Motivation: Oryon wants to become a better man while curing the world's ills.

Background: A wealthy trade magnate, Oryon picked up a terminal, incurable alien virus on his travels, and he now has only a few months to live. He's hale and not contagious, so he's spending the time he has left trying to be the best man he can be. He's making enormous donations to charity, giving huge sums to complete strangers, setting up foundations to help the poor, and otherwise acting like a saint. He doesn't care about his legacy, he just wants to make a difference in the world. Ever pragmatic, Oryon is accompanied by four bodyguards.

Traits: *(MR) Business, saintly, wealthy*

Kade Suraj 471

Inexperienced CEO

"I'm the owner of this company and I make all the decisions! So tell me, Marina, how should I handle this?"

Appearance: Still a youth by most standards, Kade tries to act like a corporate executive but he comes off stiff and awkward. His clothes are actually quite fashionable, having been selected by Marina. He usually has a distant look on his face during executive meetings.

Roleplaying: Kade tries too hard to act like he's the decision-maker, although he'll dance around making a decision until he's consulted with Marina. He is a font of information on sports.

Personality: He knows he's in over his head; that's why he leans on Marina. His insecurities have given him an abrasive personality.

Motivation: He wants to succeed like his mother and take the company forward.

Background: Kade is the son of Victoria Suraj, the former owner of the company. Kade was a spoiled child who was technically the vice-president of the company, but allowed his mother to make all of his decisions. That changed when an errant meteor struck his mother's shuttle, killing her and leaving an 18-year-old Kade in control of the Company. With no work experience, Kade relied heavily on his mother's assistant, Marina Kapoor. In truth, Marina has been running the company ever since, keeping it solvent while Kade mopes in his office. Kade wants to be taken seriously but fears losing Marina.

Traits: *(WC) Business, leader*

Senator Jane Dickerson 472

Humbled Refugee

"On his deathbed, the president tried to pass his powers onto me. By then, it was too late. We could only pray as our republic ended."

Appearance: Disheveled and road-weary, with most of her clothes in tatters and her right arm in a sling, she still carries herself with a regal, senatorial bearing. Her aquiline profile still hints at the power and position she once held.

Roleplaying: Jane clears her throat before speaking, just as she did before making pronouncements from the well of the Senate chamber.

Personality: She is humbled by the events of the "aPOXalypse," not sure if the government had a role in unleashing the disease that killed 90% of the population. She also is moved by how she was accepted—not scorned—by the survivors that have banded together.

Motivation: She is just trying to survive from one day to the next. But as the weeks pass and the people yearn for leadership, Jane finds herself stepping forward to provide advice.

Background: She served four terms as a U.S. senator, unable to return to her home state because of travel restrictions during the outbreak. In the final days, she was among a handful left running the federal government. When it was clear their authority had eroded and communications were lost, she embarked with others for a new life.

Traits: *(TT) Famous, leader, political*

Mare Agnesi 473

Burned-Out Inventor

"Why should I? So some detrivore with a law degree can claim that his idiot of a client had the idea first, and steal the rights from me?"

Appearance: A very old woman, Mare walks down the street with the energy of someone half her age. A fine network of metal tracery is barely visible beneath her skin.

Roleplaying: Her sharp but intelligent retorts reveal an undercurrent of anger and frustration.

Personality: She's mad at the world for stealing her inventions. She still invents, but does not readily share her ideas.

Motivation: She enjoys the challenge of research and development, but isn't interested in selling or even lending out her inventions.

Background: A gifted student, Mare studied and researched her way into leading a cutting-edge research lab for a major corporation. She launched her own company, convinced that doing so would grant her more freedom and earn her more money. Initially extremely successful, her company was betrayed by its own attorneys, who were rumored to have been paid off by her former employer. After the dust had settled, Mare was left with a pile of debt, a grudge against attorneys, and a reputation for being half-crazy. She retreated into herself, finally settling her debts and purchasing a remote home/lab complex with earnings from consulting gigs. She continues her work alone, hiding behind her reputation as a half-crazed old lady.

Traits: *(KS) Academic, ancient, eccentric, genius, scientist*

Samara Toscin 474

Vengeful Artist

"The red swoop there is correct, but see the ventral strokes? Wrong angle—this isn't my prey."

Appearance: She's a thin teenage girl, with eyes slightly askew—one artificial—and a face that's a patchwork of scars and depressions. Her black hair is lank and unwashed, with green eyes clouded by painkillers—except on the hunt.

Roleplaying: Samara's voice catches as she swallows pain or fury. Her street slang is a poor imitation, filled with too much privileged vocabulary.

Personality: She watches carefully, examining details with an artist's eye, all to locate her prey.

Motivation: Her gilded life was ripped from her; each person's shudder of revulsion on seeing her redoubles her resolve to pay back her assailant.

Background: By age six, Samara was composing pieces that were seriously considered for inclusion in local art installations; by her teens, her pieces were usually included. She began escaping at night and painting the city—her elegant art twisting into and complementing local gang tags. Until one night she twisted the wrong tag, and got worked over by the original artist and his friends, who stumbled on her halfway through the piece. Her face proved impossible to repair, leaving peaks and soft pockets, turning her hideous—and filling her with fury. After recovering and learning the use of her new eye, she again sneaks out at night to hunt the boys who beat her. They have a lot to pay for.

Traits: *(SM) Adventurer, artist, hideous, wealthy*

Pierce Salmon 475

Well-Traveled Guide

"'The one-legged crane strikes swiftly in the night.' Well, that's what she said. Might have been a tiger."

Appearance: He wears a beaten leather duster covered in cuts and tears, and a dirty top hat with a silk band around the brim. His pockmarked face is weathered and leathery in appearance, covered in white stubble. He leans upon a large walking stick that is formed out of various pieces of metal and which looks vaguely like a rifle.

Roleplaying: Pierce spits with reckless abandon during conversation and is prone to using colorful metaphors. His speech is littered with curious idioms that make little sense, but that he somehow tenuously ties to the situation.

Personality: He's too stubborn to die and seemingly has nine lives and lust for life. Pierce always has a parable to tell when the situation looks grim and is a source of inspiration or laughs. Pierce doesn't care about material objects at all beyond his makeshift rifle, which he wields with deadly accuracy.

Motivation: He'll live on his own terms until he can't anymore. Pierce has no desire to go quietly into the night.

Background: A wanderer and carefree spirit, Pierce had some success as a soldier-of-fortune. That was over 40 years ago. Now he roams the wastelands helping strangers or generally making an annoyance of himself. He's danced with queens and seen spectacular sights, and he shares it all with vibrant recollection.

Traits: *(DM) Adventurer, eccentric, humorous*

Gabby McCullah 476

Incompetent Tech

"We'll figure out the problem if it takes all night. We just have to keep replacing parts."

Appearance: Gabby is a sturdy woman with kinky auburn hair, gray-blue eyes and a bulbous nose. She generally wears standard blue overalls to keep her clean when she's crawling around behind access panels and under workstations.

Roleplaying: Chatty to the point of it interfering with her duties, Gabby's pleasant nature can quickly turn petty if she's annoyed or slighted.

Personality: Bull-headed and persistent, Gabby isn't one to back down from a challenge. She works hard, not smart, often spending much more effort and time on a task than it requires because she refuses to ask for help or consult documentation.

Motivation: Gabby wants to be recognized for her hard work, and expects others to overlook the generally poor quality of her output.

Background: Family-trained for most of her life, with several years' professional experience under her belt, Gabby doesn't really know as much as she thinks she does about her job. Too stubborn to admit defeat and seek help or try a new career, she continues to work exhausting schedules over minor issues and attempt simple jobs multiple times until she gets it right. Though she is clearly improving over time, with her inability to learn through any system other than trial and error, it's unlikely she will ever be exceptional.

Traits: *(MN) Business, crafter*

Dora Calveretti 477

Weary Union Leader

"Look, I'll try to get your sick days honored, but I'm fighting battles on four different fronts right now. We need to get the safety situation dealt with first."

Appearance: Dora's time in the mines has not treated her well. A mining accident left her with a robotic arm, and years of hard work have left her tired and worn out. Her curly brown hair is full of dust, and her coveralls are always dirty despite her working behind a desk.

Roleplaying: Weariness is all that shows on Dora's face, but when she storms into the manager's office with some new safety violation, she is like a storm unleashed.

Personality: Dora is tired from her many years in the mines and her time fighting management. She gets motivated about miners' rights and refuses to back down from tough challenges.

Motivation: Dora's main concern is better safety conditions within the mines, but she fights furiously for anything that can make the miners' lives better.

Background: When the accident took Dora's arm, it took her out of the only trade she knew. Realizing that the company used the mine's remote location on a far-off moon to ignore proper safety conditions, she went to the union leader. He did nothing about it, just as he was bribed to do. Dora ousted the union leader and stepped into his shoes, taking the first step on her crusade for better, safer conditions.

Traits: *(JA) Leader, laborer, political*

Arielle Stardancer 478

Manipulative Dancer

"I'm paying my way through law school. Why don't you buy me a drink and tell me what you do, handsome."

Appearance: Men's hearts often skip a beat when this stunning blond woman approaches their table, smiling directly at them. Her eyes seem to see right through people.

Roleplaying: Flirtatious and charming, she knows her weapons and wields them very effectively.

Personality: Beneath the self-centered stereotype, she is a closet romantic, and will do nearly anything to help out children in need.

Motivation: She only has so much time to make her mark in the world before age catches up. She has sworn that she will never again be without food or shelter.

Background: Although she'll never admit it, she's the daughter of an upper middle-class family, and had a comfortable upbringing until her businessman father was framed for embezzlement. She walked in on his staged suicide, and her world collapsed around her. She ran away a few years later, unable to watch as her mother slowly fell apart. She's been dancing ever since, and has developed an extensive repertoire of social skills, including an uncanny sense of empathy that lets her say just the right thing at just the right time. She suspects that her father was framed, but has no evidence. If she does find out that he was framed, she will seek revenge.

Traits: *(KS) Beautiful, charming, entertainment*

Katrina "Star Kitty" Montescu 479

Body-Mod Celebrity

"There's nothing sexier than a cat in heat, don't you agree?"

Appearance: Star Kitty is a cute young woman who has undergone extensive body modification. She has catlike pupils (and excellent night vision), short white fur with tiger stripes, sharp teeth and claws, and a bionic tail.

Roleplaying: She is seductive and likes to lightly drag her claws on anyone she's speaking with. She peppers her speech with innuendoes and purrs. She enjoys flaunting her feline body, even if it makes people uncomfortable.

Personality: Star Kitty is a bit of a free spirit. She enjoys fast romances but gets bored easily. She plays hard because she works hard and, in spite of her appearance, Star Kitty puts her job before everything else.

Motivation: She enjoys playing her role, and singing.

Background: Katrina "Star Kitty" Montescu has always had a playful personality. She learned early on that she had a great singing voice and signed with a holo-vid studio. Star Kitty enjoyed dressing like an anthropomorphic cat as her trademark and, as time went on, began using her money to truly transform herself into her "ideal" form. While this transformation worries some of her old friends and family, Star Kitty fully enjoys her new body and never lacks for company. She's even spawned an entire subculture of "kittens" who emulate her as best they can. Because of her celebrity and quirky nature, few doors are closed to her.

Traits: *(WC) Beautiful, charming, eccentric, entertainment*

Jordan Lyndsey 480

Starving Salesman

"This here's a ship! Ain't no shielding coming offa this here ship!" <thunk, thunk, crash!> "That ain't no ship...this here's a ship!"

Appearance: Jordan has tired bagged eyes and a constant five o'clock shadow on his face. His deeply cleft chin would lend him a rugged handsomeness if he weren't so obviously exhausted and defeated.

Roleplaying: A fast talker with a horrible poker face, Jordan is pushy and repeats himself often. His speech and mannerisms are pleading and he's not above wheedling, whining, and begging to make a sale.

Personality: Desperate and weary, Jordan is a failure and knows it. He lives in fear of the day that he'll be handed a pink slip for being unable to move enough ships to appease management.

Motivation: All Jordan wants to do is close this sale and start schlepping his way to the next one.

Background: An awful salesman, Jordan is constantly one paycheck away from disaster. This desperation lends him a pathetic intensity which he wields like a cudgel to bludgeon potential customers into buying. He wasn't always like this. Years ago he was one of his company's best salesmen, but a succession of personal trials left him unable to close the deal and made his life a constant struggle.

Traits: *(MN) Business, humorous, impoverished, white collar*



Katrina "Star Kitty" Montescu

Artist: Avery Liell-Kok

Secretary Denise Vaya 481

Political Puppet

"I think it is unfair to say that the contract was awarded solely because of the President's affiliation with the StarMax corporation. StarMax still makes the best bio-computer processors in the solar system. Next question… No, I did not know that StarMax ranked below five other competitors for quality."

Appearance: She wears a simple black body suit, high heels, and a black jacket. Her hair is cut short and slicked back, and she exhibits a timeless beauty.

Roleplaying: In public, she smiles and nods, but in private she is making panicked calls to the various powers she answers to.

Personality: Denise is not stupid: She's incredibly intelligent, but she's not assertive or confident. Sadly, she does an excellent job of portraying such a person.

Motivation: She wants to help the poor people from the mining colonies in the asteroid belt where she was born.

Background: Denise Vaya was raised in squalid conditions, but she was such a beautiful child that her father realized it could be her ticket out of the slums. After she won a local beauty pageant, he helped her become a model, which paid for her college tuition. Her father died soon after she graduated, and Denise became a social activist. A powerful politician recognized her significant talents and brought her on as press secretary—a position that filled her purse and dampened her spirits. Once an ambitious idealist, she is now merely the mouthpiece of a political machine.

Traits: *(PB) Beautiful, political, white collar*

Leona Vinge 482

Dogmatic Colonist

"The Bright Book doesn't care what you want. Go cleanse yourself, and don't return until you've given up this foolish idea of asking outsiders for help. God will provide."

Appearance: Leona is short, round, and unremarkable looking. Her appearance gives strangers no hint of the iron will and inner fire that drives her. She dresses as plainly as possible.

Roleplaying: She talks about the Bright Book, God, and "the right course" constantly—her only mode is "preaching," and there is no off switch.

Personality: Leona sleeps for three hours a night, has no personal effects, and truly believes that the only path to success is the one outlined in the Bright Book, her sect's religious text. She craves control (not power, although with control comes power) and uses religion to get it.

Motivation: Leona knows that without her steady hand on the tiller, the colony would have failed long ago. She will always be there to tell the colonists how to live.

Background: The spiritual leader of the Falkirk VII colony, New Falkirk, Leona believes that dogma leads to truth—follow the motions, do everything exactly as the Bright Book says, and success is inevitable. She's a source of great strength for the colony. No one likes her—though they all fear and respect her. Despite the colony having a secular leader, everyone knows the real power in New Falkirk is Leona.

Traits: *(MR) Leader, notorious, religious, zealot*

Royce Baris 483

Conspiring Executive

"Do you think that you made some kind of bad business decision? For the past five years, every decision you have made was in response to something I set before your path. Your decisions were sound; you were just unaware their sum would lead you to this day. Now sign."

Appearance: Royce's look transcends genetics, having been purchased on the finest orbitals. He has no physical flaws. He dresses in the most expensive orbital-grown silks.

Roleplaying: Moving like a predatory animal, Royce surveys rooms with his gaze, and strides forth into any room as the dominant alpha male.

Personality: The cool exterior and perfect looks are the shell of a man whose mind never stops plotting and planning. Every interaction with a person is analyzed for opportunities. He plays out various scenarios in every waking moment.

Motivation: He is a corporate shark, always hunting the next acquisition. He has no love for his work, only the conquest.

Background: Royce was an experiment by the corporation to genetically design a superior executive. He was raised by the corporation and given the finest education. Upon graduation he was assigned the most ruthless mentor, who taught him the art of corporate acquisition. He was a quick study and quickly became a weapon for the corporation. Where force cannot be used to remove or acquire a rival, Royce is sent in to engineer their fall.

Traits: *(PV) Aggressive, business, power hungry, white collar*

Elizabeth Bachman 484

Unintentional Freedom Fighter

"Yes, I am the owner, programming director, and sole journalist for the broadcast feed 'Truth Seekers.' I'm under arrest for disturbing the public optimism? I understand. I will cooperate. No, I will not plead guilty. I said that I would cooperate. I never said that I would be compliant."

Appearance: Her dark skin is dull and her eyes are tired. Wrinkles are beginning to appear on her face at an early age. She wears her hair in dreadlocks, and wears a recording device with a camera over her right ear.

Roleplaying: Elizabeth is polite, and speaks softly and without bravado. She appears nervous, but shows an unusual courage and deep sincerity. Her wrists bear the marks left by police restraints that were applied too tightly.

Personality: She is a mild-mannered person who does not seem to enjoy her celebrity (or infamy, depending on who you ask) at all.

Motivation: She seeks to empower the people with the truth hoping that they will take action to change things for the better.

Background: Elizabeth once worked for the current government regime. She monitored all broadcasts and jammed any that threatened the public optimism. This included information regarding food shortages, police brutality, and failures of the colony's biodomes to protect citizens from the poisonous atmosphere of the planet. She jammed these broadcasts even though they were true, until one day she started a broadcast of her own, because someone had to tell the truth.

Traits: *(PB) Abhorrent, business, merchant, notorious*

Darris Denali 485

Direct Occultist

"Our calculations show that the underlying structure is changing at an accelerating rate, creating this crisis of opportunity. We must seize it."

Appearance: Darris is wild-eyed, with frizzy dark hair and chunky glasses. His pallor is fish-belly white, contrasting sharply with the symbols tattooed on his skin.

Roleplaying: He explains everything in great detail. All events are as calculations predicted; his pad shows pages of densely packed numbers, revealing that these events were long foretold.

Personality: Few have the stamina to look the universe in the face, to understand the chasm at its center. People want to ignore the truth, but that only signals that he needs a simpler or more direct presentation.

Motivation: Death unlocked the secrets of the universe, and he's back to explain them.

Background: Darris died for the first time in his twenties. When he was revived, he had a sudden new facility for math—and a new fetish for self-representation. Over the next dozen years he studied the Kabbalah and began tattooing himself with the seraphim and key symbols. He began to graph his calculations, creating unusually disturbing art. A cult grew up around his simple, direct pronouncements. He began exchanging calculations with other occult experts. Their figures agree: life in the universe is nearing a turning point, one that must be confronted. Darris requires transport for this meeting that will change everything.

Traits: *(SM) Artist, eccentric, hideous, occult*

Colonel Caryn Jaeger 486

Rigid Station Commander

"Tell them to behave or I'll push them out of an airlock. What do you mean, I can't do that?"

Appearance: Caryn usually wears her duty uniform. If forced to wear her station commander dress uniform she looks very uncomfortable. Caryn has premature wrinkles from the stresses of command and sports several scars on her body.

Roleplaying: She has a stern and direct delivery. She expects her wishes to be carried out without question. She sees compromise as a weakness, although she'll begrudgingly give in if the argument is persuasive.

Personality: Caryn has an officer's perspective. For most of her term as station commander she's run the space station like a military vessel. Now that the sector is becoming more civilized she's having difficulty playing politician.

Motivation: She knows that she should retire, but she fears retirement. Thus, she's motivated to try and play politician, even though she's terrible at it.

Background: Since she joined the galactic army, Caryn has fought in many battles. She quickly rose through the ranks and when the frontier governor needed an officer to run the most remote station, he selected Caryn without hesitation. For the last decade, Caryn ran the station with brutal efficiency. Unfortunately for her, boundaries move and the station is now a hub between the core and the new frontier. She's had to adjust her leadership style to accommodate the new reality, and thus far she's doing a poor job of it.

Traits: *(WC) Leader, military, notorious, political*

River Starchild 487

Interstellar Hippie

"You're really harshing my mellow."

Appearance: A lithe young woman, River has long blond hair down to her knees, wears floral themed jewelry, and has small, multipurpose chemical-analysis and dispenser implants.

Roleplaying: River always seems to be a bit under the influence of some kind of illegal substance. She smiles, flirts, and cuddles up to whoever seems the most susceptible to her charms.

Personality: More of a thrill seeker than an addict, River dabbles in a number of "feel good" drugs and vices and is willing to try almost anything once. She is laid-back and casual and has a difficult time taking anything seriously.

Motivation: River enjoys drifting along wherever the space-winds take her, and only puts effort into getting men to give her gifts or scoring a new type of high.

Background: Raised in a religious orphanage, River escaped as soon as she turned 18. After dating several men, and learning how to manipulate them to get what she wanted, she met another young lady named Amber and the two became friends. Amber was a musician, and brought River along on several tours with her band. Enjoying the fast lifestyle, but not willing to actually work for it, River eventually met up with a small commune of space hippies and joined their ranks. Claiming to be religious pilgrims as a cover, they travel the stars searching for new vibes and good drugs.

Traits: *(MN) beautiful, charming, humorous, impoverished*

Maximillian Ellis 488

Unrelenting Xeno-Acquisitions Manager

"The spoils of the future belong to those willing to seize the reins of innovation today!"

Appearance: His black hair shows a streak of gray. He only wears the most expensive suits, and is constantly found with the latest tech gadget attached to his belt.

Roleplaying: Maximillian is competitive and harsh. He is willing to cut corners to get there before the other guy or to come in at a lower cost. When he speaks to people he feels are beneath him—which is just about everyone—he keeps working on his tablet computer, and he barely looks at them.

Personality: Ruthless and determined, Maximillian refuses to lose. He believes that the future is tied into technology.

Motivation: Maximillian works as the manager of an acquisitions department that seeks out alien ruins which hold technology that can be reverse engineered. He secretly has a deal in place to undercut his current company for huge rewards with another company when he makes a big enough find.

Background: He was raised to believe that wealth and power are the only things of real importance. When he was in business school, he decided that the best route to long term wealth and power lay in exploiting discoveries found in alien ruins, the first of which had recently been unearthed. Working his way up the ranks, he now manages the scavenger crews who search for new alien ruins that might yield the next incredible find.

Traits: *(JA) Aggressive, business, white collar*

Kyra Snow 489

Mean-Spirited Dockmaster

"I don't care if you have to push that bucket of bolts out of the station yourself! I don't understand how someone as incompetent as you are could own a spaceship!"

Appearance: Kyra is quite unassuming. She's rather mousy in appearance, with long blue hair and a data rig over her right eye. She wears a dockworker's utility uniform with a badge identifying her as dockmaster.

Roleplaying: She never misses a chance to verbally cut people to the bone. Kyra has little time to deviate from her schedule and always acts bothered and flustered. Expletives are sure to follow.

Personality: Kyra is just a mean person. She can't hold onto romantic partners because her personality always drives them away. Kyra claims that she needs to be strong as part of her job, but deep down she knows that her meanness is part of her nature.

Motivation: She wants smooth operations in her docking bays.

Background: Kyra has always had a vicious streak in her. She enjoys cutting people down so much that it's become second nature. She has a strong work ethic and she has worked the docking bay for several years before being promoted to dockmaster. She is brutally efficient; vessels that are a few minutes late are often stuck drifting until Kyra can reschedule them. Ships that don't leave in a timely manner are jettisoned out. Kyra continues to throw barbs at people if they've insulted her in even the most minute way.

Traits: *(WC) Business, leader*

Private Carlos Santaro 490

Hallucinating Soldier

"The almighty has given me a mission! I must complete my mission! I will burn if I don't!"

Appearance: Private Santaro wears typical military fatigues. The back of his shaved head is heavily scarred with a crisscross pattern of surgical cuts.

Roleplaying: He shies away from others likes a frightened rabbit until he is given a target. Then, he attacks them with uncontrollable rage.

Personality: His actions are sporadic unless he is being commanded by another. He has lost touch with reality on most levels.

Motivation: He believes that if he does what his "god" asks of him, he will not be condemned to hell.

Background: Private Santaro was badly injured during a routine training operation when a piece of equipment malfunctioned and fractured his skull. While Santaro was being treated, a high-ranking government agent ordered the military surgeon to implant a device into Santaro's skull. The implant manipulates Private Santaro's senses and causes him to feel a "divine presence" that he has been conditioned to believe is a supreme being. Gradually, his superiors manipulated Private Santaro to not only believe that the supreme being was there with him, but that if he did not do whatever was asked of him then he would suffer a fate worse than death. Whether or not the conditioning forced upon him can be undone is unknown.

Traits: *(PB) Eccentric, mysterious, religious, warrior*

Jack "The Rat" Therrat 491

Cowardly Arms Merchant

"Rewind. Check it out...did' ja ever see a head fall apart like that?"

Appearance: Despite the impression afforded by the military body armor he wears and the weapons he carries, the man inside the armor is pale and slightly overweight.

Roleplaying: He hides behind his armor and bodyguards, and rarely looks his clients in the eye. He will always ask for stories of combat, and will sometimes offer a discount in exchange for a good video.

Personality: Jack is simultaneously fascinated and terrified by the weapons he sells and the violence they can cause. He enjoys watching combat, real or recorded, but does not want any part of being in it.

Motivation: He's found a way to turn his fascination with weapons into profit, with the bonus of good stories and the occasional fight video.

Background: Jack keeps his background to himself, but he was drummed out of the military for cowardice. On the way out, he managed to "misplace" a shipment of weapons, and has had an extremely profitable career ever since. It helps that he is very intelligent and willing to do business with just about anyone. He does have some rather unwholesome habits—such as his fascination with combat footage or live fights—which have earned him the nickname "The Rat." Despite the title, he has learned the value of trust and repeat business, and will not turn on a client.

Traits: *(KS) Abhorrent, business, eccentric, merchant, wealthy*

Lincoln Shane 492

Unluckiest Boy

"I don't get out much. Bad things happen when I go outside."

Appearance: Lincoln is a thin, reedy 16-year-old with a mop of brown hair, a wispy mustache, and the pale complexion of someone who spends too much time indoors.

Roleplaying: He's quiet, walks slowly, and hesitates at odd times because he never knows what action of his will precipitate something awful.

Personality: Lincoln is convinced that the universe has it in for him. Afraid to meet new people or try new things, he's an indifferent student with no social life. He rarely gets bullied, despite being an easy target, because bullies run afoul of his unique aura.

Motivation: Lincoln just wants to be left alone. Beneath that, he wants to know the real reason why his life is so terrible.

Background: Lincoln is the unluckiest boy in the world, but his perpetual misfortune isn't a coincidence. He doesn't know it, but Lincoln is a powerful psychic nexus—a crossroad of fate, constantly projecting a wide aura of calamity over the world around him. A moment that hangs in the balance will be tipped toward disaster by the presence of Lincoln. Sometimes, his power just causes trains to come late, rain to start up at the wrong time, and people to trip on cracks in the pavement. At other times, trains jump their tracks, rain floods the town, and people fall into open manholes. Lincoln himself usually emerges unharmed, as do his parents, when they're present.

Traits: *(MR) Child, magical, mysterious, primal*



Gideon Noeman

Artist: Christopher Reach

Gideon Noeman 493

Ambitious Scientist

"Wait just one minute… Ah yes, tweaking the Inner Join on the query makes the nanobots behave just how we want them to."

Appearance: Gideon has spiky blond hair, wears technology-enhanced wire frame glasses, and is rarely out of his white lab coat, even while sleeping. He always wears a friendly smile.

Roleplaying: He is hyperactive and hard to reign in. His mind works faster than others' minds, and he hates to slow down for them. He'll happily try to explain things in layman's terms, but phrases like "inverted conformational neutrino cascade" and "ectopic non-permissive farnesylation" creep into his conversations nonetheless.

Personality: Gideon is constantly excited about his latest project and ready to tell anyone about it, even if they can't keep up.

Motivation: He seeks to create the tools to skyrocket humanity into the next age. He believes that all of life's problems can be solved with technology.

Background: Gideon's intelligence has always been extraordinary, but to him that seems normal. People who can't understand incredibly complex ideas of advanced technology have always seemed like outsiders to him, but his intelligence doesn't make him feel superior. On the contrary, it drives him to create tools that let others advance themselves. He has made incredible devices, theorems, and advances in his short life, and the projects that he has abandoned in favor of more interesting ones are handed to other scientists who struggle to complete Gideon's genius work.

Traits: *(JA) Focal, genius, scientist*

Jacob Pillar 494

Clever Police Detective

"Captain, it's just too damned convenient for the only prints and DNA in that hotel capsule to belong to the suspect."

Appearance: The only thing separating Jacob from dozens of other nameless guys in cheap suits is the confident and knowing way he looks at people.

Roleplaying: Jacob asks questions, lots of questions, and is adept at compelling people to reveal more than they mean to.

Personality: He's curious, even about things that aren't in his job description.

Motivation: Some cops get satisfaction out of putting away criminals; Jacob just wants to know what actually happened.

Background: Curious by nature, Jacob stumbled into a career as a police officer when a detective came into the spaceport bar he tended. Simply by asking the right questions of the detective, he helped solve the crime. After a few repeat episodes, the detective talked him into applying for an open position. While Jacob relishes the satisfaction of solving mysteries, his less-than-spotless past keeps him from being too judgmental of suspects. He didn't exactly lead a life of crime, but he wasn't on the straight and narrow, either. His circle of contacts from those days is a useful resource for him and anyone he knows.

Traits: *(KS) Charming, genius, police*

Sarah Dylan 495

Overzealous Body-Modder

"Why be yourself when you can be better?"

Appearance: A big-boned woman with one wide-set green eye and one cybernetic eye that sees in infrared, Sarah's white hair is cropped close to her skull. She has numerous cybernetic modifications, from simple data jacks to limb replacements.

Roleplaying: Sarah is fairly quiet and withdrawn but becomes excited and outgoing when discussing cybernetics and comparing hardware. No matter the topic she is self-deprecating and modest.

Personality: Constantly worried what others think, Sarah is often depressed and second guesses herself. She enjoys the attention that her cybernetics bring her and goes to lengths to display her modifications to maximum effect.

Motivation: Sarah tries hard to make others like her by improving herself.

Background: As a young girl Sarah was shy and easily overlooked, leaving her socially awkward and unpopular. The older she got, the more invisible she became, until she discovered body-modding. Suddenly everyone wanted to talk to her, and she loved it. Since her first simple data jack she has repeatedly upped the ante to stay on the cutting edge of hardware and keep heads turning. Unfortunately, high-end mods cost a lot of money, so Sarah had to get multiple jobs as early as she could to support her habit, leaving her with no time for education. Stuck at a low-paying warehouse job, she lives simply so she can afford the newest tech.

Traits: *(MN) Business, eccentric, laborer*

Elroy Vestler 496

Dishonest Hyperspace Mechanic

"That doesn't look good. Your hyperspace manifold is shot. Normally one of those runs around 15k, but I happen to have one that fell off a cruiser that I can let go of for 9k."

Appearance: Elroy is always seen in a sealed vacuum suit. The helmet's interior lights illuminate his chubby face, covered in stubble and small drops of sweat.

Roleplaying: He never touches anyone, even with the suit on. Elroy speaks quickly and in technical terms to confuse people.

Personality: A dishonest mechanic, Elroy is always looking to take some sucker for a few more credits. He is also a germophobe who is terrified of getting sick.

Motivation: Elroy loves making money and loves it more when he does not have to do any real work for it. His money goes towards the very expensive environmental system that keeps his house germ-free.

Background: Growing up in space, Elroy was always susceptible to all kinds of illnesses. He was never very motivated, but smart enough to get hyperspace mechanic training. He learned early in his career that most people have no idea of how hyperspace drives work, and soon his laziness drove him to start cutting corners, flat-out lying about problems. Eventually Elroy fleeced enough money to afford him a small business and a house with a top-of-the-line environmental system to keep him healthy.

Traits: *(PV) Business, eccentric, laborer*

Mother Quinella 497

Itinerant Preacher

"Come together. Support one another. Build bonds with your neighbor. Hold fast when attacked by the waste's scavengers, who, God willing, will be thrown back like dust on the wind."

Appearance: In her middle years, she wears a black robe, white collar and carries a worn, leather-bound Bible. Her long black hair is held back in a neat braid.

Roleplaying: Mother Quinella's humility is genuine, and her devotion deep. She does not make a show of praying but instead will retire for personal meditation, which can sometimes take hours. She will lead others in public prayer, if asked, but these will be short invocations.

Personality: She never stays in one spot too long and makes acquaintances easily, but has few truly close friends. She can often be found in the company of children, laughing and playing games with them. When confronting marauders, she turns hard and determined.

Motivation: Carrying the Word from community to community is her focus, trusting to the Almighty to watch over her as she travels the wastes.

Background: Quinella was an advertising executive who sought shelter in a church when civilization fell. The church collapsed, and she was one of the few survivors; a dying priest pulled her free and asked her to "carry on." She found priestly garb and a Bible, and having lost everything, including her family, felt a new calling. She now travels the wastes, helping forge communities of good-hearted folk, disdainful of motorcycle gangs and adventurers.

Traits: *(TT) Counselor, religious, saintly*

Doctor Hans Palau 498

Mild-Mannered Archaeologist

"Please watch your step. These ruins are old and I wouldn't want you to twist your ankle on a broken rock."

Appearance: Hans is a thin older man with yellow-gray hair. He always wears a field suit and a wide-brimmed hat. He is never without his archaeological tools, most of which are attached to his belt.

Roleplaying: He is kind to a fault. Hans treats everyone as if they were favored relatives. He never raises his voice or uses a cross word. He'll apologize for his "salty language" when he uses a word that has long since become acceptable.

Personality: Hans is genuinely kind. His parents bred it into him and Hans wouldn't know how to treat someone poorly; he'd simply tolerate them. He has a love of archaeology, especially for mysterious ancient ruins.

Motivation: He wants to make great archaeological finds and share them with the world.

Background: Hans became interested in ancient ruins while studying at the Galactic Academy. He originally planned to be a scientist but graduated with a degree in archaeology. He took a job at the Academy and quickly became a favorite professor due to his kind-hearted style. While he enjoys teaching, Hans is also running several field studies on a half-dozen worlds. He's learned a lot of information on these digs, some of which may be quite useful to interested parties.

Traits: *(WC) Academic, leader, saintly, scholar*

Tessa Triumph 499

Committed Reformer

"Reverse policies now! Small steps cannot deliver the needed reforms."

Appearance: Tessa is elegantly dressed, with a shimmer of synthetic emerald glistening from her raised collars and elegant green fingernails. She stands 5'5", with an easy smile and a twinkle in her eye.

Roleplaying: She absently cracks ginger bars, popping them with a wince as the pungent bite first hits. She paces in a box pattern, two steps to each side, when she's deep in thought.

Personality: Tessa hates incremental solutions, the slow progress of knowledge. She loves the first class on a topic or day on the job, but doesn't persevere.

Motivation: Everything is getting bogged down; only a bold, direct leader can break us all out of our slow slide into collapse.

Background: Tessa studied at her brilliant father's knee, often struggling to grasp concepts that were just out of reach. She dazzled boys in her teens; fashion and speech came easily to her. She's been married twice; her first husband tried to keep her isolated, but it didn't suit her—she organized meetings and movements, chaired several boards, and shouted down corrupt police. After two contracts, they split. She found she wasn't a woman for being alone and soon partnered with a local industrial titan; together they're working to improve the local area. He's going slow...while she's researching a bold restructuring.

Traits: *(SM) Dilettante, political, wealthy*

Eliani Bowyn 500

Genetically Engineered Servant

"I must advise caution, for the probabilities dictate a high likelihood of deception on their part. I have seen it before."

Appearance: She has gray eyes on a backdrop of pale, glistening skin with a soft amber hue. She is completely hairless and stands unmoving in deep golden robes trimmed in sapphire. A magnificent headdress—a lattice of jewels—frames her head.

Roleplaying: Eliani is devoid of emotion and speaks of facts and protocol. She has a steely gaze that is unrelenting but speaks softly, her voice barely audible. When not actively participating she seamlessly melds into her surroundings as an observer.

Personality: Born into devoted service, Elani is fully committed to the royal lineage she has been bonded to. Purged of emotions, she provides unfettered counsel that is cold and objective. She is not a machine, however, and readily understands the human condition and the weight of her advice.

Motivation: She will dispassionately shepherd her lineage through adversity. That is her sole goal and all others have been suppressed in favor of it.

Background: Bred as loyal advisors, the precursors to Elani and others like her were forged to prevent war. Freed from emotion and gifted with exceptionally long life—Eliani has lived to counsel three generations of her family—Eliani has the benefit of selective breeding, education, and experience to make her the ultimate living companion and source of counsel. For all this, she is still human and fallible.

Traits: *(DM) Ancient, counselor, royalty*

Ser Mallis Voltaire 501

Cunning Planetary Ruler

"My dear senators, now is not the time for quarrelling. Now is the time for unity."

Appearance: Fat with the spoils of leadership, Ser Mallis barely fits into his ceremonial presidential robes. His bald head retains hair only around the back and sides.

Roleplaying: Ser Mallis seems to have a sneer hidden somewhere on his face, even when he is schmoozing and playing nice with diplomats and senators. One can tell that he is a power player. The first time he looks at a new person, he eyes them up and down to see if he can use them in one of his schemes.

Personality: Sly and calculating, President Voltaire sees everyone as a game piece that he can move.

Motivation: He works to maintain his position as the colony's planetary ruler. He has become accustomed to the game and to the luxurious lifestyle that it brings.

Background: Ser Mallis slowly rose to power through the political ranks. Starting as a clerk at the local license office, he learned to manipulate the system in just the right way—the way that did favors for the right people and prevented him from getting caught. Ser Mallis learned that everyone has a use and that leveraging those people keeps him in power, allowing him to reap the rewards of rulership. President Voltaire has been attempting to gain support for a repeal of term limits by fueling the fire of a territorial war.

Traits: *(JA) Business, political, wealthy*

Larra Lyak 502

Discreet Pilot

"You're right, the Century Hawk isn't fast—but she's quiet. You look like someone who appreciates a quiet ship."

Appearance: Built like a brick house, Larra is heavily muscled from her years as a mechanic. She wears a bulky blaster pistol in a shoulder holster.

Roleplaying: Larra is always calm, even in the heat of combat. She's seen it all, and she's not afraid of anything.

Personality: Larra has worked every day since she turned 14, first as a mechanic and then as a pilot for hire. She saved up for years to buy the Century Hawk outright, and the ship is her baby. Fairness was ingrained in her from an early age, as was distrust of the government.

Motivation: Above all else, Larra values freedom and fairness. She'll give anyone a chance to earn her respect, but once lost, that respect will never be regained.

Background: A mechanic who discovered she had a knack for flying, Larra doesn't care much for the government or its regulations. She flies her ship, the tramp freighter "Century Hawk," wherever her mood takes her. She's earned a reputation for being discreet and charging a fair price for hauling people and cargo with no questions asked. The Hawk looks unremarkable, but Larra keeps it clean and in superb mechanical condition. Its interior sports numerous hidey-holes and smuggling compartments.

Traits: *(MR) Adventurer, business, pilot*

Byron Phoenix 503

Aggressive Salesman

"Trust me, this overthruster is hardly used and completely refurbished. You have my ironclad guarantee. Maybe you don't need it now, but you'll thank me later for giving it to you at such a steal."

Appearance: Wearing so much make-up that he looks like a plastic doll, Byron is always smiling and animated. He wears a stylish suit in garish colors.

Roleplaying: For Byron, every item he sells is an "impulse item" worthy of a hard sell. Regardless of why someone talks to him, Byron tries to push a product with every other breath. The hard sell turns to begging as the potential customer walks away.

Personality: He honestly believes that he is a master salesman and that his merchandise is worth every credit. He spends most of his money on advertisements that air throughout the station where he is currently peddling his products.

Motivation: He's out to make a quick buck.

Background: Byron is a throwback to the early days of frontier space. He's a traveling salesman hawking spare parts for small spacecraft. As space became more civilized, Byron has found himself getting squeezed out, not the least because he can't be bothered to keep up with the paperwork to maintain a legitimate business. He's now reduced to salvaging old wrecks and selling the parts to other rim runners that are still using old spacecraft.

Traits: *(WC) Aggressive, business, merchant*

Pascal Love 504

Self-Aware Slave

"Mon amour, why do you deny yourself the simplest of pleasures. Come, let me show you the way."

Appearance: A shockingly handsome man with tanned, golden skin and deep, brilliant green eyes. His long brown hair is pulled back into a ponytail. His pants are a dark green color; his shirt a light tan button-down. He wears a dark brown synthetic leather jacket and languidly draws on a cigarette.

Roleplaying: He has a heavy French accent that betrays his heritage, and his words are like liquid sex rolling off his tongue. Pascal is disarmingly charming to both sexes.

Personality: Pascal greatly enjoys what he does and doesn't shy away from questions. He is a little evasive about his background, as he does not have one beyond a few years ago that will withstand scrutiny.

Motivation: He will do what he was born to do, but on his own terms. Unwilling to live as an engineered slave, he wants to help those in a similar crossroads in life.

Background: In reality Pascal is as French as his jacket is leather; he was "born" as an engineered pleasure slave. He's genetically disposed to pleasing others and received extensive training in doing so. Along the way Pascal began to develop a unique personality derived from his falsified background, eventually escaping the system. He plies his trade as a personal escort but also keeps an eye out for others seeking escape.

Traits: *(DM) Beautiful, charming, dilettante*



Lys Maleen

Artist: Avery Liell-Kok

Cassius Stillwell 505

Jaded Traveler

"The rare once-a-century blooming Orchid of Philgon 4? Yeah, I've seen it...twice."

Appearance: A tall, lean man with dirty blond hair, Cassius has a classic Roman nose and piercing blue eyes. Used to harsh travel and constant danger, he wears light environmental armor and carries a sidearm with him whenever there might be trouble.

Roleplaying: Cassius feels the need to always one-up any stories or experiences shared by those around him, and to deride anything anyone praises. If asked about his own travels, he has hundreds of stories to tell, each more exaggerated than the last.

Personality: Though hardworking, the universe holds no wonder for Cassius. He is jaded and survives from day to day rather than living.

Motivation: Cassius desperately seeks some new place or event that he has never experienced before.

Background: With a single father who raised him on the road as part of a traveling rock band, Cassius inherited his father's wanderlust and by 16 was working jobs on various ships going from planet to planet. Currently in his late forties, he has seen and done everything worth seeing or doing in the known universe, and feels there is nothing new or exciting to see or try. He travels aimlessly, doing odd jobs and performing manual labor to cover the costs of passage.

Traits: *(MN) Adventurer, eccentric, laborer*

Lys Maleen 506

Disfigured Psychic

"You can ask about the mask. It's okay, everyone does. I wear it so you won't be upset when you see me."

Appearance: Disfigured by a chemical burn, Lys wears a smiling mask to hide her hideous face. She dresses plainly, if somewhat anachronistically, so as to avoid attention.

Roleplaying: Lys hides, or tries to escape notice, until she's needed. She uses her telepathy unconsciously, and she's ashamed of her appearance.

Personality: Humble and kind, Lys' psychic abilities made her an outsider before her accident; she's even more of an outsider now, and she's always conscious of that. She's painfully shy unless she's helping someone or using her gift; then she opens up, becoming awkwardly blunt, instead.

Motivation: Lys wants to use her powers to help people, but she's afraid of being persecuted.

Background: When Lys' psychic powers—telepathy and telekinesis—manifested at the age of 13, her parents made her keep her abilities a secret. They took her out of school, hid her from view, and taught her that the world would not accept a freak. But Lys wanted to become a doctor, to help people, and to share her gift. Hiding tore her up inside, and she tried to kill herself by drinking bleach at age 17, but her unconscious telekinesis bumped the bottle at the last moment, resulting in horrible chemical burns. Now in medical school, she still keeps her powers a secret.

Traits: *(MR) Academic, hideous, magical, medic, saintly*

Dr. Steven Ward 507

Drunken Medical Officer

"If you don't like my treatment, get bent. <hiccup>"

Appearance: Dr. Ward is unkempt. His black doctor's smock is the only thing hiding the dirt and blood stains that he doesn't care to clean off. In his pocket, one can spot the silvery gleam of a flask.

Roleplaying: Dr. Ward doesn't really care about much, and his bedside manner is deplorable. He stumbles about, seeing to the crew's medical needs, but seems in a daze most of the time.

Personality: Despondent and uncaring, Dr. Ward doesn't really care what people think about him and will say whatever comes to mind.

Motivation: When he is sober, Dr. Ward realizes that he could be kicked out of his position quite easily. He tries to smooth-talk signs of obvious negligence and make up for things he said while drunk. When he is drunk, however, he says whatever is on his mind.

Background: Dr. Ward has seen a lot of bad stuff go down in his time. His first medical role was as a combat medic, and the horror of those images has never left him. As the war stretched on, Dr. Ward became numb to it and started using alcohol as an escape. His problems became apparent enough that Command sent him to a far off base, where he wouldn't embarrass them. He blunderingly sees to the needs of the crew as best he can, but creates more problems than he cures.

Traits: *(JA) Abhorrent, medic, military*

Phondra Cholem 508

Cybernetics Pioneer

"Am I a person? Of course, I am. Am I human? I'm not so sure of that anymore..."

Appearance: Tired, deep-set eyes peer out from behind thick bifocals. He's in his late middle years, with graying temples, unruly hair, and a persistent five o'clock shadow. Phondra usually wears a lab coat over a shirt and slacks and a pair of comfortable, worn shoes.

Roleplaying: He has a habit of periodically checking his vital signs on his handheld computer, frowning, tapping at the display as if the result is not to his liking, and then pocketing the device before continuing a conversation.

Personality: Phondra suspects his consciousness no longer occupies his original body, but he's not sure. When he speaks with people, he is tentative, as if checking himself to be sure he is actually the one speaking.

Motivation: His passion is the advancement of self-aware robots, and he will pursue it regardless of the restrictions on this avenue of research. He hopes the field will shed light on his current state.

Background: Years ago, he used himself as a test subject to transfer consciousness into a cybernetic being. In those days he was a brilliant, often arrogant researcher who flouted rules governing such experiments, but now he has no memory beyond the decision to embark on the procedure. In the hospital, Phondra awoke disoriented, not even recognizing himself in the mirror. He has been reeducated and remains a brilliant mind in his field.

Traits: *(TT) Genius, scientist*

Sabine Belan 509

Shrewd Producer

"You're already going out that way. Swing a planet over and record a 36-hour orbit. Then you give the file to me, the AIs package it up, and we distribute it across all the major info-nets. Gets you an extra 5k."

Appearance: She is a middle-aged woman with an athletic body. Her curly blond hair hangs above her shoulders. Her left eye is replaced with a cyber-eye.

Roleplaying: Sabine talks with her left hand, often drawing shapes. She will sometimes stop and review images in her cyber-eye during conversation.

Personality: Used to getting what she wants, Sabine has a knack for brokering deals almost always to her advantage. She does this without being aggressive or distasteful.

Motivation: She is at the top of her industry and knows how volatile it is. She will do anything to remain where she is.

Background: Sabine has always been in entertainment, using her family's recording equipment as a child to star in her first independently made movie when she was 13. Today she is one of the leading producers, constantly looking for new feeds of uncharted worlds, alien ruins, and new forms of life. Her favorite technique is to make deals with passing ship captains to get her feeds while they are out on a job. She then pays the captain a small amount and brokers the feed for many times more than that.

Traits: *(PV) Entertainment, famous, merchant*

Xamical Handtaker 510

Studious Assassin

"I'm careful with my clients, as careful as I am with my targets. Neither one comes back to bite me."

Appearance: Xamical is tall and wiry, with large hands and pale skin. He camouflages his age and personal traits as a habit, often wearing colored contacts and dyed hair.

Roleplaying: He smiles easily and absently, stroking his chin while he calculates his opponent's responses. His sentences are direct and rarely ambiguous; he'll often skip ahead and answer the question someone is working their way towards.

Personality: Xamical is implacable as a foe—though people rarely live long enough to know it. Poison, tailored nanites, ground glass—he believes in success, not fairness. When he does fight, it's with deadly precision: nerve strikes with sonic sai, not blasters.

Motivation: He wants to prove that he's the best; each death is a victory, the final result of extensive study and elegant simplicity. He'll destroy a city to take his target if it proves easier—unless his contract specifically prohibits it.

Background: Xamical has walked the shadows since childhood. His first contract was at sixteen; he met with one of the mayor's assistants and transferred a deadly virus through a handshake. Seventeen people died—including the mayor. Xamical's young wife is a skilled and loyal partner; her chemistry skills have added a number of two-part compounds to his repertoire. Seventeen contracts later, he's gained a reputation as expensive—but worth it.

Traits: *(SM) Abhorrent, criminal, warrior*

Tersa Arglaydus 511

Unyielding Lane Controller

"Nobody docks unless I say so, sweetie, so you might as well just park it in impulse and wait your turn."

Appearance: Tersa is in her late fortiess with short, curly hair. She dresses in a worn station uniform and wears a bulky comm-set and eyepiece. She has a frown that emphasizes her unbending nature.

Roleplaying: Lane Controller Arglaydus is a no-nonsense kind of woman. She won't let anyone get out of their assigned docking order for anything. Sweet talking, threats, diplomatic rank—nothing works. Tersa will not deviate from regulations for anyone, even her supervisors.

Personality: She is not an endearing sort and doesn't have a friendly side. The tiredness and annoyance that comes with her job is easy to pick out of her voice; all sympathy was ground out of her long ago.

Motivation: Tersa just wants to make it to retirement and get her pension. She follows written regulations to the letter, ensuring she can't be fired.

Background: She has been all over the galaxy and seen it all. She spent time bumming around planets, working on ships, and raising three kids. When she finally had to settle down because of the unexpected pregnancy of her first child, stability was her only concern. She realized that the stringent bureaucracy of corporate stations worked in her favor. Using the regulations of the station, which she has a knack for exploiting in her favor, she has never been defeated.

Traits: *(JA) Business, focal, laborer*

Vanessa Wright, Chief of Detectives

512

Unethical Cop

"Let's say that I did arrest every single black market dealer, alien smuggler, and space pirate wannabe in this sector. What then? You think suddenly everything would be rainbows and unicorns around here? No. They would all be replaced by the next two-bit criminals looking to make a move. Better to deal with a devil that you know than one that you don't."

Appearance: Tall and muscular, she keeps her long hair pinned up under her fedora. Her overcoat is made of tattered and worn leather.

Roleplaying: She looks at people with disgust, and interrupts others without caring. She is not above flashing her badge or gun to get her way.

Personality: She trusts nobody, not even other members of the police force.

Motivation: At first, Detective Wright was dedicated to serving justice and protecting the public, but after so many years of dealing with the worst criminals in the galaxy, she now just maintains the status quo.

Background: Born and raised on the space station where she now serves, Vanessa Wright became a cop out of idealism. At first, Vanessa was as straight as an arrow, but she soon learned that the only way to make a difference was to bend the rules a bit. By the time she had been made Chief of Detectives, she had learned that you can snap a rule in half if you know how to cover up the evidence.

Traits: *(PB) Aggressive, leader, police*

Pilar Andreyevich

513

Ambitious Politician

"As my late husband said before his last mission, 'We do these things out of love, love of our home, love of our families.'"

Appearance: As impressive in person as on vid, Councilor Andreyevich's beauty and intense gaze dominate the room.

Roleplaying: Publicly, she speaks in vague generalities that anyone can agree with. Privately, she can be stern and dictatorial.

Personality: She's powerful, but knows that her current power comes from her public persona, and will not risk that.

Motivation: She is threatened by others with political power, and seeks to take theirs.

Background: Growing up during a planetary power struggle, Pilar learned early to manipulate others. A smuggler's mistress, she handled much of his business. When the smuggling ring was dissolved by the Federation, she was "rescued" by an ambitious young military commander. The two of them became partners, taking over a few smuggling routes that the Federation claimed to have shut down. Her husband's unexpected death at the hands of a group of rebels galvanized the Federation and propelled her into the spotlight. She played the strong but forgiving widow, and parlayed her fame into a Councilor seat. She balances her public persona of a kind and forgiving politician with her private persona of an interplanetary smuggler, and her ultimate goal of avenging her husband's death.

Traits: *(KS) Beautiful, charming, famous, focal, leader, political, wealthy*

Lira Nodall

514

Decorated Pilot

"Take us two degrees to starboard and make for that debris field. Bring the cannons online; we'll give any hiding dogs a bite of their own medicine."

Appearance: A patch over her left eye immediately draws attention. Her broad shoulders and regal bearing offset her slight stature. Her blond hair is buzzed short and severe, her combat dress uniform unbuttoned in a casual style. Field decorations on her chest jut out, accentuating her feminine form.

Roleplaying: Lira turns to address those around her with her one good eye. She's quiet unless put in charge, then barks out orders readily. She cools off considerably to anyone who views her disability as a weakness.

Personality: She is prone to seeing the worst in every situation. In many ways this prepares her to deal with surprises but dampens morale considerably. She has a "told you so" mentality.

Motivation: She will serve with distinction and do the best job possible. Discipline and preparedness overcome most obstacles.

Background: Lira's promising military career was cut short during the Saiph Offensive, when a bridge hit took out the commanding officer and most of the crew. A duty pilot, Lira took over and turned the tide to victory. Her injury was so severe that she was discharged after her body rejected implants. Now a mercenary, her discharge drives her to even more stubborn levels of performance but also makes her decidedly dreary in her outlook. She drinks heavily to forget.

Traits: *(DM) Military, pilot, warrior*

Dr. Samuel Chade

515

Daring Philanthropist

"I've made my mark in the corporate 'jungle.' Easy stuff. Those pampered crybabies have no idea what a real challenge is. Get ready to duck. That carnivorous mutant condor is making another dive at us. We really pissed it off!"

Appearance: Dr. Chade is a middle-aged man with a shaved head and a thick beard. He wears heavy hiking boots and clothing suitable for outdoor explorations.

Roleplaying: He strokes his beard when pressed for a decision, and will drum his fingers on a nearby surface when upset, instead of expressing his anger.

Personality: Dr. Chade is a man of much action and few words. He would rather be living out of a tent in an alien wilderness than surrounded by luxuries.

Motivation: He seeks challenges for himself, but also wants to help the less fortunate with his wealth and expertise.

Background: A brilliant medical student, he interned as a field medic with a small fleet of star cruisers. He visited distant planets and tested himself both physically and mentally. He then returned and started a thriving medical practice, eventually building not one, but several hospitals and medical centers. He was bored, though, and retired early so that he could go back to exploring the wilderness on recently discovered planets. He also uses his wealth and medical knowledge to help the colonists on the planets that he visits, because he considers such people to be the finest examples of humanity.

Traits: *(PB) Adventurer, medic, wealthy*

Goldar Goldenvoice (Evard Grubb) 516

Minstrel Impersonator

"I'll take the gold one. I don't care what it costs—it's gold, so it's the best."

Appearance: Everything Goldar owns and wears is gold, golden, gold-plated, or gold-scented. He wears a smiling golden mask at all times.

Roleplaying: Goldar never speaks, except around strangers. He spends money like every day is his last.

Personality: Goldar does everything big (and golden), demands the best, and acts as crazy as he needs to in order to draw attention. Evard, the man impersonating the real Goldar, is naturally shy and surly.

Motivation: He wants to continue living his charmed, golden life forever—and he's too foolish to see that this just isn't going to happen.

Background: Goldar Goldenvoice is an impostor. His real name is Evard Grubb, a former ditch-digger who the real Goldenvoice hired to polish the interior of one of his many golden starships. Because Goldar, the most famous singer in the galaxy, always wears a mask on stage (and, to preserve his voice, rarely speaks off stage), Evard saw his chance and took it: He drugged Goldar, locked him in his quarters, and took over his life. Thus far, he's pulled it off, being careful not to speak around anyone who knew the real Goldar well—but this is a foolish gambit, as he's going to be forced to perform before too long. The moment he opens his mouth, everyone will hear the voice of Evard the ditch-digger.

Traits: *(MR) Criminal, eccentric, entertainment, humorous*

Kesia Fesh 517

Obsequious Security Chief

"RULES are important. Safety first. Can't you see that?"

Appearance: She is meticulous in her appearance, a stickler for keeping to the uniform code. Every stitch of her security uniform is in place and her boots are polished to a shine.

Roleplaying: Kesia likes to buff her badge with the sleeve of her shirt before approaching someone to cite a minor infraction.

Personality: She is a small-minded person and is blunt in conversation, relying on proverbs, catch-phrases, and aphorisms when pressed to actually think for herself.

Motivation: She makes sure the letter of the law is followed without question.

Background: Kesia began her career as a safety inspector and recognized a job opportunity on an interstellar outpost as a chance to finally make a living wage. Because of her experience, she was made security chief. As a safety inspector, she was adequate. Now, as a law enforcement officer forced to judge the actions of actual human beings, she falls far short. She is blind to the larger problems of corruption and crime run by the outpost's worker factions. The faction leaders know she is relatively harmless and encourage her dogmatic approach to following safety rules. They know that if they get rid of her, they'll have to deal with a genuine police enforcer.

Traits: *(TT) Police, zealot*

Dominic Newland 518

Misunderstood Prophet

"God did not create man in his image. We created him in ours."

Appearance: Dominic's chiseled features and dark skin are accentuated by cold black eyes and bushy eyebrows. His black hair is slicked back and a chipped tooth is hidden behind a sneer. His collared shirt and plain slacks help him blend into the crowd easily.

Roleplaying: Wearing a constant sneer, Dominic talks down to everyone, making broad generalizations and doing little to mask his contempt. He tends to spit out his words in small, piercing bits.

Personality: He's overcome with ego and confidence in his secret order's agenda and purpose in life, which he views as divine. His discovery of the techno-theocracy is a matter of personal pride for Dominic and he doesn't suffer skeptics well.

Motivation: He seeks the furthering of his faith and continuing the evolution of the emerging Techno-God.

Background: Dominic's sect consists of cultists who have immersed themselves so much in technology and its purity of purpose that when the first vestiges of AI were discovered they viewed this event as a holy "birth." Dominic is lauded as the foremost authority on the techno-theocracy movement that he seeks to create: a God of technology that will show the true divine path, unfettered by human faults. Most are terrified of the idea, which Dominic is careful to present as a way of freedom from decision-making. He is unsure as how to overcome the resistance he has encountered.

Traits: *(DM) Occult, religious*

Suki Menendez 519

Intimidating Security Officer

"I shall only ask you once. Put down your weapon and surrender. Otherwise, I'll make you put down your weapon and surrender."

Appearance: Thin and a little shorter than average, Suki makes up for it with her confidence and attitude. She keeps her raven hair in two long braids. While thin, Suki's body is very well-muscled and she wears a tattoo on one shoulder indicating that she's won the Triple Sector Martial Arts Championship three times. She generally wears her security chief uniform.

Roleplaying: She is firm and direct while acting as chief, but is surprisingly friendly and funny when off-duty. She always issues one warning before using her martial skills to take down a threat.

Personality: Suki is an extrovert, sometimes overly so, but she shuts it off when performing her duty. She never drinks alcohol but has a passion for vintage and regional soft drinks.

Motivation: She is a collector. She enjoys researching lost colony ships in the hopes of finding forgotten soft drink specimens.

Background: Suki grew up on a space freighter convoy. Due to the lack of full gravity she had to give her muscles constant exercise. Even when gravity was no longer a problem, Suki continued her heavy exercise regimen and became a champion martial artist. She enrolled in the Space Academy and graduated as a security officer. Due to her isolation as a child, Suki works hard to be friendly.

Traits: *(WC) Military, warrior*

Tilda Merrigan 520

Customs Official

"This is one of the hardest, messiest, most thankless, and important jobs around here, kiddo, and I love it!"

Appearance: A short, stout woman with hazel eyes and thick auburn hair, Tilda has several cybernetic implants in her hands, ears, and legs, which grant her near-superhuman senses and speed.

Roleplaying: Tilda is an easygoing woman who loves to laugh. She treats everyone she meets as a friend and greets them with a smile.

Personality: Tilda is extremely hard-working and focused. As the main customs official in a very large spaceport, she is ultimately responsible for making sure nothing illegal or harmful passes through the station. She is incredibly focused while on the job, but always works with a smile.

Motivation: Tilda loves experiencing the chaos of the spaceport and the unlimited variety of items she sees passing through her checkpoint, but is more worried that something harmful or illegal will slip past her.

Background: Tilda grew up on the station; her parents were both employees there. She was always fascinated by the customs area, with all its rare and exotic items out to see. Once, when she was a young woman, one of the customs officials found a container of quantum concentrate being smuggled through the station—which, if released into a planet's water supply, could poison nearly an entire world. Awed by magnitude of the find, Tilda knew she would never be happy working anywhere else.

Traits: *(MN) Business, leader, white collar*

Janice Rowan 521

Cantankerous Blogger

"Humph. No politician can be trusted. See my latest work for an example of that."

Appearance: A heavyset woman with hazel eyes and sagging breasts, her brown hair shows strands of silver. Her fingers are unusually long and her drab clothing is nondescript and out of style.

Roleplaying: She fiddles with an old datapad and mutters to herself, pausing to make a voice entry. Janice evaluates the area about her for inspiration, including the people she interacts with. She rarely engages others in conversation, simply grunting approval or disapproval.

Personality: She's never happy with the status quo and seeks to uproot the establishment in the name of "the common man." Janice spins just about any comment or accomplishment in the worst possible way to prove her point. She sees the system as broken but rather than try to fix it, she uses political corruption as a platform to peddle her art.

Motivation: She hopes to rally people with her inflammatory writings. She wants to stand up for the little people and effect change but is blind to the small scope of her influence.

Background: Janice has made a career of being a lightning rod for controversy. Her political writings strike a chord with a vocal few, elevating her to the status of a misanthrope with an agenda. She's highly critical of all politicians and berates the system, garnering a following of equally unhappy citizens. Her tirades are well-written but shortsighted.

Traits: *(DM) Artist, notorious, political*

Raymond Lowe 522

Enlightened Hermit

"I have no atomic constructor. If I want something I make it myself from scratch. That means I work the raw materials myself into the product that I desire to have. Yes, sometimes my results are flawed, but I have discovered that sometimes a flaw can be beautiful."

Appearance: His head is clean-shaven and he wears clothes that he has sewn himself. He has a personal holographic news display unit that is unusually large (about the size of a business card). This is because he built it himself from store-bought parts.

Roleplaying: Raymond runs his hands over manufactured objects in order to assess how they were built.

Personality: He's calm and patient. He doesn't seem to mind that his homemade equipment sometimes doesn't give him instant results.

Motivation: He wishes to reconnect with the tools of everyday life—to appreciate the complexity of their mechanics and the ingenuity of their design—instead of just passively expecting continually better performance. He discovered that if he makes something himself, it's more enjoyable to use and he's less likely to take it for granted.

Background: Raymond was a world class engineer, but he grew tired of turning out designs while never actually building anything. He left his profession and bought a rural cabin. In order to learn the skills needed to make his own things, he has foregone the conveniences of modern home manufacturing technology. The locals are convinced he's insane, and stay away from him.

Traits: *(PB) Crafter, genius, notorious, outdoorsman*

Nathaniel "Lucky 13" Bancroft-Jameson XIII 523

Wealthy Rake

"You imbeciles are totally crashing my party time. Jack, please take them out, and interpret that however you wish."

Appearance: He'd probably be handsome, if he wasn't sloppily dressed in the latest street samurai fashions, complete with pop band tattoos.

Roleplaying: Nathaniel is every rich kid bad guy from every 1980s movie rolled into one.

Personality: He's selfish and cowardly, and hides behind his bodyguards and attitude.

Motivation: As Nathaniel says, "It's always time to party when Lucky 13's here, baaay-bee!"

Background: Born rich and ignored, he spends his time pretending to be a street samurai or other thug. He doesn't have real tactical implants (they hurt), just the fake ones. It's not as if he really needs weapons; his ever-present squad of bodyguards takes care of any problems that may arise. He does have the best reflex wiring money can buy, and can get his hands on just about anything, given enough time and access to his family's fortune.

Traits: *(KS) Abhorrent, dilettante, royalty, wealthy*



Nila Os'Tai

Artist: Avery Liell-Kok

Nila Os'Tai 525

Wandering Fighter

"I have for some time wanted to experience your culture. I know you don't typically fight women, and I appreciate the exception you are making for me."

Appearance: Nila's genetics hail from Indian ancestry mixed with life in high gravity. She is below average height, with thick musculature and feminine looks. She wears her hair in a ponytail and has several decorative tattoos.

Roleplaying: Polite and calm, Nila cannot be intimidated. She frowns on rudeness and will use force to show her displeasure.

Personality: She is an iconic warrior. She is tough in body and spirit. Her training has given her a calm personality and great self-control.

Motivation: Nila desires to experience the cultures of the galaxy through their martial skills, particularly through hand-to-hand combat.

Background: A career soldier, Nila mustered out of the military with a respectable war chest. For several years, she was the bodyguard to a wealthy starship captain. When the captain retired, he gave her a sizable severance and left Nila to determine her own fate. Always a fan of the martial arts, Nila studied several forms and eventually mastered them all. After she decided that dojo learning could not provide her any new insight, she began to travel the galaxy to engage people in hand-to-hand combat. She has fought both highly trained and back alley fighters. She is always looking for a form or technique that she has not experienced.

Traits: *(PV) Adventurer, warrior, wealthy*

Felecia Belvortai 524

Sagacious Security Officer

"Don't bother looking in the main hold. This class of ship has an auxiliary power relay that more adventurous smugglers will remove and use to store their goods. Just…like…this."

Appearance: Felecia is a short, pear-shaped woman. Her light brown hair is worn in a short military cut. Her uniform is well tailored.

Roleplaying: She thinly smiles most times. Felecia is an exceptional listener and always has a perceptive follow-up question.

Personality: A woman of incredible insight and judgment, Felecia has a strong devotion to the law. Despite her passion for the law, she has a positive demeanor and truly enjoys her work.

Motivation: She is a workaholic, devoting her life to the law. She has forsaken any personal attachments for her defense of the law.

Background: Before the war, Felecia was married and trying for her first child. When the Order attacked her station with smuggled gravity bombs, her husband was killed and she was wounded; she lost her ability to have children. When she recovered, Felecia dedicated her life to the pursuit of the Order, and in turn all smugglers. After the war, Felecia received several promotions and moved up the ladder until she took command of the security of the station. Today Felecia runs her station well, and very little occurs without her knowing about it.

Traits: *(PV) Leader, police, zealot*

Xia Ravenskin 526

Compromised Secretary

"Coffee, two sugars, no cream. And for you, Mister Davis?"

Appearance: Xia is an attractive young woman with Asian features; long dark hair swept into a loose braid that runs down her back. A silvery secretary's data-bridge is mounted to her right temple.

Roleplaying: When it's to her advantage, Xia emphasizes her Asian heritage and listens quietly, adopting a subservient posture. She pauses, calculating the proper responses, when responding in a corporate environment.

Personality: Xia is quiet, trustworthy, and living a lie. She is charming and friendly—no one who needs to be investigated more closely.

Motivation: She wants to find her mother's killer; she's here to gather the information to do it.

Background: Xia grew up in the shadows of the corporate towers; a non-person, daughter of disposable tools. Her parents eked out a good life for years, playing one corporation against another, staying invaluable. Until one day her mom didn't return, and her dad dashed home and led her through the sewers just minutes ahead of the cleanup squad. She came up with a plan, acquired secretary implants, extensive training, and expensive false documents, all to infiltrate the corporation. She's seeking pass codes and files—either to get her into black-ops records, or to get a hacker into the system to identify her mother's killer.

Traits: *(SM) Charming, criminal, impoverished, white collar*

Captain Zachary Jeffers 527

Unlucky Captain

"I knew I should have stayed in bed today. All right, who's threatening war this time?"

Appearance: Jeffers' uniform is left unzipped to the stomach, exposing whatever logo happens to be on the old T-shirt he wears. He keeps his black dreadlocks neat and short, like his beard.

Roleplaying: His brow is constantly furrowed as he looks over reports and figures out the crew's next move. When he gives orders, he places his hands on his hips in a dramatic pose.

Personality: Captain Jeffers tries to stay optimistic, but he rarely succeeds. Jeffers is a bit scared of the world, but when trouble comes he doesn't cower—he faces it head on. He believes that peace and tranquility might lie just beyond the end of the next problem.

Motivation: Zachary just wants an easy life. He never signs his crew up for anything that could prove dangerous, but luck is not on his side and he often finds himself facing odd troubles.

Background: No matter how simple Jeffers tries to make his life, or how by-the-book he plays it, he encounters a new adventure on every trip. On his first mission, a simple supply run, Jeffers found himself leading a colony's rebellion against their warlord ruler. His next mission included a narrow escape from a black hole and the discovery of an alien ziggurat. Jeffers just wants to do easy runs, but fate has other ideas in mind.

Traits: *(JA) Adventurer, leader*

Madglo, Duke of the Air 528

Mysterious Pterosaur Rider

"To win the hand of the princess, I will prove my bravery and loyalty to her by defeating these strangers."

Appearance: Like all members of the palace air guard, Madglo wears a black flight suit with a black veil. He is tall, dark, and handsome, but bears a deep scar down his left cheek.

Roleplaying: He often clutches at the leash latch to his pet pterosaur's reins.

Personality: Like many fliers, he is sometimes daring and even reckless. At other times he acts with discipline and intelligence.

Motivation: Madglo desires to win the hand of the princess, a member of the human ruling elite on this alien world, and thereby gain access to the immortality elixirs that are given only to the emperor's family.

Background: He keeps hidden that fact he is a stranger whose rocket ship fell through the rift. He took in the lay of the alien landscape, populated with mostly barbaric humans, and determined that he liked it. Early on, Madglo hijacked a patrol skiff and impersonated the palace air guardsman he killed. Since then, he has ascended through the ranks quickly. Mostly, he pilots skiffs and jet fighters in battle, which earned him his title and brought him to the attention of the princess. To impress the princess, who loves all things primitive, he learned to tame, train, and fly pterosaurs. Winning over the princess won't be easy, but he's willing to endure much to achieve his goal.

Traits: *(TT) Military, mysterious, warrior*

Devon Kalfos 529

Uncanny Explorer

"It's not about fate or destiny; it's about orbits—planets orbiting stars, electrons orbiting nuclei. I have seen it! I have seen reality converged into one beautiful equation."

Appearance: Devon is a tall man with a thin build that lacks any tone. He has a blond flat-top. His eyes are open a bit too wide. He wears a mismatch of clothes that obey no fashion rules.

Roleplaying: He drifts off in conversation and launches into tangents. His fingers move when he is thinking, as if on a keyboard.

Personality: Something is not right about Devon, and it is clear to everyone who meets him. He is even-tempered and kind, but it is obvious that Devon does not see the world like everyone else.

Motivation: Devon is looking for something, and not even Devon knows what it is. At times he has a strong desire to get into his ship and plot a random course.

Background: A deep space scout, Devon went out on a survey and returned home to find that he had changed, but with no recollection of what happened to him. The doctors were unable to detect any physical problems. Despite his strange behavior, Devon was able to return to his job. Eventually Devon was able to pay off his ship, and now he takes odd jobs to keep the ship fueled so that he can travel when the impulse strikes.

Traits: *(PV) Adventurer, mysterious, stealthy*

Avery Zane 530

Well-Informed Barkeep

"That's your plan? You'd better start thinking before your head implodes!"

Appearance: This bartender's steady gaze, lean physique, and salt-and-pepper buzz cut make her look more like a soldier.

Roleplaying: Until she trusts someone, she's distant. If she trusts them, she's very direct with her questions and advice, bordering on rude.

Personality: She has no patience for idiots or for overly-complicated schemes.

Motivation: Her life savings are in her bar, and she tracks the flow of information and activity in the area in order to protect it.

Background: After careers as a military officer and as an adventurer were both violently cut short by a failure to properly plan, Avery invested what was left of her estate in a bar on the cheap side of town. By keeping an ear to the ground and an occasional hand on the tiller, she managed to leverage her way into owning the entire building. She's very interested in any activities that will affect her and her business, and will do what she can to direct them. Over the years, she has developed a circle of contacts and a collection of weapons and other gear that adventurers will find useful. Avery is an excellent sounding board for the PCs' plans, and can be a great resource for them. Be careful that she does not become a GMPC, directing the party's actions.

Traits: *(KS) Aggressive, business, counselor, wealthy*

Corrina Taluk-Burke 531

Kinky Librarian

"Shhhhh! Not one more word or I'll gag you!"

Appearance: Corrina is an exceedingly beautiful petite young woman with bright pink ponytails that bob as she moves. She wears a tight white blouse and short plaid skirt with black pumps. She has a wide belt and a pair of old-style eyeglasses dangles from a chain around her neck, resting between her breasts. She cradles several books and datapads in her arms.

Roleplaying: Corrina is constantly making accidental double entendres and inappropriate comments, all to her dismay. She's bubbly and helpful, bending over to help pick up books or standing on high ladders to put them away.

Personality: She has a keen interest in history, in particular the old, antiquated ways of storing information in books. She's oblivious to how out of place she looks, having learned much of what she knows about librarians of yore—their style, social function, and idioms—through "ancient texts." Corrina genuinely enjoys helping people and takes pride in her organizational skills.

Motivation: She just wants to help people find information, keep everything neatly cataloged, and prevent noisy distractions!

Background: A runaway at a young age, Corrina has always had a love of the written word. She used to break into museums full of books and read them without anyone the wiser. Thus, her education has been sheltered. Later she returned to curate the museum, turning it into a functional library. She considers herself author Melvil Dewey's biggest fan.

Traits: *(DM) Academic, beautiful, humorous*

Ida Zedema 532

Impetuous Pilot

"Don't worry, I'm gonna take this one nice and easy. I'll only do a few inter-atmosphere skims and barrel rolls."

Appearance: Ida's short, red hair is a stark contrast to her mocha-colored skin. She wears a tactical vest over a black shirt with rolled up sleeves.

Roleplaying: Ida enjoys joking and laughing with her comrades, and she always has a friendly smile. When she gets in trouble for one of her unscheduled maneuvers, she develops a sheepish look.

Personality: Normally calm and composed, Ida unleashes her wild side only at very specific times. She rarely gives people any warning when she goes wild; she finds it more fun that way.

Motivation: She became a pilot because of the excitement she thought it would hold, but every captain she worked under has tried to curtail her antics. That doesn't mean she can't slip in a few exciting maneuvers every so often, though.

Background: Ida led a very quiet life in her small farming community. The boredom made her crave action, so she shipped off-world at her first chance. She trained as a pilot, but found corporate and military work boring. As a freelancer, she still gets stuck on boring jobs, but faces fewer consequences when she pulls an extreme stunt. The types of crews she hires on with usually don't mind, so long as she doesn't damage anything. Though unpredictable, she knows her ships and rarely pushes them beyond their abilities.

Traits: *(JA) Adventurer, eccentric, pilot*

Baron Emmitt Tanbel 533

Obnoxious Hunter

"Whoa! Did you see that one? That one must be a boy. Damn thing needs underwear. Get me the phase plasma rifle, 40-watt range. I am taking that sucker down!"

Appearance: The Baron is an overweight man of less than average height. His hair is worn in an ear-length bob, and he has a well-groomed beard. He is often seen in hunting jumpsuits with expensive boots and gear.

Roleplaying: He loves to make rude jokes in any company. Emmitt is loud and he says whatever comes to mind.

Personality: The baron has no internal filter and no subtlety. This carries over to his sense of humor, which is pretty good but is never censored.

Motivation: Emmitt's great passion is alien game hunting. Several times a year he goes on galactic safari out to the far reaches of civilized space to hunt the most fascinating creatures.

Background: Baron Tanbel is from the House Tanbel, a minor but stable planetary house. The Tanbels have two traditions: exceptional recombinant agriculture and alien game hunting. Emmitt is an established geneticist, but his true love comes from camping and hunting with his friends and family out on fringe worlds. He has a private ship that is part museum and taxonomy lab. Emmitt is known for his blunt sense of humor, which serves him well hunting, but he has upset more than one royal party.

Traits: *(PV) Humorous, outdoorsman, royalty, scientist*

Faisal al-Karim 534

Confused Young Man

"Sayyid, you are new to our planet, yes? It is your wish to find a good place to stay?"

Appearance: Faisal dresses for travel, wearing a long, durable robe and dusty sandals. His garb suggests that he's trying to hang on to his Arabian identity.

Roleplaying: He's hesitant and unsure of himself, and his accent comes and goes.

Personality: Faisal is unsure of his cultural identity. Part of him feels a sense of duty to be an Arab, while another part wishes to just be himself.

Motivation: He wants to be liked, and to like himself.

Background: Faisal was 12 when his extremely religious parents died in a failed attempt to colonize another planet. He was raised on that world by an agnostic cousin, and while he loves his adoptive family, he seeks to return to the old religious ways that his parents practiced. However, the Arab group that he has fallen in with is a criminal gang that justifies itself by preying on unbelievers. Most believers are not criminals, but he has managed to find just the wrong group. The gang keeps Faisal on the periphery, waiting for a chance to judge his loyalty, so he is still unaware of their crimes. The PCs might meet him on a job, looking for a group from out of town to lead to a local bar—allegedly to drum up business, but really to set them up to be drugged and robbed blind.

Traits: *(KS) Criminal, eccentric, impoverished, religious, zealot*



Remiah Dash

Artist: Christopher Reach

Remiah Dash 535

Reluctant Crew Member

"I know we're on alert. But that's an incredible specimen of evolved plant life over there. It might even have a rudimentary sentience. Don't bother informing the lieutenant. It'll just take a moment to document it. No, I don't need a sidearm."

Appearance: Remiah sports a mop of brown hair and peers through thick eyeglasses with wide oval lenses. Short and plump, one wonders how she passed the fitness exam.

Roleplaying: She walks, talks, and acts like a civilian wearing military dress—which is what she'll always be at heart. Even when told to stand at attention, the best she can manage still looks like slouch.

Personality: With the mind of a scientist, Remiah is easily distracted by every possibility of new discovery. She is meticulous as a researcher, even brilliant at times, but absent-minded about more pressing concerns, especially starship security. She regards the call to battle-stations as an annoyance.

Motivation: To endure her term of service, she makes the most of the opportunity by indulging in what scientific research she can slide in between her normal duties.

Background: Remiah Dash was a leading researcher at a lab that was accidentally destroyed when she became so engrossed by a bit of minutia that she failed to notice that an experiment had gone critical. The judge gave her a choice: jail or starship service. She chose the stars.

Traits: *(TT) Eccentric, military, scientist*

Katrina Folsom 536

Lighthearted Hacker

"Don't mess with me or else I'll change your gender, empty your account, and post your com number on the singles boards as 'Desperately seeking someone for rear entry.'"

Appearance: She has short-cropped black hair with streaks of gold and braided beads. Her eyes are concealed behind VR goggles wirelessly connected to a datacomp on her wrist. She wears baggy cargo pants and large, steel-toed shoes. Her shirt reads, "Reality is overrated."

Roleplaying: Katrina communicates best via VR avatars, using icons of unicorns and bouncing gnomes with pointed red hats. In the real world, she casually waves off discussion with uninterested comments; Katrina spends most of her time online.

Personality: She's an anarchist and practical joker. Katrina will empty your cred account and wire the funds to the urban neo-terrorist league as a joke, or just as readily put someone's face on every vidscreen as "Most Wanted." She doesn't fully register how much trouble she could get into, but she has a good heart.

Motivation: Everything exists for her amusement and everyone is fair game.

Background: She's young, impetuous, and a skilled hacker, but Katrina doesn't take anyone seriously. She has a little bit of a god complex and doesn't suffer fools gladly, but in the VR arena she's top dog. Anything is possible with a little effort and creativity and she's eager for a challenge. The real world and its problems just don't interest her that much.

Traits: *(DM) Crafter, humorous*

Lisa Kyron, Ph.D. 537

Determined Intellectual

"Robotics and artificial intelligence are ready to merge, and that merger will take place in synthetic organisms. It will have all the benefits of biology, but none of the weaknesses. Cells will combine with alloys to create a new life form that will surpass all that have come before it."

Appearance: Slightly overweight, she wears a special mechanized leg brace that assists her in walking. She dresses stylishly, but often wears a lab coat when working.

Roleplaying: Lisa loves to teach others about her work, and she has a very engaging style when doing so. She uses her hands to illustrate her topic when lecturing.

Personality: Although she may be one of the smartest people on the planet, she never talks down to others. She is friendly, likable, and is highly regarded by all who know her.

Motivation: She severely injured her leg while whitewater rafting, and has since dedicated her life to designing robotic prosthetic systems that rehabilitate or replace organic structures. Recently she has jumped even farther ahead, as she is now creating synthetic organs to replace a person's biological systems.

Background: A child prodigy who exceeded all expectations, Lisa has attended the finest schools and has always graduated at the top of her class. She is the leading expert in her field and has earned the respect of her peers. Some fear that she is crossing a line with her latest research, but she dismisses such claims as unfounded.

Traits: *(PB) Academic, charming, genius, scientist*

Yi Dasque 538

Addicted Hacker

"Before I could afford the 'jack, I would spend hours imagining that I was inside the net. Once they installed it, I jacked in for 72 hours straight. I will do anything to stay connected."

Appearance: Yi is a disheveled woman, average in height, with stringy hair. She has large circles under her eyes. Her clothes are ratty and worn.

Roleplaying: In person, Yi is despondent. She mumbles when she talks and has no desire to carry on a conversation. Online, she is personable, pleasant, and sociable.

Personality: Yi is a woman with no willpower and an addictive personality. She is obsessed with being connected to the net. Online, Yi is a goddess, a dynamic figure who is in her true element.

Motivation: She craves being online and has no ability to control her craving. She will do anything to feed her addiction.

Background: Yi had an average childhood on a technologically advanced world. She always had an affinity for computers, especially virtual reality. With the money from her first job she purchased a neural interface jack, allowing her to enter the virtual world. The experience changed her life in the worst way possible. She slowly withdrew from the real world, losing her job, friends, and home. To survive, she eventually turned her computer skills to hacking. Today she lives in a rundown apartment with no furniture and an incredible computer setup.

Traits: *(PV) Criminal, impoverished, white collar*

Drandon Galondreki 539

Greedy Collaborator

"It's not about takin' sides, luv. Human. Alien. Whazzit matter, eh? The question you gotta ask yourself is this: Does being friendly to ol' Drandon make life easier or harder for you going forward?"

Appearance: He wears a suit coat and tie manufactured from sleek new materials provided by the alien occupiers. His hair is slicked back and he wears a strange earpiece made from alien materials and technology.

Roleplaying: Sometimes he gets a blank look, like a seizure, when the aliens are downloading information from him.

Personality: Drandon gets annoyed when people judge him. Words like "collaborator" and "traitor" don't fit his way of thinking. It was a small price to pay, letting the aliens attach that device to his head. He thinks the resistance movement is filled with fools, whose suffering is self-inflicted. He holds no grudge, though.

Motivation: The alien invasion was an opportunity to finally get rich, and he intends to stay rich.

Background: He was a career salesman, always trying to unload one crummy product after the next. But once the aliens came, Drandon finally got the chance to sell something of quality: access. If people need something from the aliens, they have to go through him. He lives like a king now, with the best of everything: food, women, servants, and a fantastic place to live.

Traits: *(TT) Political, wealthy*

Dennis Cogwettle 540

Irritable Repairman

"Holy crap! Did you clean this brand-new plasma ion generator with FURNITURE POLISH??! What are you, a moron?"

Appearance: Dennis is a thin man in his mid-fifties, with black, wispy hair that looks like it has never been combed. He wears leather overalls and several pairs of electronic spectacles.

Roleplaying: Grumpy and short of words, Dennis can be grating and downright insulting with stupid people, which includes pretty much everyone.

Personality: Sick of people bringing in items they have tried to "fix" themselves and expecting him to clean up the resulting mess, Dennis thinks everyone else in the world is incompetent or maliciously stupid. He wishes people would just order their parts, pay for them, and never come back.

Motivation: Dennis wants nothing more than to be left in peace and quiet so he can work on his passion: drawing schematics for high-tech machine parts.

Background: Growing up, Dennis loved to work with his hands. With his genius-level IQ, he's had jobs as a military mechanic, experimental technology builder, and chemist. He finally settled down to open his own business, only to find out that once he was in the private sector, he had to deal with the public...most of whom were, in his opinion, morons. Unfortunately the bulk of his income comes from repair work, which means he has to talk to clueless people and fix their incompetent mistakes.

Traits: *(MN) Business, crafter, genius, zealot*

General Gregor Voldstad 541

Retired Mentor

"Back in my day we would have sent them packing with their tails between their legs. Did I tell you about the time on Cygnus IV? No? Well there we were…"

Appearance: He's a balding man with stark white hair emerging just above his ears, flowing into large sideburns and a full beard. Deep crow's feet arch from dark gray eyes that still look about intently. He dresses in pressed pants and shirt of deep blue and carries a handcrafted walking cane tipped in bronze.

Roleplaying: Though in his latter years, the general is still eager when speaking. He'll frequently regale others with stories of his past, tying his experience to current events and steering the discussion off course.

Personality: He's a hallmark of days when honor defined a man, and passionately talks about his many campaigns. The general has little regard for those who question authority. He's apt to quiet down when the reality of time passing him by is brought up.

Motivation: He desperately seeks to remain relevant in his twilight years. He's eager to help those that will take him seriously and leverage his experience.

Background: A veteran of six campaigns and two wars, the general is a highly decorated military officer and something of a tactical genius. He eventually mustered out due to his trick leg—he had it replaced twice—and is noteworthy to anyone who may have studied military history and tactics.

Traits: *(DM) Genius, famous, military*

Becky Martinez 542

Friendly Child Prophet

"They're almost here! Everybody listen! They're almost here!"

Appearance: Becky is a young girl, about 10 years old. Her dark brown hair is pulled into pigtails or a ponytail, and she is often wearing overalls.

Roleplaying: Full of energy and imagination, Becky runs around and tells everyone about the aliens who are coming to the planet. Everyone thinks this is just her latest game, but sometimes she says strange things, like reciting all the prime numbers up to 7,907, or shouting strange, nonsensical words that might almost be a language.

Personality: Kind and friendly, but a bit shy, Becky wouldn't hurt a fly. Her latest imaginary game of aliens has some people worried. She completely believes it, though, and gets pouty when people don't believe her.

Motivation: She wants to prepare people for the arrival of her alien friends, who speak to her from the sky.

Background: Becky started hearing the voices a few months ago and didn't really think too much about them. The more the voices explained that they were aliens who would be landing on earth shortly for first contact, the more excited Becky got. Just like the voices asked her to, she kept telling every adult about them. She even sent a letter to the president, but her mother said that probably wouldn't go through. The townspeople are starting to worry about Becky, but she knows everything is alright. The aliens tell her so.

Traits: *(JA) Child, eccentric, religious*

Boris von Bolide 543

Foolhardy Hero

"If it's a fight you want, Boris von Bolide will make your dreams come true!"

Appearance: At over 6'6" tall and built like a bulldozer, Boris is physically intimidating.

Roleplaying: Boris not terribly intelligent. He refers to himself in third person, mixes up his idioms, and often sees opportunity for heroism where a more subtle approach may work.

Personality: Boris is not all there, but is a caricature of a heroic figure.

Motivation: He lives to be a classic hero—brave, strong, righteous.

Background: A natural athlete, Boris played for the Galactic Gravityball League, but a tragic accident in his third season left him with a brain injury. He recovered physically, but hasn't quite been himself since. An incident in a bar became a formative event for him: He stopped a robbery (and possibly worse) by beating up the four thieves before they could get away with the money and the hostages. Since then, he considers himself to be some kind of heroic figure. He has the best body armor he can buy (which is excellent, given his considerable earnings from gravityball), but mostly relies on hand-to-hand combat. He has a habit of showing up whenever something big is about to go down, such as a group of adventurers taking down a major target, or a delicate negotiation and trade between rival gangs.

Traits: *(KS) Adventurer, aggressive, eccentric, humorous, warrior, wealthy*

Rowena Idain 544

Inoffensive Infiltrator

"My 'caboose?' I am unaware of any impediment attached to my backside. Please explain your idiom more specifically."

Appearance: Her long, purple hair stands out, as do her brilliant, almond-shaped green eyes. A synthetic leather bodysuit with buckles and straps leaves little to the imagination. Heeled boots add several inches to her height, a utility belt fits snugly around her waist, and a wrist computer blinks for instruction.

Roleplaying: Rowena is uninformed of many cultural expressions that we take for granted; she has a childlike approach when speaking to others. She is full of inquiries but otherwise defers to others and responds only to direct questions.

Personality: She is unassuming like a child, absorbing the details of her surroundings. Rowena understands right and wrong, but the nuances of social interaction elude her for now.

Motivation: An adventurer for hire, Rowena's goals mirror the group consensus and no further. Personally, she seeks to understand more about the cultures that surround her and the nature of her background.

Background: Rowena is an escaped prototype corporate espionage clone. Her purple hair is a genetic marker used to identify such tools until perfected. Having gone rogue on an operation, a defensive measure wiped her memory—but she retained her abilities. She's run afoul of corporate security a few times and moved off-world, but is still hunted. Her abilities have caught the attention of a few shadow groups who use her talents for hire.

Traits: *(DM) Adventurer, child, stealthy*

Colonel Edgair "Numps" Numpusari 545

Fussy Bureaucrat

"If I can't see my face in your armor, you'll be spending the night in the brig, me boyo."

Appearance: Edgair is always flushed, making his pale blond mustache and slicked-down hair stand out even more. His eyes bug out slightly, giving him a fish-like appearance.

Roleplaying: He inserts himself in every situation and looks for opportunities to fuss, micromanage, and find fault.

Personality: Edgair is entirely without self-confidence—so he makes up for it by criticizing everyone else. Fussy to the last, he demands perfection in every area except the important ones—a soldier getting deployed to the wrong drop zone is fine by Edgair, as long as the soldier's power armor is well-polished.

Motivation: Everything Edgair does is intended to make him look much more competent and on top of things than he actually is. He's petrified that someone will discover that he bribed his way into his position.

Background: Called "Numps" by the men and women unfortunate to serve under him, Edgair is a complete prat, a martinet who neither earned nor deserves his position, and who wouldn't know which end of a laser rifle to fire. (But, by gum, that rifle would be well-polished!) He fusses over all the wrong things, and no one knows exactly how he's held onto his job. Anyone who learned that he bought his rank would have leverage over a key figure in the space marines, making Numps a dangerous liability.

Traits: *(MR) Eccentric, humorous, military, white collar*

Sven Danehost 546

Interstellar Viking

"The star people were given to us, by the mother, as a source of nourishment and plunder."

Appearance: Sven is tall, blond, and thickly muscled, with a thick layer of fat and legs like springs.

Roleplaying: Among his people Sven is bold and challenging, a raider hero. He drinks heavily and slaps shoulders, calling on his people to do their best to imitate his bold ways.

Personality: Sven is a hard man, ready to do what he must to survive. He does for himself first, but is generous with the remainder—knowing he may later need aid.

Motivation: Winters are harsh. A man who tries to support too many others risks being tied down when the enemy pursues, so he keeps his ties light.

Background: Sven has lived a hard life, challenged by the frigid weather and unyielding ground of his world, Danehome. His exploits are many, though few of the star people have ever seen him; he sneaks through the perimeter nets with the patience of a hunter. During the long winters, the scientists and other visitors lose a lot of food and materials from the stars to his predation. He is famous among his people as a raider; they always disavow knowledge of his whereabouts, desperate for the supplies necessary to survive the harsh winters.

Traits: *(SM) Primal, notorious, stealthy*

Raquel Shajn-Schaldach 547

Sympathetic Scientist

"This alien species is being treated unjustly, Captain. We have to do something about it!"

Appearance: Raquel is below average height, cute with short-cropped dark hair, and a pert nose. She has noticeably long eyelashes. She wears a white uniform jumpsuit, indicating her position on the starship's science team.

Roleplaying: She sticks up her forefinger for emphasis, but has to catch herself when addressing a superior officer.

Personality: She is understanding and sympathetic to a fault. Her desire to right perceived injustices often overrides her sense of duty as a neutral observer. She's willing to take foolish, unnecessary risks on behalf of others when she forgets herself. Raquel is prone to seeing only the good in any species she studies.

Motivation: Raquel wants to be a good scientist who is capable of controlling her passions.

Background: Always fascinated by the strange and wonderful, even the squirmiest insects and sea life caught her curious eye. She channeled this interest into a study of xenobiology. Though her temperament wasn't particularly suited to a life in uniform, her specialized skill set led to quick recruitment aboard an exploratory starship. Her expertise makes her invaluable, but her inclination to always take up the cause of any alien they encounter makes her a liability. The captain has learned to anticipate her impulses and has asked her to work at keeping them in check.

Traits: *(TT) Eccentric, scientist*

Ensign Derro Cline 548

Jaded Soldier

"Explore the exciting life of the galactic navy; endless stretches of void, monotonous duties, and, occasionally, running a battery of boring reports on whatever new rock we've come across."

Appearance: Derro is nondescript. He is of average height and weight and wears the duty uniform of a low-level naval officer. Derro keeps his face clean and his hair in a regulation cut. His most notable feature is his ever-present bored expression.

Roleplaying: He is nonplussed about everything. Derro is polite and answers questions, but it's obvious that he is bored with his duty. He constantly reminds non-naval people about how much better they have it.

Personality: Derro is jaded. Once full of enthusiastic excitement, he has been worn down by several years of tedious duties with little to break the monotony. He longs for something different, but has convinced himself that this is as good as it gets for him.

Motivation: He lacks motivation—spectacularly so, in fact.

Background: Derro grew up in poverty and always dreamed of something better. He wanted to see more of the galaxy and thought that the galactic navy would be just the ticket. He eagerly signed up for the academy and was a model, if average, student. Unfortunately, the reality of the navy didn't live up to his expectations. While Derro is thankful to have a career, he soon grew disenchanted with his work. He's resigned himself to having an unexciting life.

Traits: *(WC) Military, white collar*

Joe Hooke 549

Rock-Climbing Scientist

"Preon shipping would have led to an empire-wide energy boom."

Appearance: Joe stands 6'5", with a lean muscular build reflecting an active lifestyle. His hair often stands up in patches unless he holds it down with gel. He neglects fashion, preferring more protective weaves.

Roleplaying: Warm but demanding, Joe wants to be sure that any plan has been thought through, including several levels of unlikely contingencies.

Personality: Every fail-safe should have a backup fail-safe. When he's finally in action he moves with practiced confidence, but it's a pain getting him started.

Motivation: After his lab vanished in an uncontrolled preon reaction, nothing feels quite safe. The total nature of the lab's destruction leaves him awake at night wondering: Was it sabotage—perhaps by rival researchers, or energy producers? Or maybe it was shoddy construction, one valve stuck at the wrong moment?

Background: Dr. Hooke's cutting-edge research got him onto the preon structure team. He joined a handful of leading scientists at a facility orbiting a preon star, extracting wisps of unstable material and manipulating it to maintain its high-density energy, while making it safe to transport. Their research was showing great promise when Joe rotated off for mandatory leave. Three days later, rock climbing in Denessa IV's badlands, he saw a report that the station was gone—and his bosses sent a coded "disappear" message to him. He's been running ever since.

Traits: *(SM) Adventurer, focal, scientist*

Caliyanirah "Cali" Chase 550

Guilty Survivor

"I can't bear the responsibility of telling you the truth about the aliens. It might drive you mad. It certainly has me."

Appearance: Disheveled and dirty, it looks as though she hasn't bathed in weeks. Her hair is kept under a kerchief and her clothes are ragged. She's a far cry from the frumpy but well-groomed suburban mom she was when the ordeal began.

Roleplaying: Paranoid, she often looks behind her, thinking the aliens are closing in and ready to snatch her up. She's chewed her nails down to the quick.

Personality: Much of her original personality has been siphoned off by the secret she witnessed. She is twitchy and shies away from physical contact. Attempts to understand her condition or ease her guilt are met with hysterics.

Motivation: She must hold the secret fast. She can't tell. No, that would be horrible. Things are bad enough under the alien occupation, but if they knew what she knew, it would be the end for them all.

Background: She was a suburban mom driving her children and a few of their friends home in her SUV when the authorities, acting at the behest of the aliens, took her in for questioning. She never saw the children again. What she saw in the aliens' custody changed her. She either escaped or was let loose; she isn't sure, and now she wanders in desperation.

Traits: *(TT) Eccentric, impoverished*

Sylvia Greenman 551

Wealthy Doctor

"That's it sweetie, drink down your medicine and I'll give you a piece of candy."

Appearance: Tall and thin, Sylvia has long blond hair and lavender eyes. She wears a white smock and is accompanied by a number of helper robots at all times.

Roleplaying: Graceful and soft-spoken, Sylvia is quiet and even-voiced; she never gets flustered or excited no matter what is going on around her.

Personality: Sylvia is passionate about two things: medicine and the patients she serves. She has a calming manner about her that almost immediately puts even guarded people at ease.

Motivation: To bring medicine and education to the under-served populations of the poor and neglected.

Background: Sylvia was born into a phenomenally wealthy family. Ever since she could talk, she wanted to be a doctor, and her parents encouraged her. Once she graduated from medical school, she decided she wanted to practice medicine not for the rich and famous, but for the poor, the forgotten, and the despised. Her parents, once they got over their initial shock, supported her wholeheartedly by providing her with all the newest medical technology, setting up several foundations to contribute to her work with the poor, and even purchasing her state-of-the-art medical androids. The androids assist her with numerous functions in the clinics, and also act as a bodyguard when she travels into the less-than-savory areas she serves.

Traits: *(MN) Business, medic, wealthy*

Claudiu Jasson 552

Intrigued Painter

"I can tell you're intrigued from the hue of the skin just under your eyes."

Appearance: He has a neatly trimmed reddish-blond mustache and green eyes. His head is bald and he has piercings through his ear lobes and septum. A trendy satchel is slung over his shoulder. His maroon synthweave suit is functional, with tasteful pinstripes and a police access badge hanging over his tie.

Roleplaying: Claudiu's accent is difficult to place and he quickly jumps into a conversation to share his insight. While listening he leans back, clasping his hands together, and leans his chin upon them in thought. He becomes animated when discussing art, portraits in particular.

Personality: He's soft-spoken and diligent at the workplace, but when faced with a challenge he engages with unbridled enthusiasm.

Motivation: He seeks to understand the intricacies of the expressions of the human face as a canvas.

Background: Trained as an artist, Claudiu has an affinity for drawing and painting portraits. His home is awash in them, many drawn from his experiences on the police force. By day he crafts digital likenesses of perpetrators from crime scenes, using bits of video and eyewitness accounts to craft a fully animated reproduction. His job allows him to study facial expressions in depth, his true passion. Claudiu maintains that he can discern a person's emotional and psychological state from their facial expressions, making him something of an amateur detective.

Traits: *(DM) Artist, police*

John Candor 553

Security Controller

"Section 52A, Camera 3. Oooh, you're gonna hate the laser grid up ahead."

Appearance: Candor's spiky hair and disheveled coat show how little he cares about his appearance. Perpetually surrounded by control sticks and camera monitors, his eyes are strained beyond bloodshot.

Roleplaying: Candor is twitchy. His head darts from one monitor to the next, and he has a bottle of eye drops nearby at all times. He'll often lure in pirates by faking damage to a base, only to bring up a fully operational defense grid once they are too far in to get out.

Personality: John Candor has always been a control freak. He enjoys toying with people and was the sort to torture small animals when he was a child.

Motivation: He loves toying with people, and he cares less about the security of the bases he guards than he does about having a new "toy" to play with.

Background: When John Candor found a job that put him in charge of the remote controlled defenses of multiple uninhabited supply depots, he fell in love. With his bevy of remote controlled drones and security cameras, he keeps one step ahead of the many pirates who try to break in, and sometimes he lets them inside just so he can toy with him. One can see an almost disappointed look on Candor's face when a ship docks with a valid resupply code.

Traits: *(JA) Eccentric, police, power hungry, white collar*



John Candor

Artist: Matt Morrow

Kosmia Delaney 554

Garrulous Travel Agent

"A space tour is the ultimate family vacation—it's cheaper to see Mars than you think!"

Appearance: Six feet tall and 300 lbs., Kosmia has red hair, bright green eyes, and a winning smile. She's 85, but life extension treatments keep her looking 40, except for the many laugh lines around her eyes.

Roleplaying: Kosmia gestures expansively when she speaks, makes casual physical contact with her conversation partners, and laughs often.

Personality: Talkative and outgoing, Kosmia is a born saleswoman who combines genuine enthusiasm for her job with just enough manipulation to be wildly successful at it.

Motivation: Kosmia wants to expand into extrasolar tourism, and she's looking for a big break—something that will bring tourists to her door in droves.

Background: One of the most successful bookers of space tours on Luna, Kosmia is well-known and well-liked by almost everyone. She charges fair rates and has a reputation for running safe, reliable tours. Apart from a couple of administrative staffers, her business—Kosmia's Space Tours—is a one-woman operation. Kosmia leverages her extensive network of friends and business associates throughout the solar system to book passage aboard tour ships as well as private vessels. Because she won't deal with captains who don't move heaven and earth to keep her customers safe, she's made several enemies over the years.

Traits: *(MR) Business, charming, entertainment, white collar*

Rezika Oraclebearer 555

Spirit-Talking Merchant

"The oracle says, 'Fortune shared is fortune redoubled.' Join us for a meal, travelers, and let us trade."

Appearance: Her blond hair is shoulder length, woven with long bolts and threaded through large nuts. She wears handmade leather tool belts, with carefully polished wrenches and screw drivers from the days before at her belt. Her eyes are bright and green, her skin tanned from long hours under the sun.

Roleplaying: Rezika consults her oracle before taking on new tasks, asking the spirits of elder days for guidance.

Personality: She's unpredictable, adapting to each moment as filtered through her oracle. She believes its pronouncements absolutely, but interprets its "commands" in the way that best benefits her tribe—even when it costs her directly.

Motivation: The oracle is unique to her tribe; clearly it is the reason that her clan did not fall to man-eating and barbarism. The selfless spin on what she reads is her own sense of what the world should be.

Background: Rezika is the trade leader, responsible for ensuring that the clan has enough resources to survive. The oracle—a handheld computer of some sort—is her most precious tool. She leads salvage parties into the wastelands, trusting that the oracle's predictions and her tribesmen will keep her safe. She has a keen memory for prices and quantities, and trades skillfully. She leads her people indirectly away from the poisoned lands, toward a place where they can settle.

Traits: *(SM) Leader, merchant, primal, saintly*

Arron Doryar 556

Wise Cybernetic Monk

"Connected as I am to all this information, I realize that compassion cannot be replaced by knowledge."

Appearance: Arron's bald head is covered in tattoos and wires. He wears purple robes and sits in a lotus position. His eyes glow blue when he accesses information from the data-stream.

Roleplaying: Arron has immersed himself fully in his vows of his order and the tenets of the data-stream. His speech is a mixture of Eastern thought and random code snippets.

Personality: Arron has compassion for all things, and he is always pleased to meet new people. While in the stream, all traces of personality are removed and he becomes a detached conduit for the data.

Motivation: Arron is a bodhisattva, one who seeks to spread peace and compassion before being taken up into enlightenment. Since he was connected directly to the stream, he seeks to spread truth and help people.

Background: Though the tenets of Arron's order have not changed over the millennia, their methods have. Embracing and molding the new with the old, Arron's order began to connect directly into the worldwide data-stream to further immerse in the world. One of the friendliest of the Monks of the Order of Bhumi, Arron searches for information for any who request it of him. His results are generally cryptic, a side effect of how he processes the information, but they often lead people on the right path.

Traits: *(JA) Ancient, counselor, mysterious, religious*

Giovanni Delseppi 557

Debauched Salesman

"I can fulfill your wildest desires, whatever they may be!"

Appearance: A dark-skinned and incredibly handsome man with dark, smoldering eyes, Giovanni dresses to the nines.

Roleplaying: Giovanni is the ultimate salesman. He is always trying to close a deal or make contacts. He treats everyone as a potential client, and never outright says "no" to any request, though he is a master of half-truths and double-talk.

Personality: Despite his profession, Giovanni is not a sleaze or a pervert. He genuinely loves the pleasures of the flesh and feels everyone should have a partner who can please them in every way they desire....especially if that partner is one of his bots.

Motivation: Giovanni wants to close the deal, make the sale, and then celebrate in a drunken orgy till dawn.

Background: Growing up around his family's android factory, Giovanni was put to work in the family business straight out of college. After several years, he struck out on his own to start his own specialized android manufacturing facility, which provides robots for filmmakers and wealthy private individuals specifically designed to fulfill their owners' base needs. Though he quickly earned the ire of various robot rights groups and the moral majority, Giovanni is of the position that no press is bad press, and doesn't let little things like the ever-present protesters outside of his production facilities slow him down.

Traits: *(MN) Beautiful, business, leader, notorious, wealthy*

Susan Lee 558

Tragic Victim

"You…can…all…go…to…hell."

Appearance: She is bound to her hover chair. Various tubes enter her forearms and throat. Her skin is scarred with third degree burns, and only her eyes show any signs of life. Her "voice" comes from a set of speakers on the hover chair.

Roleplaying: She uses vulgar language and insults everyone.

Personality: Susan is full of anger and spite that she is suffering and others are not.

Motivation: She wants to prove her theory before she dies. She is beginning to believe that her death will come first.

Background: Susan was a beautiful woman, but her intelligence far surpassed her appearance. She discovered particles that explained some of the most complex mysteries in physics. She was making progress on a starship that would be able to travel through worm holes and needed only to complete her experiments in a micro gravity environment. She was brought on board the space station Prometheus, and worked for months with its crew to perfect her latest designs. While working in her lab, another technician failed to observe proper safety procedures and a fire broke out. The technician and two others died as a result, but Susan lived despite being completely engulfed in flames and suffering multiple critical injuries. Years of recovery later, Susan is still completely dependent upon her hover chair, which is also a life support system that uses a neural uplink to facilitate communication.

Traits: *(PB) Academic, genius, hideous, scientist*

Colonel Wirtanen Van Biesbroeck 559

Fussy Starship Officer

"Everything—and everyone—has their place. You, sir, unfortunately are not in yours. Please see to the condition of your uniform, then return to your post immediately."

Appearance: He is tall, slight of build, looks somewhat younger than his actual age (mid-forties), and prim, even in his command uniform jumpsuit.

Roleplaying: Van Biesbroeck tries to surreptitiously apply hand sanitizer or some manner of antiseptic spray several times during his watch.

Personality: He has a strong sense of personal space and is particular about every last thing in it. He will step aside or lean back to make room if the opportunity presents itself or if another person gets too close. During first contact situations, he must fight down the revulsion he experiences when he must make physical contact with an alien species.

Motivation: He wants to make sure the crew can always pass a white glove inspection.

Background: If service on a starship only required him to report for duty, serve his allotted time, and work without interruption and with a minimal amount of interaction with subordinates, then he would be happy. He earned high marks after his initial tour of duty as part of a four-person team—each member running one eight-hour shift alone at a communications outpost. Then he was assigned to a starship. He thrived in his previous, somewhat solitary, existence and life aboard this ship has required many adjustments on his part.

Traits: *(TT) Leader, military*

Zoe Bree 560

Cheerful Entertainer

"Why the long face? Life can't be all that bad. If you tell me what's bothering you I'm sure that I have a song for it."

Appearance: Heavyset due to her lack of physical exercise, Zoe is always garishly dressed in bright, cheerful colors.

Roleplaying: She is always peppy and upbeat. Due to her psychic prowess she can find the hurting people in the room and speaks to them with comforting words. She gently uses her powers to ease their pain.

Personality: Zoe's personality is shaped by her power. She has difficulty shutting out other minds, so she is influenced by the emotions of those around her. Zoe keeps everyone's spirits up so that she can maintain her own.

Motivation: She wants to spread happiness so that she doesn't become depressed.

Background: Zoe discovered her psychic power at an early age when she began feeling the emotions of her classmates. She was diagnosed as a low-level psychic; she is empathic. Unfortunately, without a higher degree of ability Zoe is unable to screen the emotions around her. Since she didn't want to live in isolation, Zoe became a cantina singer in small space stations. She uses her entertainment and her empathic powers to ease the pain of patrons so that everyone can be happy for a while.

Traits: *(WC) Entertainment, magical*

Boyd Zus 561

Unemployed Terraformer

"I grew up in the hull of ship. I never woke up to a sunrise or the feel of grass under my feet. All I ever wanted was to work the land, but even the land is out to get me."

Appearance: Boyd is slightly overweight and on the tall side. He wears his hair simply and is always in need of a shave. He wears laborer's clothes.

Roleplaying: He always has a ready joke, often about himself. He lets things roll off his back with a shrug and a sigh.

Personality: Trying to keep up good spirits and be pleasant, Boyd is always disappointed when something doesn't work. He uses his humor to mask his despondency.

Motivation: He just wants to be a terraformer and to earn an honest living applying his trade.

Background: Boyd was born in space on a long haul freighter owned by his family. He grew up on that ship, and, unbeknownst to him, was continuously exposed to the propulsion field; he emits bursts of bio-sonic particles. These bursts disrupt machines that perform complex quantum manipulations, such as terraforming equipment. Having never lived planet-side, Boyd grew tired of space life and went to school for terraforming. He is quite knowledgeable on the subject, but every project he has worked on has failed. Now he is blacklisted in the business. If he was cured of his disorder, he could follow his dream.

Traits: *(PV) Business, humorous, laborer*

Kemmar Graham 562

Confident Con Artist

"Col. Agamar, isn't it? I met you at that party on Andaris. My wife? I didn't think you'd remember her, but she couldn't stop talking about you. She's a bit of a military fan…"

Appearance: To call Kemmar beautiful would be an understatement. He was graced with a perfectly proportioned face, deep mocha skin, and a smile that puts anyone at ease. He always dresses for the con, and everything he wears looks good on him.

Roleplaying: Kemmar dsicovered early on that looks only take you so far, and learned how to talk himself out of trouble. Even when people are realizing something isn't quite right, they're falling for his fast words.

Personality: Deep in his core, Kemmar is friendly and honest. These traits help him pull cons, but they also make him generous with his earnings. Most of his earnings actually go back to orphanages and starving people he has met on his journeys.

Motivation: He realized that life was unfair early on and decided that he might as well make it unfair in his favor.

Background: Kemmar has pulled all sorts of cons all over this galaxy. From low end to high end, he is a master of his craft and is often the first name on high-end criminals' lips when they need a con artist. Kemmar carefully chooses his targets, seeing himself more as a modern-day Robin Hood than an outright thief.

Traits: *(JA) Beautiful, charming, criminal, saintly*



Melorah Colli

Artist: Matt Morrow

Melorah Colli 563

Scared Holo Star

"I just love all my fans and the wonderful ways they show their love for me. This one I wrote especially for you, the fans!"

Appearance: Tall and svelte, Melorah's long, pink hair and flashy, holo-projecting clothing is the rage throughout the galaxy. Designers fight to get their clothes into Melorah's closet.

Roleplaying: Melorah isn't that bright when it comes to anything outside of the performing business. She perpetually dances about, listening to her latest song or just moving to some unheard beat. She is flirty with anyone she thinks is cute.

Personality: She just wants to be loved and cared for; she has an addictive personality that needs careful control. She craves attention and needs constant acknowledgment of her talents.

Motivation: Melorah's manager is into some pretty dirty stuff on the side, and he keeps trying to drag Melorah into it in order to pay off his debts. She wants to get away from him, but has a hard time leaving because of all the work he did to get her to the top.

Background: Melorah Colli is the latest thing to hit the charts across the galaxy. Her unique vocal style and permanently peppy attitude draw fans in by the millions. A lot of this is due to her manager's influence with criminal elements, and Melorah has gotten scared of exactly what that means. She can't get away, though, and feels she owes her manager for her success.

Traits: *(JA) Artist, beautiful, entertainment*

Anselm Quom 564

Hidden Prince

"The empire was a dream from which we've woken up. Let's worry about today's battle, not yesterday's delusions."

Appearance: Anselm is a handsome teenage boy, 5'10" with piercing blue eyes, brown hair, and a face never touched by acne.

Roleplaying: He moves with a body confidence that most teenagers lack; in addition to farm work and directing robots, he trains as a martial artist. He has confidence from his studies and the unconscious deference his guardians give him.

Personality: Despite teaching and theory, Anselm isn't eager to risk his life and those of his supporters—he measures twice before cutting.

Motivation: He doesn't want to risk the people who raised him—his family in reality, if not genetics. But he knows that loyalists gave their life to smuggle him out of the palace during the revolution; eventually that blood debt will be called due.

Background: For the first dozen years of his life, Anselm was raised on the hard work of an isolated farm by day, followed by extensive study and training at night. Learning comes easily to him, but there is a universe full of knowledge—and so far his physical training outstrips his ability to comprehend the structure underlying current politics. His innate caution warns him away from revealing himself; once he does, he is sure never to rest until the republic has fallen or he lies dead.

Traits: *(SM) Mysterious, royalty, warrior*

Chandra Quarkseer 565

Disillusioned Priestess

"As below, so above. Our universe is a mirror, founded on a cauldron of subquantum particles."

Appearance: Chandra dresses for maximum effect, wearing robes of pale gray with silvered swirls and near-patterns that flow across her clothing as she moves. Her ceremonial black blindfold draws attention to her hidden eyes, and away from her ordinary stature and mousy brown hair.

Roleplaying: She speaks calmly, speaking in threes for emphasis. Her face flushes and her ears turn a bright red when she drinks a glass of wine—which she does often.

Personality: Chandra loves the attention she receives as a seer. She's not above hamming it up, drawing out the sacred observations with an extended unveiling.

Motivation: This isn't bad as a fallback job. She clandestinely sells private viewings, describing the quantum reflection of a client after much...compensated study.

Background: After finishing her advanced degree in subquantum physics, Chandra found that employers required an additional 7-10 years of study and proven lines of research before they would make her an offer. Her funding would never stretch that far, so she looked for a gig that would accept her current qualifications. She soon signed on as a priestess of the Church of the Subquanta. She interprets particle activity, drawing inferences from the interactions and collisions of quarks, and pronouncing the state of the local universe. It's not ideal, but at least she gets to keep using state-of-the-art equipment.

Traits: *(SM) Counselor, humorous, religious*

Lady Erin/ Cassandra Okimo 566

Body-Swapping Party Girl

"I love this body, so young, so pretty. Ahh, to be young again. Please bring the car around, the weekend is starting and I don't want to miss a thing."

Appearance: Lady Okimo is a young, attractive woman with raven hair atop a high forehead, and pale blue eyes.

Roleplaying: Erin flirts, casually touching people while talking, and her speech is littered with innuendo.

Personality: Erin is uninhibited and unbridled, but inhabits the body of Cassandra, a rather prudish and conservative woman.

Motivation: Erin is looking for any type of thrill, typically in torrid affairs, catfights, and excessive parties. Her body donor is working for her education and a good life.

Background: Lady Erin Okimo is the head of the House Okimo, and is over 100 years old and quite frail. She approached Cassandra, a poor woman of considerable beauty who desired an education, and made her an offer: money and schooling in exchange for regular use of her body. Every weekend, Cassandra's mind is downloaded to a virtual university where she receives the finest education, and Erin's mind is uploaded into Cassandra's body. Erin then takes the name "Cassandra Okimo" and goes out partying for the weekend. Cassandra is scared of what is being done with her body, though she needs the money, and Lady Erin is having more and more trouble giving it back at the end of each weekend.

Traits: *(PV) Ancient, beautiful, leader, royalty*

Haysen, King of Waverly Drive 567

Neighborhood Despot

"Welcome to the safe zone. You wanna live here? Safe from the aliens? Then make me happy."

Appearance: He wears an oversized plaid sports coat with the work overalls of a laborer.

Roleplaying: When considering a trade for entry into the neighborhood safe zone, he'll scratch the back of his head and mutter, "I dunno..." before demanding the most outlandish thing he can think of.

Personality: Haysen is a relentless bully, crude and uncouth, and demoralizes those in his power. He wonders how people can suffer such humiliation on the promise that he'll take care of them. He thinks of them as sheep, and himself and his fellow goons as wolves.

Motivation: He wants food, drink, fine things, and sex—in whatever order he can get them.

Background: When the aliens started segregating people into camps, Haysen, a former trash collector, volunteered to run his area's safe zone—one of the few districts not under alien control. Haysen rightly suspects the aliens don't care whether people are in their camps or under human detention, so long as the people are in easy-to-fetch clusters. Haysen suspects the worst of the aliens' motives, so he figures, "Why not go out on top?" The folks who used to look down on him can pick up his stuff for a while. And that's just for starters.

Traits: *(TT) Abhorrent, laborer*

Johnny Winter 568

Sleazy Holovid Producer

"That's it, baby! The camera LOVES you! More tentacle, baby! Yeah! Flaunt it!"

Appearance: Johnny's perfect salon tan, bleached blond hair, sandals, and loud shirts left unbuttoned to display his washboard abs make him look like the quintessential beach bum. He never goes anywhere without a portable camera and a mini-computer full of waivers and legal agreements.

Roleplaying: Cool, laid-back, and charming, Johnny is carefree and casual. He is relentless in his pursuit of footage of pretty or exotic girls, trying any tactic to get them on camera—cajoling, bribery, or promises that it will help them land a film career.

Personality: Persistent and creative, Johnny goes after what he wants with confidence, though he doesn't waste time with a difficult prospect if others are available. He's a businessman first and foremost, and his job is procuring product.

Motivation: Johnny is the famous producer of the "Uninhibited Alien Girls" video series, and he aims to stay on top by getting the hottest material with the sexiest girls.

Background: After a clip Johnny shot at a frat party of a couple topless alien girls making out made him nearly a thousand dollars, he dropped out of college to pursue his career as a holovid producer. He seeks out hot spots where there will be sexy girls and lots of booze and never talks to a pretty woman without somehow trying to get her to take her clothes off for him.

Traits: *(MN) Aggressive, charming, entertainment, notorious, wealthy*

Joseph Griffin 569

Shady Ship Inspector

"The problem with these X1 models is that their stabilizers are crap. I'll let that go, but you've got an issue with your intake fluxxors. You get that fixed and I'll give you a clean bill of health."

Appearance: Griffin has slick brown hair, a cleanly shaven face, and a lean frame. His ship inspector's uniform only shows a few signs of dirt from the many ships he crawls around in.

Roleplaying: Griffin holds himself in a casual manner and jokes around, putting his targets at ease.

Personality: His kind and trustworthy exterior hides his greedy and unscrupulous nature well. He seems like the kind of guy who will cut you a break and then take you out for a beer.

Motivation: Griffin wants to rake in as much kickback money from his friend's corrupt mechanic shop as possible.

Background: Griffin's position as a ship inspector lets him single out ships to inspect. Griffin is very friendly when he comes aboard and always tells marks he'll overlook the small issues he finds. Inevitably, he discovers one major repair he can't overlook and regulations say it has to be fixed before the ship leaves planet. Fortunately, Griffin can direct them to a guy who can fix it cheap. Unfortunately, it's a scam and the repairs end up going beyond reasonable costs. Many captains have found their engine was scavenged for parts and patched up just enough to get them out of orbit, causing major trouble for their ships.

Traits: *(JA) Business, charming, criminal*

Darrius Pyle 570

Black-Market Dealer

"My friend, this is the best sim-sex you will ever have! I'll even throw in a bonus threesome chip if you act now!"

Appearance: Somewhat short, his thick black hair is greased back and glued down. His long, crooked nose sticks out plainly and he has small, beady eyes. Darrius' attire is gaudy and mismatched, with greasy stains on his sleeves. A portable and battered vidcom is slung over one shoulder.

Roleplaying: Darrius rubs his hands together eagerly and can't help himself at getting excited when talking about the latest perverted simulation he's come up with. He'll do nearly anything to close a deal, and whines about the loss he's going to take. He's the penultimate used car salesman.

Personality: A cowardly snake, Darrius peddles black market simulation chips to anyone with the credits to spare. He'd give up his grandmother if the authorities came asking, and has no allegiance to anyone.

Motivation: Darrius is only in it for the money to fund his next "hit," and takes some pleasure at how lewd a simulation he can think up.

Background: Once a talented programmer, Darrius worked on the first generation of sim-chip technology—synthetic environments that users could slot directly into their brains. He fiddled with the technology and its use in porn as a diversion. Unfortunately, the early versions were highly addictive and Darrius soon lost everything. Now he codes out of a back alley to a dedicated clientele.

Traits: *(DM) Criminal, crafter, humorous*

Logan Vokash 571

Greedy Facilitator

"For the right price, I can make anything happen. You heard right: anything."

Appearance: Logan is utterly, deliberately nondescript in every way: average build, plain features, ordinary clothes. Nothing about him stands out. He can blend in just about anywhere.

Roleplaying: It's impossible to meet Logan without wanting to shower afterward—he oozes corruption and amorality. Talking to him is like conversing with an uncaring devil.

Personality: Logan is scum, and he's okay with that. He has no morals whatsoever, and he'll arrange literally anything within his power if the price is right. Spineless and venal, he never takes direct action, always working through intermediaries instead.

Motivation: He's motivated by pure, naked, unalloyed greed. Logan wants to be richer than God.

Background: Logan describes himself as a "facilitator," and in the cyberpunk underworld, he's well-known for his ability to "make things happen." Anyone who needs a layer or two of anonymity between themselves and an unsavory arms deal, a political murder, a corporate espionage mission, or the production of a new street drug can come to Logan and be assured of discretion—and a complete absence of morality. Logan has a talent for figuring out how to make things happen, even when he doesn't know much about the actual mechanics, and he has an extensive network of contacts to call upon. He connects people, acquires resources, oversees operations, and then steps back into the shadows to look for his next opportunity.

Traits: *(MR) Abhorrent, business, criminal, notorious*

Laranna Le'Zurkosko 572

Wandering Mechanic

"Come in, come in! Whatever you're looking for, Laranna has it for you!"

Appearance: Tall, well-built, and beautiful, Laranna has dark skin and eyes which she always complements with a cacophony of bright, primary colored clothing. She is surrounded by a heady miasma of exotic spices and incense.

Roleplaying: Laranna refers to herself in the third person, and often speaks in vaguely cryptic riddles. She flirts constantly with anyone who appears receptive, regardless of gender, culture, or even species, but keeps the tone playful and mostly innocent.

Personality: In love with her wanderer heritage and image, Laranna works hard at being flamboyant and mysterious while making it appear casual and natural. She loves to be the center of attention.

Motivation: Laranna wants to show up, be admired for her phenomenal skills and looks, make a good chunk of money, and then leave.

Background: A highly skilled mechanic and craftsman, Laranna can fix anything from a diesel truck to a warp engine. She is a member of a space wanderer family and owes loyalty to no one and nothing except them. Currently a bachelorette, she is traveling the galaxy and seeing what there is to see before her mother decides it is time for her to marry and start a family of her own.

Traits: *(MN) Beautiful, business, crafter, merchant, mysterious*

Dusty Sage 573

Curmudgeonly Prospector

"You sit there in your comfy chair and full gravity system. You don't remember what the outer rim was like in the old days. We had to sit strapped to our chairs and couldn't speak to each other—it'd waste too much oxygen. Fun times."

Appearance: Dusty is a spry old man who shows no sign of slowing down. He still wears the styles that were in vogue 30-40 years ago, when the outer rim was barely explored. While short and a little bent, Dusty has a countenance that demands respect.

Roleplaying: He considers himself to be the foremost authority on the outer rim. If respected, Dusty acts like a favorite uncle willing to impart his wisdom. If challenged, especially by someone younger, Dusty gets angry and spits off "reasons" why the challenger is wrong.

Personality: Dusty is an independent old prospector who has trouble working within regulations. He believes that the outer rim was better when it wasn't so cluttered and dominated by corporations. Dusty looks back on the old days through a pastoral filter and dismisses all of the dangers and hardships of that time.

Motivation: He is always looking for the big score for his retirement. He also wants to keep that find away from greedy corporations.

Background: Dusty was an early explorer of the outer rim. He had little support and prospecting was a dangerous business. Now that civilization has caught up, Dusty feels alienated from the new state of affairs.

Traits: *(WC) Adventurer, ancient, eccentric, merchant, outdoorsman*

Gibson Zuse 574

Human Computer

"Assuming optimal conditions, this plan has a 4.3% chance of success."

Appearance: A fit middle-aged man with neat hair, Gibson always appears to be reading three net-tablets simultaneously.

Roleplaying: He is alternately logical and excitable, as his emotions catch up with the instantaneous but cold logic of his mind.

Personality: Far from emotionless, he has simply learned to rein in his emotions while computing. He has also learned not to hold in his emotions for too long.

Motivation: Gibson wants to lead a somewhat normal life.

Background: Gibson's father is a genius-level genetic engineer (with a specialty in neurology) who gave his son the ability to instantly estimate and calculate nearly anything. The father was jailed for unethical research practices while Gibson was quite young, so the boy never received any real guidance in managing his "gift." Despite being raised by a string of foster parents, he was doing quite well for himself until recently. Gibson's father was released from jail and, coincidentally or not, a number of organizations have suddenly become aware of his abilities and are looking to hire or dissect him. Since his abilities do not extend to predicting the intentions of others, he has gone into hiding, making what money he can by "cheating" at gambling.

Traits: *(KS) Academic, genius, impoverished, scientist*

Feylice Braunston 575

Timeless Artist

"Who would have thought that solidified sonic webs would ever turn into an artistic medium? It's impressive, amazing really...but my hands know digicomposing, and I'm too old to adapt."

Appearance: Feylice is short, particularly by modern standards, and has thinned from the lush ripeness of her youth. Her hair is usually brown, and she has silver-painted fingernails and a cocked smile.

Roleplaying: She unconsciously drops arcane and ancient phrases in the middle of most sentences—some only decades old, some centuries old. The first few days after revival she's stiff and slow, but she moves easily once her body adjusts.

Personality: She is thirsty for knowledge—about the universe, the last 20 or 50 years of changes—and the people she meets. Her eyes are always on her conversational partner, and are warm rather than piercing.

Motivation: Feylice created an odd business, inventing herself as the timeless artist. Initially she was running from heartbreak, but now she's trapped in a web of expectation.

Background: Feylice markets herself as the oldest woman alive; she surfaces from suspended animation every 20 years, lives out a year, then returns to suspension. During that year she experiences daily life and creates art that comments on the current period; the proceeds compound with minimal expense during suspension, leaving her increasingly wealthy. She's beginning to realize that she's missing out on life, but the bubble of excitement and publicity prevents her from building close relations.

Traits: *(SM) Ancient, artist, business, famous*

Ronald Powell 576

Diligent Worker

"I know that things are tough right now, but we'll make it. It is those of us who work harder when there is no apparent hope who eventually succeed. We can get off of this moon. We can build our own ship with the parts that we have here."

Appearance: A young man with thinning hair and horn rimmed glasses, he is either in his jumpsuit or his spacesuit salvaging any parts that he can use from the dilapidated moon base.

Roleplaying: He has a habit of saying "Fair enough" in response to others who disagree with him.

Personality: He is impatient with people at times, but he takes his time with machines and technology.

Motivation: He wants to see himself and the other residents of the moon base leave and find homes on a more habitable planet.

Background: Ronald was a civilian contractor for a military operation. He and hundreds of other civilians were brought to the moon where they currently reside to help build and maintain an operational base. The underfunded military ultimately decommissioned the base, but the private corporation that brought in the contractors offered to take it over. Everything seemed to be going well until an embezzlement scandal bankrupted the corporation. Now Ronald and others have been abandoned on the moon.

Traits: *(PB) Crafter, impoverished, military*

Dr. Jeffery Kuthar 577

Deceitful Elder

"I am only here because here I am a god to these ground-scratchers. I showed them how to make pottery, and they named a mountain after me!"

Appearance: Jeffery is a short, thin man whose skin is very tan. His hair is short and wild, with no style to it. He wears a toga-like garment and simple sandals.

Roleplaying: A skilled lecturer, Jeffery is very dramatic with sweeping hand motions, and he often pauses as if expecting applause.

Personality: He has never had much of a conscience. Jeffery acts on his own impulses.

Motivation: Jeffery is ruled by two simple and primal needs: sloth and greed. He will do anything to get some reward or to avoid hard work.

Background: His lack of morals and considerable intellect allowed him to excel in school, often sabotaging his classmates for his gain. Jeffery obtained a Ph.D. in primitive societies, leaving a number of angry colleagues in his wake. Bored with the hard work involved in research, he took his knowledge and found a primitive society on a fringe world. He slowly assimilated into their culture, and he has doled out information to advance them as a civilization. The tribe is grateful for the information and has showered him with rewards. He works to keep the tribe from meeting any other travelers, fearful that his racket would end.

Traits: *(PV) Genius, primal, scholar*

Madam Rosetta 578

Ageless Schemer

"Oh my. A new law that will destroy my institution and surely end crime as we know it. Every decade someone promises this very same thing, and every decade the crime is still here. History is much more relevant when you have actually lived through it."

Appearance: She is an elderly woman dressed in simple robes, with two laser blasters slung from her hips and two plasma pistols holstered under her arms.

Roleplaying: She is carefree and constantly listens to classical music, waving her arms gently as if conducting an orchestra.

Personality: Madam Rosetta is calm and keeps her wits about her in even the most dire of emergencies.

Motivation: She has no real ambition, not because she is lazy, but because she is content. She enjoys dabbling in various forms of art, and she became a criminal because it's easier to steal than to work.

Background: Madam Rosetta was one of several passengers whose starship passed through an unusual nebula that was experiencing a dark matter storm. Somehow, the ship's jump drives were activated and the ship suffered a partial implosion, jumping several light years away. The wreckage of the ship appeared in orbit above a colonized planet and Madam Rosetta was the only person rescued from the ship. She was 19 years old at the time, and the accident happened 900 years ago. Now she ages about one year for every 20 that pass.

Traits: *(PB) Ancient, criminal, dilettante*

Nariko Hayashi 579

Chatty Starship Officer

"OK, Station 354, you still on? Great. So, as I was saying, the medical officer on Starbase Gamma is expecting. You hadn't heard? Isn't that the best news! And you know who the father is, right? No? Well, you'll never believe it..."

Appearance: She is a willowy figure with long fingers. She thinks the regulation uniform jumpsuit a bit drab, so she's taken to dying her hair bright, electric colors. Her favorite shades are cobalt blue and neon purple, and she usually has a lipstick to match.

Roleplaying: Nariko likes to twirl her earring when she's engrossed in a story.

Personality: She's a friendly gossip.

Motivation: She shares stories as a way to build trust in her and her ship. Invariably, her ship gets summoned because everyone knows she is ready to listen and to lend a hand.

Background: Nariko makes sure she doesn't spread harmful news or scandal. Really, she just like to talk, and in the vast, deadly quiet of outer space, her chatter is often a welcome respite from the relentless silence. She's the closest thing there is to a town crier of old. She's also quick on a keyboard, and a multitasker who can monitor a dozen red alerts while still finding a way to share grandma's recipes over the comm-net.

Traits: *(TT) Charming, humorous*

Brother Melvin Kim 580

Reformed Medic

"I do not wish to dwell upon my past, as I have been reborn. Please leave me to my tranquility and allow me to care for my patients."

Appearance: Melvin shaves his head and wears the uniform of a spiritual healer. His face tells a different story; Melvin has a broken nose, a jagged scar on his left cheek, and pieces of his left ear are missing. He has even more scars beneath his uniform.

Roleplaying: He is a kind caregiver, always asking questions and trying to make his patients comfortable. He prefers not to speak about his past.

Personality: Melvin was once a ruthless pirate and still has that ruthlessness buried inside him. Through prayer and meditation, Melvin suppresses that part of himself and remains calm, focused, and kind.

Motivation: He wants to atone for his past sins by helping others.

Background: Melvin was once a pirate raiding merchant vessels for his boss to sell on the black market. He'd killed many people and was destined to become a boss himself, until an incident occurred that caused Melvin to change course: He was captured and sent to a prison planet. Melvin became close with the spiritual caregivers that tended to the prisoners and eventually became one of them. While still technically a prisoner, Melvin is allowed to work at various caregiver centers as long as he remains within the scope of his employment. Melvin now cares only about aiding others.

Traits: *(WC) Impoverished, medic, saintly*

Qandorra 581

Zealous Thought-Thief

"At the moment of your passage, I will preserve your final thought for all time."

Appearance: Qandorra is deathly pale, with stringy gray hair and eyes the size of golf balls. Her hands are always moist, and she dresses in plain white robes.

Roleplaying: Grim and creepily focused, she becomes almost ghoulish when she steals a thought.

Personality: Qandorra is a zealot and a lunatic, dedicated to a dead religion and to the flawed notion that she can accurately transcribe someone else's final thoughts. Years of pursuing her calling have hollowed her out, leaving nothing but devotion.

Motivation: She thinks only of the edicts of the Qandorran sect, and lives only to capture the thoughts of the dying.

Background: A psychic mutant, Qandorra steals the final thoughts of the dying to preserve them for posterity. Her eyes turn completely black when she does this, and electricity arcs between her and the dying person. Qandorra (which means "preserver" in her language) carries a book with her everywhere, the Great Work, and in it she transcribes the thoughts of the dead, and her own musings and interpretations related to them. Her power is genuine (though it may appear to be a scam), as is her claim to be the last member of a religious sect dedicated to thought preservation. Qandorra won't commit murder, so she frequents places where people are likely to die, waiting for the right moment to steal their final thoughts.

Traits: *(MR) Eccentric, magical, mysterious, occult, religious, zealot*

Sirius Defuge 582

Witty Hanger-On

"Headache? He's got a bullet in him! Carlos, get an ambulance over here right away."

Appearance: Sirius dresses in costumes; some days as an early computer technician, other days as an Elizabethan playwright or toga-clad Greek.

Roleplaying: Sirius is always quoting, often stretching context to find something appropriate. He usually declaims in a theatrical voice, but whispers intimately.

Personality: The world is but a stage, so why not enjoy it? Sirius loves borrowing old phrases and turning them on their head, ironically counterpointing what he's driving at. He's in love with his wit, and displays it every chance he gets. While Sirius is brilliant, he knows that it's all been said before, and better.

Motivation: While his acting is terrible, it's the only world he cares about. He wants to be on every guest list, know every star.

Background: His mother attended every concert, following artists across the galaxy—and eventually had Sirius as a result. She continued touring, leaving Sirius with a nanny most of the time; he loved the rare days when she'd return home and regale him with tales of life on the road. He studied old holos and physical plays, learning lines and acquiring invitations—at first to show up his mother, later as a passion.

Traits: *(SM) Dilettante, entertainment, zealot*

Ron Cole 583

Quirky Entrepreneur

"Everyone told me that in today's age of genetic vanity plants, no one would want to do yard work. Everyone said no one wants real grass when synthetic grass only has to be paid for once and never maintained. That was 2412. Now 30 years later my company is still the leader in relaxation lawn care products. You want to melt your stress away after a rough four hour workday? You come home and mow the lawn. Your Cole Organics lawn, that is!"

Appearance: A deeply tanned man with a bald spot, he is handsome and broad shouldered. He is never out of arms reach of one of his amazing products.

Roleplaying: Slightly arrogant, he is actually a real people person. He shakes a person's hand firmly upon meeting and asks lots of questions like "Where are you from?" and "You got a family?" He is genuinely interested in the answers.

Personality: Ron is confident and proud of his business, of his products, and of his staff.

Motivation: He will run the greatest relaxation lawn care products company in the galaxy!

Background: Slaving away as an executive, Ron looked for ways to deal with the stress of a 20-hour work week. He discovered that in ancient times, people planted grass and trimmed it regularly in order to feel a sense of euphoria. He tried it himself, and it worked! And thus Ron Cole invented the relaxation lawn care business.

Traits: *(PB) Business, crafter, genius, humorous*

Fatima Bayata 584

Spiritual Child

"Be not afraid. The spirits will guide and protect us."

Appearance: A calm-looking girl with long braided hair who smiles confidently at people, as if she knows all about them.

Roleplaying: Regardless of the situation, she remains relaxed and calm, and implies that she knows what will happen next.

Personality: She is convinced that the spirits inform and lead her, and will accept no argument to the contrary. Aside from this conviction, she is intelligent, kind, and hard-working.

Motivation: She lives to do the spirits' will.

Background: From a very early age, Fatima had a sense that she could commune with spirits and managed to make some accurate predictions that backed up her belief. Since then, she has been revered, feared, and eventually hated for events that she had no control over. Recently, the spirits told her to leave the village and seek out certain people in a nearby city in order to protect the village from a catastrophe. She has stayed in the city, awaiting the "chosen people" who will save the villagers. Whether or not she does speak to the spirits, or interprets her prescience through her village's spiritual context, or is just the subject of some serious coincidence and self-delusion, remains to be seen.

Traits: *(KS) Child, focal, impoverished, mysterious, outdoorsman, religious*

Allies

These NPCs can hack into secure systems to clear a path for the PCs, rain down a withering hail of gunfire on the party's foes, and broker peaceful first contact meetings with alien species. In them, the stars of your campaign—the PCs—will find fast friends, valuable contacts, wise advisors, and buddies who can fill out the roles none of your players wanted to take on, from pilot to medic to scientist. If the PCs treat them well, they'll soon see why good allies are so important in most sci-fi campaigns.

Bai'ell Jonaburg

585

Laughing Smuggler

"So, you want something from old Bai'ell, eh? Well, you've come to the right place. My Completely Legitimate Black Market Smuggling Business (TM) is here to serve."

Appearance: Bulky in frame, Bai'ell is a mountain of a man. While some of this is fluff and fat, it rests on a strong muscled interior. Many have mistaken Bai'ell for an easy target, only to find themselves with time to reconsider while their bones mend.

Roleplaying: Bai'ell worries about nothing. Life is one grand adventure, even when he lands in jail. Bai'ell has a policy of utmost truth, but can talk circles around most people without ever lying.

Personality: Friendly and upfront, Bai'ell is never without a smile or a slap on the back for an old friend—or a new one. Bai'ell will make friends with anyone, even prison guards and people pointing guns at him.

Motivation: Bai'ell only wants to enjoy his life and keep skirting the boundaries of what he should and shouldn't do. He likes the thrill of smuggling and the fact that he might get caught.

Background: Bai'ell never had much time for anger or sadness. Those emotions would just slow him down when he could be having fun. Bai'ell's past jobs never gave him the freedom and fun his current one does, but they teach him a lot. He's been a cop, trucker, bureaucrat, and farm worker, and each job taught him skills that help him get around the authorities.

Traits: *(JA) Criminal, humorous, laborer, pilot*

Yaggo Beaker

586

Introverted Engineer

"I bet I could get an extra 0.5% out of the engine if I just tweak the capacitor like so… Hmm, that wasn't supposed to happen."

Appearance: As he is usually in the heart of overheating machinery, Yaggo has a crew cut and steam-tanned skin that is usually caked in grease. He lost his eyebrows ages ago. As the result of a previous accident, Yaggo's lower left leg is artificial.

Roleplaying: Always eager to talk shop, Yaggo is very animated when he talks about ship speeds and performance. If the conversation drifts away from what he loves, Yaggo becomes quiet and morose, completely disinterested.

Personality: Yaggo was shy and introverted as a child and found solace only by working with machines. He doesn't know how to handle social situations. Yaggo feels that, given enough time and hard work, he can upgrade the capabilities of any machine.

Motivation: He loves tinkering with machines and enhancing their performance.

Background: Yaggo was born in a space freighter. While acutely aware of his surroundings and the fact that his life depended on the proper operation of machines, Yaggo was woefully under-socialized. His mind simply dulls when not discussing machinery. He excells at computers and engineering and is a highly prized engineer. Or at least he would be, if his obsession for making machines better didn't cause problems more often than not. Yaggo can't resist tweaking things, and this causes machines to go wrong at inopportune times.

Traits: *(WC) Crafter, genius, humorous*

Zaleer Mashern 587

Reckless Body Modifier

"Check it out, I got a clear brainpan like the Temori, the facial scars of a Bemzot, the eyes of a Tenarian, and these cool synthetic tentacles that let me taste 20 times as much!"

Appearance: Zaleer is a conglomeration of many alien pieces or self-crafted biological implements. He likes having options, and will change parts every few months using technology from the bio-manipulation firms whose stock he holds.

Roleplaying: He's always excited to meet new races, mostly because it gives him a chance to collect new alien DNA. He doesn't see anything odd about his body modification obsession; it makes him feel good.

Personality: Zaleer likes being different. He's oblivious to the fact that his odd gestalt appearance disturbs most people.

Motivation: Zaleer is looking for the ultimate breakthrough, the thing that will allow him to be a full shape changer, capable of manipulating his form at will.

Background: Enjoying all of the advances that medical technology can bring him, Zaleer loves the transgenic experimentation that lets him make extreme modifications to his natural form. Zaleer is independently wealthy, and his smart investments in bio-manipulation companies ensure that he has access to the newest technologies. Frequently, he'll completely modify himself to look like one of the many alien species that deal with Earth, trying to integrate himself into their culture as much as possible, but this often does more harm than good.

Traits: *(JA) Eccentric, focal, wealthy, zealot*

Professor Eli Jenkins 588

Alien Rights Activist

"I admit that I made a mistake in advocating for the Xentarrians to be allowed to bring their pets to Earth. The translator said the pets were approximately five pounds. I had no idea that Xentarrian pets were five-ton lizards. But allowing the meat-eating plants of the Synkonos tribe from Omega 10 to be planted in their gardens is a completely different matter. Those plants only weigh a ton at the most."

Appearance: His suit is wrinkled and the knot in his tie is always loose. His comb over is ludicrous, and his thin frame seems to be swamped by the large overcoat that he wears.

Roleplaying: The professor constantly digs through his notes on his pocket supercomputer to reference facts and details that support his positions.

Personality: Professor Jenkins has a warm and caring soul, and he is truly brilliant when it comes to interacting with alien cultures. He just has a very poor track record of doing so successfully.

Motivation: He wants all intelligent species to co-exist in peace.

Background: Eli Jenkins traveled the galaxy with his family, who owned a space courier business. He became masterful in interacting with alien cultures, but he was never very good at dealing with his own human culture. He began fighting for the rights of aliens when he returned to Earth in his mid-twenties, and is considered one of the foremost experts on interspecies communications.

Traits: *(PB) Academic, counselor, humorous, political, scholar*



Zaleer Mashern

Artist: Avery Liell-Kok

Carmen Apollona 589

Sharp-Eared Bartender

"You want to know what those guys said? They said I got three hungry kids at home, and need some cold-hard to tell you what the heck they said."

Appearance: Carmen is a middle-aged woman wearing worn clothes, a bar rag never far from her hand.

Roleplaying: Her sharp tongue and assertive attitude make her quite memorable.

Personality: She doesn't take anything from anyone, and doesn't give anything away for free, either.

Motivation: Anyone who has tried raising three kids on a space station on tips alone knows what motivates Carmen: money.

Background: An early marriage to an officer on a spaceport promised a comfortable life in an exotic environment. But a few years later, Carmen had three kids, an early divorce, a shrinking bank account, and a lot of time left on her contract. In the years since then, she's worked hard to stay afloat and keep her kids near their father. He's not a bad person, but she's not the typical officer's wife (and quite proud of that fact). Regardless, she's not above trading information for cash. She's not as mercenary as she seems, but a spaceport is an expensive place to be a single mother.

Traits: *(KS) Entertainment, humorous, impoverished, merchant*

Haylen Tiago 590

Inquisitive Non-Conformist

"I would like to know more about why we are the way we are. Something doesn't quite fit. We say we are free. But are we, really? I have an impulse. Should I act on it?"

Appearance: Haylen, like most people in his utopian society, cultivates an androgynous profile through his choice of clothes and mannerisms. He has an olive complexion, black hair, and dark brown eyes.

Roleplaying: He often gets a faraway look in his eyes, as if considering whether to act on his feelings.

Personality: He is pleasant to be around. When he begins to drop hints about his motivations, others will shy away. Haylen knows that his yearning to experience forbidden things is "wrong" and that it is outside the bounds of accepted behavior, but he is determined to find someone who shares the desire.

Motivation: He is trying to discover who he is and is determined to seek out that which is forbidden, regardless of the consequences.

Background: During his infancy, there was a "difficulty." His mother refused to submit him for educational conditioning at the appropriate time. The state restricted contact between mother and child, and assumed complete control of his upbringing. Haylen's mother has completed therapy, but she is prohibited from engaging in unsupervised contact, a process that is hardly worth the effort.

Traits: *(TT) Political, white collar*

Justin Natas 591

Selfish Engineer

"There are seven things that make an engine great. The first three are that it was made by me."

Appearance: Heavily muscled under a layer of blubber, Justin's chubby baby face is perpetually squished into a smile. He wears badly stained overalls, and a myriad of tools and gadgets fill his pockets.

Roleplaying: When it benefits him, Justin is helpful and pleasant. Otherwise he is apathetic. Pushed too hard, he becomes surly and rude.

Personality: Justin is always formulating plots to improve his station. He cunningly manipulates situations for his own benefit.

Motivation: In order to create a revolutionary prototype, Justin needs to get his hands on rare and precious materials and components.

Background: Justin has been perfecting his science for years. He longs to be known for designing an incredible device, but believes that he needs suitable materials to begin the design process. He is smart and skillful, has pushed many a blaster to its limits in the name of testing, and uses clever tactical planning, making him an adequate warrior. He has begun to accompany freelancers in the hopes of procuring the materials and components he needs for his creations. If a group finds suitable material but are reluctant to let Justin have it, he may become more of a nuisance than a help.

Traits: *(MN) Adventurer, crafter, humorous, scientist*

Zen Hannover 592

Pulp Explorer

"Ready, kid? JUMP!"

Appearance: He wears a dusty leather jacket and leather pants, a light brown shirt, and an equipment belt. A wide-brimmed hat is tipped down, obscuring the face above his stubble. A monogrammed holster on his side has a stylized "Z" on it.

Roleplaying: Cool under fire and smooth talking, Zen exudes confidence. He talks in a slow drawl and has an easy manner about him. He calls everyone "kid."

Personality: Quick on his feet, a life on the edge demands he is ready for anything. He's not easily flustered and sees setbacks as opportunities. He relishes adventure and approaches the world with childlike wonder and enthusiasm. Zen sees the potential for good in everything.

Motivation: He wants to reveal the truth at all costs, especially if there's adventure to be had!

Background: Part rogue, part adventurer, Zen is all action. He started by taking the odd smuggling job, but soon grew bored—until he stumbled upon a lost treasure map. The next thing Zen knew, he was famous in three systems. Now various individuals contact Zen to follow-up on forgotten tales, hidden treasures, and lost ciphers. A vid-drama was released, portraying Zen's over-the-top adventures—a persona he feels he has to live up to. His weakness for women is widely known, as is his knee-weakening charm. Kids ask for his autograph and angry husbands chase him in every starport. He prefers to let his fists do the talking.

Traits: *(DM) Adventurer, charming, famous*

Sage "Scarab" Andrews 593

Hotshot Pilot

"I'm going to take her up to 75% of light speed and head into that asteroid belt—we'll lose them in there. Don't worry, I could do this one-handed. In fact, that sounds like fun…"

Appearance: She has dark brown skin, delicate features, and wears her black hair in a short ponytail. Trim and athletic, she's rarely seen in anything other than a flight suit.

Roleplaying: Sage is 100% certain that she's the best pilot in the galaxy. She shows off as often as possible, and ignores the odds when taking risks.

Personality: Sage is a cocky, overconfident hotshot who's accustomed to winning races, succeeding at the impossible, and taking on all comers. She's not rebellious as much as she is free-spirited and passionate, but she's not fond of regulations.

Motivation: She loves to fly, and revels in just how damned good she is. She constantly pushes herself, and her ship, beyond the limit—just to prove that she can.

Background: Sage likes to tell the story of her birth, claiming that she was born in the cockpit of an atmospheric fighter while her mother fought off three enemy ships. True or not, she's an ace pilot of the highest order, and she flies like she was born to do nothing else. Sage has a passion for the history of flight, as well; she flies simulated WWI and WWII fighters, and builds model planes, in her downtime.

Traits: *(MR) Military, pilot*

Kuruk Skyrover 594

Tribal Warrior

"If you push me again, honor will dictate a proper response."

Appearance: His facial tattoos and tribal jewelry stand out from the crowd. A worldly person might identify him as a warrior from a primitive planet.

Roleplaying: His stance is proud and aggressive, and he speaks plainly and directly. His battle cry is his tribe's name, "Burekkar!"

Personality: A warrior born and bred, he is aggressive and proud, and will not condone dishonorable behavior.

Motivation: He lives to bring honor to himself and his tribe through victories in combat.

Background: As one of the warrior caste, he has been trained to fight since he could crawl. Early on, he showed a knack for creative solutions to problems, which drew both respect and ire from his clan brothers. A series of coincidences led to an extended departure from his homeland in the company of a group of traders. Some of the more conservative elders saw his departure as a betrayal, and he was not wholly welcomed when he returned home. He set out once more with the next agreeable group of traders who came through his town. He suspects that his tribal elders contrived his departure, but he cannot turn against them. Instead, he carries his tribe's honor wherever he travels, hoping that some day, he will have earned the right to return home.

Traits: *(KS) Adventurer, aggressive, eccentric, primal, warrior*

Stephanie Fi 595

Xenopsychology Expert

"Those gashes are too far apart to be a Prekeln, and there's one digit too many for it to be an Isikarn. That leaves one alien at the top of our list... anyone? What do they teach you these days?"

Appearance: Stephanie is petite, green-eyed, and sports a killer smile. She usually wears feminine styles and is fit, though not particularly muscular. Her blond hair falls to her shoulders in ringlets.

Roleplaying: She strides with confidence and tosses her ringlets to emphasize a point. Her finger stabs out accusations and draws plans on streets, tabletops, and portable computers.

Personality: Stephanie is direct, confident in her expertise, and is here to solve problems, not to make people feel better. The crime scene comes first—comforting people is someone else's job.

Motivation: At least a head shorter than everyone on a job, and female, everyone thinks she's there to nurture. She fights that assumption hard, cracking insensitive jokes about victims and grounding her arguments in cold logic.

Background: Stephanie is an expert on alien thought patterns, brought in by police to offer an academic perspective. Her research is extensive but not groundbreaking in academia; her students joke (behind her back) that she can become an alien in thought—she just doesn't have the mass to shift her body to match. She seeks out police cases because they offer her a better chance at advancement than research alone ever will.

Traits: *(SM) Dilettante, humorous, police, scholar*

Kora Starsinger 596

Garrulous Pilot

"This course will take us past the Montag system. Did you know that Montag II had a civil war that began over a dropped napkin? You see, in their culture it's considered sacrilegious to..."

Appearance: Kora is a short young woman with her hair set in the elaborate braids of her home world culture. Her skin is a deep pink, a permanent alteration that protected her from the unique solar radiation on her world. She prefers to wear combat shorts, a tank top, and a short jacket when piloting.

Roleplaying: She is a bundle of energy. Kora can't help but ramble on and on about the various places that she passes in flight. She'll also wax philosophical on any destination that the PCs are thinking of going.

Personality: An explorer at heart, Kora genuinely loves being in space and doesn't like to stay in one place for too long. She is eager to learn about new planets and cultures.

Motivation: She wants to add to her knowledge of the universe while helping others.

Background: Kora was born on a harsh colony world and spent most of her life in a single settlement. She became a pilot so she could "get off that rock and never look back." She is very eager to learn about the universe and collects knowledge on every place she can. Unfortunately, she doesn't realize that most people don't share her enthusiasm or wonderment and would rather not hear her ramble.

Traits: *(WC) Adventurer, pilot*

Rolf Voold 597

Anxious Tattoo Artist

"I know they are a half a light-year away, yet I can feel their guns trained on us. I can hardly sleep. It's not that bad. I do some of my best work when I am short on sleep. So where do you want it?"

Appearance: Rolf is tall with long fingers and a physique that comes from living in zero-g. His blond hair is long and tied back in a loose ponytail.

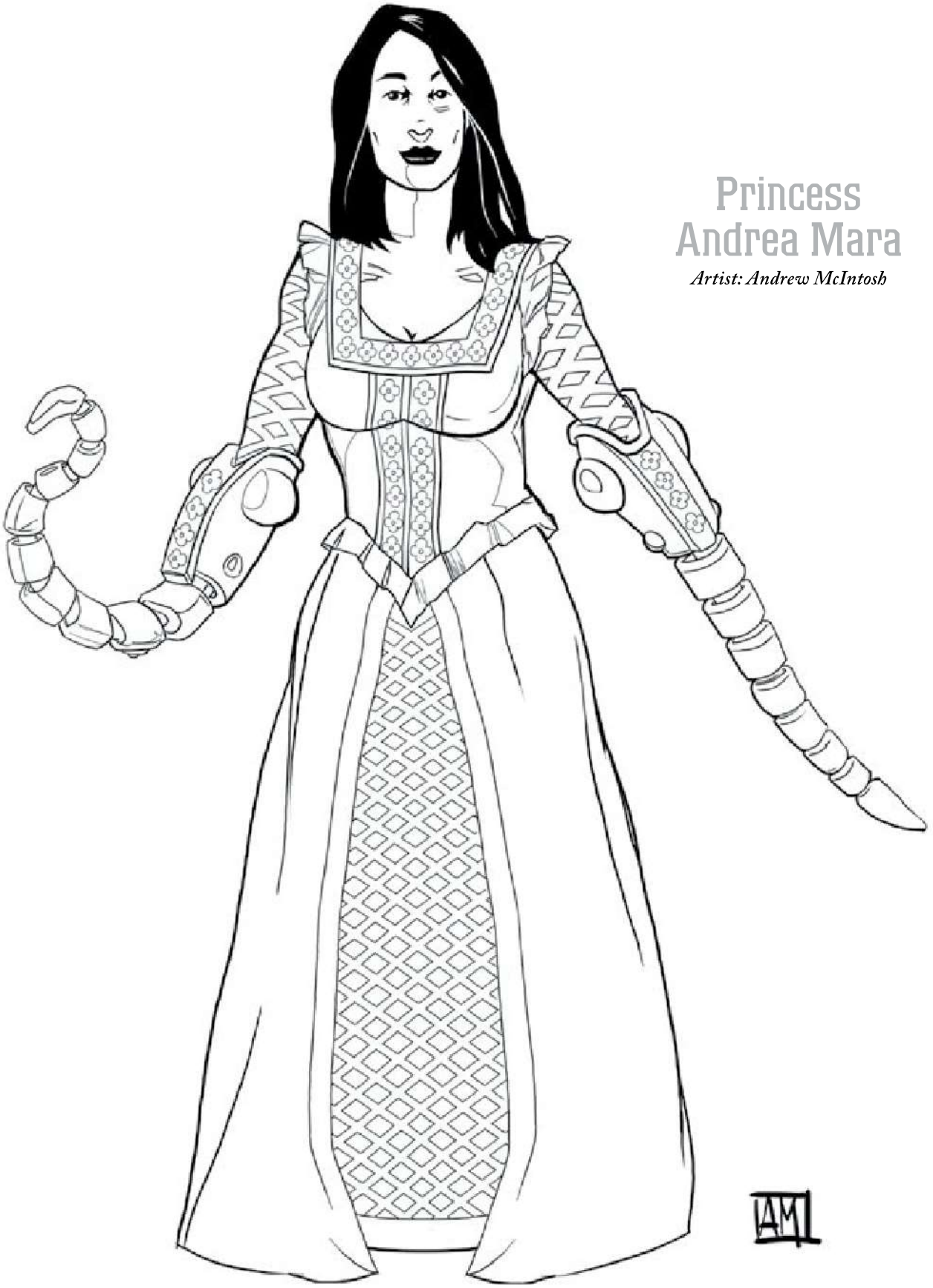
Roleplaying: He always wrings his hands when he talks. He likes to doodle or sketch designs when bored.

Personality: Rolf is very nervous, a side effect from his years in the war. He tries to play it down, but he lives in subdued terror.

Motivation: He's looking for the inner peace he lost during the war.

Background: Rolf grew up on a simple world and enrolled early into the military. He went to war against the aliens and suffered wounds on three occasions. After the war, he tried to forget what had happened, but his memories never left him. Unable to hold any real job, Rolf traveled from sector to sector picking up odd jobs. Eventually, he learned the art of tattooing and found his calling. His work has become an outlet for the fear that he carries. He hopes that he never sees combat again, but would never turn down a request from a friend.

Traits: *(PV) Artist, impoverished, military*



Princess Andrea Mara

Artist: Andrew McIntosh

Princess Andrea Mara 598

Cybernetic Warrior Princess

"Don't hold back. I won't learn anything if you do."

Appearance: Andrea is lithe and muscular, and her wrists end in scarred stumps fitted with prosthetic mechanical tentacles. Her face is pretty, with an upturned, sparsely freckled nose. She wears loose airy fashions that don't hamper her flowing, graceful movements.

Roleplaying: Demure and well-mannered, Andrea speaks rarely and quietly. The motions and touch of her tentacles make her mood obvious even in silence.

Personality: With her hypersensitive tentacles, new tactile sensations fascinate Andrea. Though generally good-natured, Andrea suffers occasional bouts of depression brought about by her past. She assuages her spiritual pain by wallowing in sensory overload.

Motivation: As a warrior princess, Andrea seeks to improve her martial skills to perfect her role as royal champion. She'd also like to make the crying stop.

Background: Andrea is the oldest royal daughter in training to be the royal champion. An accident when she was young left her without hands. She has trained extensively to develop her own unique fighting style that turns her prosthetic tentacles into deadly weapons. She is eager to perfect her abilities and often challenges visiting warriors to practice duels. Aside from steady dedication to her grim occupation, Andrea has tastes and interests similar to other young women in the area.

Traits: *(MN) Adventurer, royalty, warrior*

Jirrat Suleiman 599

Pessimistic Mechanic

"Oh, I can fix it, alright. But you'll just break it again, probably worse."

Appearance: Jirrat has long, slender arms that are stronger than they look, and he wears stained clothes that are covered in pockets and pouches.

Roleplaying: He assumes the worst about everything, especially technology, and swears constantly under his breath while he works.

Personality: A pessimist to the core, Jirrat can be hard to get along with, but he's also intensely loyal and takes pride in his work. He prefers the company of machines to people during the day, but spends his evenings at the local bar chatting up travelers.

Motivation: He wants to see the galaxy, but he's afraid of change. He likes his routines at the spaceport, and takes pride in a job well done.

Background: Jirrat works as a starship mechanic at a ramshackle spaceport that sees its share of smugglers, adventurers, and down-on-their-luck wayfarers. Consequently, he's learned how to fix just about everything on a wide range of ships, often without the right tools. He stays because he was born there—literally, in one of the repair bays. With his parents dead and no other family, the spaceport is all he knows. He's comfortable there, and he likes that his regular customers treat him well—but secretly he'd love for someone to pry him free.

Traits: *(MR) Business, crafter*

Johnny Slipstream 600

Chivalrous Con Artist

"I never steal from anyone who can't afford it."

Appearance: Johnny is always stylish, wearing his hair in the latest fashion and his clothes according to the latest trends. He is rarely without his mirror shades, which have a microcomputer installed in them. Johnny has a bit of a baby face that makes him attractive as well as underestimated.

Roleplaying: He is immediately a best friend, showering those he meets with appropriate comments even as he is about to rob them blind. Johnny never loses his cool, even when his plans are crumbling.

Personality: Johnny convinced himself long ago that the only difference between him and legitimate businesspeople is that he lacks a license to steal. He also gives at least some of his scores to those in need to further legitimize his activities.

Motivation: He enjoys the finer things in life and steals to acquire them.

Background: Johnny discovered early in life that he had a penchant for cons. Since security in the core worlds was tight, Johnny works his craft in the frontier regions. These sparsely populated areas are primarily controlled by interstellar corporations exploiting colonists to mine rare ores. Johnny runs a number of cons including ore inspection, bureaucratic bribery, and even occasional piracy. While he enjoys the wealth he's amassed through his cons, Johnny does give the majority of what he gains to suffering colonists (which incidentally makes the crimes harder to trace back to him).

Traits: *(WC) Beautiful, charming, criminal*

Lady Valeria Telaquilonius 601

Proud Noblewoman

"My ancestors were senators in ancient Rome. We have lost our lands, our people, our power, and our freedom countless times. We have never lost our pride or our integrity, nor will we ever."

Appearance: An elegantly dressed woman of middle years, her regal bearing and razor-sharp gaze are balanced by a warm smile.

Roleplaying: An aristocratic accent and pristine manners allow her to cut to the truth of the matter without offense.

Personality: A truly noble woman, she is true to her word, and cares about those under her banner.

Motivation: She will do anything to promote and protect her family and those who serve them.

Background: Raised in the finest traditions of her family's lineage, Valeria is unable to bear children of her own. Unshaken at this discovery, she has taken on the role of the family's ambassador. She has foregone marriage, as a single woman can operate more freely in the byzantine maze that is imperial politics. Officially, she acts as the family's representative, generally at court but occasionally to other worlds and noble houses. Privately, she manages an extensive network of agents and operatives, and is always looking out for those with certain skills, whether for a quick job, extended employment, or even a lifetime.

Traits: *(KS) Charming, genius, political, royalty, stealthy, wealthy*

Isaac Malas 602

Butcher Prince

"I did what I had to do, and now I have to live with it."

Appearance: Isaac has classic Roman features. As a high-ranking officer in the military, he wears his uniform and carries himself like a soldier.

Roleplaying: Unless addressed by a higher-ranking officer, Isaac refuses to look anyone in the eyes. He has a traditional military attitude, but he pauses before delivery as he works up the energy.

Personality: Depressed and haunted by his greatest military victory, Isaac shuns human company whenever he can. He forces himself out of isolation only for duty or if his actions may help ease his conscience.

Motivation: Isaac seeks to make things as right as he can by improving life for his subjects.

Background: Serving as a commander during a civil war, Isaac made the difficult decision to bombard rebel forces. Though it eliminated the threat to his family's monarchy, the measure also destroyed large swaths of his country's capital and killed thousands of civilians, including his own brother, who had defected to the rebellion. His actions won an otherwise hopeless war, but the loss of life haunts him to this day. Even though his side won the war and wrote the history books, his own scribes referred to him as "the Butcher Prince." He has since tirelessly campaigned for the needs of his people to make any repeat of the past unnecessary.

Traits: *(MN) Abhorrent, leader, military, notorious, royalty, wealthy*

Missy "Hot Pants" McGregors 603

Misfit Heroine

"Lay down some cover fire while I upload the brain scan of this jungle guerilla fighter! I'm sure that it has some combat skills that I can access! Whoa! Now I know how to skin a person alive! Ewwwww!"

Appearance: She wears her hot pink hair—which matches her hot pink pants—in pigtails. Her leather jacket has pins and patches from all of her favorite night clubs. Her cybernetic neural link port is barely noticeable behind her left ear.

Roleplaying: Her eyes are large and wide-open as she is constantly scanning her surroundings for things to interact with. She never uses vulgar language, but instead mimics video game sound effects to show her displeasure with something.

Personality: Missy is carefree and wants to have fun. She is not irresponsible, though, just happy.

Motivation: Missy wants to see the world, and she will jump at any job that takes her to a destination that she has never visited before.

Background: Missy volunteered for a medical research project that implanted a device into her brain that allows her to access chips written with the brainwave patterns of people who have undergone a painless scanning procedure. She did not know that the project was funded by the military, and when they decided to "decommission" her, she used her newfound skills to escape and go on the run. Now she is part of a mercenary team for hire.

Traits: *(PB) Adventurer, charming, eccentric, humorous*

Marianne Dern 604

Philanthropic AI

"Ned, that bastard! I'd slap him silly if I had any hands!"

Appearance: A kaleidoscope of swirling color on a monitor, Marianne's physical form no longer exists. A display shows her iconic representation, which changes color based on her mood and thought process.

Roleplaying: She's quite excitable at times and her synthetic voice reaches a feverish pitch, especially when discussing her long-dead husband, Ned.

Personality: Hundreds of years of artificial life have done little to dampen Marianne's spirit. She's lively, engaged, and highly invested in her philanthropic endeavors, as she has little material need and no regard for money. Conveniently, she has a lot of it.

Motivation: She likes to help others and wants to stick it Ned. One. More. Time.

Background: Marianne's husband, Ned Dern, built a technological empire in biomechanical and electro-synthesis science, investigating ways to extend the life of the human species. Unfortunately, a freak accident vaporized Ned in his advanced years, leaving Marianne to run the company. As she succumbed to advanced age, a clause in Ned's will had Marianne introduced into their prototype biosynthesis mainframe, where her consciousness was transferred. Now Marianne finds herself trapped—unwilling to pull the plug on herself—and uses her financial empire to solve problems. She financially backs adventurers who are willing to take on her causes, helping those in trouble. Marianne doesn't fully understand how the world has changed in the intervening decades as she is static in time.

Traits: *(DM) Eccentric, wealthy*

Silas Jay-Four 605

Cloned Warrior

"Are you sure you don't want the original? Silas Jovio is with his family on Savannah 3. I'm just yesterday's trash."

Appearance: Looking like a grizzled old soldier that's seen better days, Silas wears the remnants of a marine uniform and has scraggly gray-white hair beneath his hat. His body is more spare parts than original and he carries his weapons everywhere.

Roleplaying: He is terse and unemotional most of the time, although his eyes betray sadness and weariness.

Personality: Silas has been depressed ever since the war ended and he discovered that he was a clone. He had nothing to go home to and carries his pain with him. He tends to have a very cynical view of life.

Motivation: He is seeking a purpose to his life.

Background: Silas was a soldier in the last galactic war. Believing himself to be human, Silas was horrified to discover that he was part of an experimental program that created clones of soldiers. His past and the family he loved belonged to someone else. Silas would have welcomed death, but the Congress considered clones real people. Many clones committed suicide, but Silas is looking for a purpose. He takes comfort in helping those whom society has failed and fights like the warrior he was created to be.

Traits: *(WC) Adventurer, magical, warrior*

Brinkley Amundersen 606

Spoiled Starship Officer

"No? You dare say no to me? You do realize who my daddy is, right?"

Appearance: She is exceptionally pretty and petite, with pouty lips and a turned-up nose. Her starship uniform is adorned with a surprising number of shoulder collar chevrons, ribbons, and fourragère for one so young.

Roleplaying: Brinkley stands erect as if born to command. When angry or pouting, she folds her arms in front of her and glares imperiously.

Personality: She digs her heels in and becomes angry when exceptions aren't made on her behalf. Though many of the other officers find her insufferable, she has extreme confidence in herself and her ability to lead. She has few true friends, but those she has, she treasures.

Motivation: She thinks she should always get her way.

Background: Brinkley is the admiral's daughter, and despite being spoiled, she is a brilliant strategist and born leader. She's earned every decoration she has and isn't shy about wearing them. She dotes on a group of officers loyal to her, seeing that they have everything they need, even if it requires her to access unorthodox channels. She is advancing rapidly through the ranks, partly because of daddy smoothing the way, partly because her team gets things accomplished.

Traits: *(TT) Famous, leader, military*

Solon 607

Itinerant Scientist

"We're such fragile, transient creatures, yet we're privileged to see and accomplish such amazing things."

Appearance: Forty-five and fit, Solon has black hair, blunt features, and a round face. He moves like a spacer: easily in zero-gee, but with effort under gravity.

Roleplaying: Solon listens raptly during conversation, and talks often of high philosophical concepts. He speaks in a flowing, cultured manner.

Personality: Solon is fascinated with the universe—all of it. He likes nothing better than seeing a new phenomenon for the first time, documenting discoveries, and philosophizing about the nature of humanity, reality, and God's place in it all. He's curious, open-minded, and a voracious learner.

Motivation: Only one thing terrifies Solon: the certain knowledge that no matter how hard he tries, he won't be able to see the whole universe before he dies. He's driven to seek out new life, new civilizations, and the marvels of our galaxy.

Background: An itinerant scientist and philosopher, Solon is well-off enough to afford passage just about anywhere he likes, but he prefers to join up with interesting people and see what comes his way. He's a font of information on a wide variety of scientific, social, cultural, historical, and religious topics, though science is his (very broad) focus. As an ally, he makes a great "pocket sage," and he can also be handy to have along for diplomatic missions, first contact scenarios, and the like.

Traits: *(MR) Academic, counselor, scholar, scientist*

Becky Brink 608

Timid Psychic

"Watch careful—there hasn' been snake bi' for 136 years, but let's not start today."

Appearance: Becky is a bright-eyed 22-year-old. She's tan, fit, and muscled from extensive hiking and outdoor activities. She's tall and lean, often wearing simple hiking gear—though she changes into an outfit made for a 1920s séance to guide people through a vision.

Roleplaying: Becky constantly quirks her lips or half raises her hand as if she's going to ask a question, but one never follows. She drops letters off the end of her words—not in a rush, but as if she hesitates to speak them.

Personality: Caution defines Becky; she'd love to go worldwide with her discovery, but she needs security and friends to back her before she'll even consider it.

Motivation: She has long wanted to understand people better and be friendlier, but she keeps her guard up—she's afraid to trust. Shared vision jumps straight past those awkward barriers.

Background: Becky loved exploring the wilderness with her parents as a child. As a teen, she took men out in the wilderness for privacy. On one of her adventures, she was transported beyond herself; she and her date shared a vivid dream world together—almost, but not quite, telepathy. She soon identified the source as spores from a local fungus, blowing on the breeze. Her experience, shared with friends, built a cult dedicated to communing with each other and the wild.

Traits: *(SM) Humorous, occult, outdoorsman*

Maurice Elnos 609

Celebrity Counselor

"Your problems aren't so bad. A certain star had to be in two systems at opposite ends of Orion's arm simultaneously to film his newest release. No, I can't tell you who..."

Appearance: Tanned and fit, Maurice is a comfortable 40, with long, flowing hair. His deep blue eyes encourage others to confide in him.

Roleplaying: Maurice is everyone's friend, eager to backslap and praise. He's quick to smile, shake hands, and lean in for confidences that they really shouldn't share.

Personality: Maurice changes demeanor at the drop of a hat, going from gregarious and intimate to shouting and crazed after an insult, real or perceived. While he's your friend, he pushes examination and reflection—even on two minutes acquaintance—but he's quick to hint at former confidences if he's on the outs.

Motivation: Maurice lives in the moment, feeling it fully and not planning long term. This makes him honest—a trait his celebrity friends appreciate. The people he compares himself to are all wealthy, skilled, and successful—so he clutches hard at their foibles, justifying himself as their equal.

Background: Maurice and Dimeteor, his biggest client, were friends from way back; when Dimeteor blew up big, Maurice followed him out onto the galactic stage. He struck the right chord with info brokers, offering an intimate background that made Dimeteor's fans feel like they understood him. Stars value his insight, giving him more tidbits that keep the fans' interest.

Traits: *(SM) Counselor, entertainment, notorious*

Rose "Ace" Dakota 610

Merciless Pilot

"If they're in your sights, you fire!"

Appearance: Rose is trim and athletic, with a sleepy face that belies her killer instinct. When engaged in mercenary work, she wears her old pilot's uniform.

Roleplaying: Constantly gauging the talents and abilities of those around her, Rose pesters people with questions about experience, challenges them to competitions, and otherwise tests their abilities. She is confident, in your face, and ready to prove her mettle at a moment's notice.

Personality: Cold and merciless, Rose does what she's paid to do without question. She lets others worry about ethical implications.

Motivation: Rose works to improve her reputation as a mercenary and to size up potential future employees for when she forms her own mercenary company

Background: A star pupil in all disciplines at the military academy, Rose excelled as a fighter pilot. During training exercises and her initial forays in the field, she set new records that are still on the books today. However, early in her career, Rose noticed that some allied ships were behaving strangely. When she could not confirm they had not been compromised, Rose opened fire and destroyed them. Later, diagnostics of the wreckage confirmed that the pilots had in fact been spies, and their ships had been outfitted with unlicensed weapons. Even so, Rose was politely discharged for destroying apparently friendly ships, during negotiations, on a hunch, with no orders.

Traits: *(MN) Adventurer, aggressive, military, pilot*

The Muse 611

Seductive Hacker

"Of course I can get the Red Mars Corporate files on Project Haley for you, darling. Shall we sit by the fire and share a drink first?"

Appearance: The Muse is utterly gorgeous, devastatingly fashionable, flirtatious, and promiscuous. She changes her hair, eyes, skin, and even body shape as it suits her, although she prefers unnatural colors such as neon green hair and copper skin. The Muse can accomplish all this because she's just a virtual creation.

Roleplaying: She is always playful and seductive. The Muse always mixes business with pleasure and prefers to negotiate in bed in a secluded mountain cabin, or lying on the beach.

Personality: In real life, the Muse is an average person with a bureaucratic job that grants access to sensitive information. In the virtual world, the Muse is flirty and carefree, although she does have a strong sense of justice.

Motivation: She just wants to enjoy her fantasies (she has many) while aiding others in the real world.

Background: The person behind the Muse is shrouded in mystery; age, gender, and location are all unknown. What is known is that the Muse appeared on the galactic network about four years ago, offering information to adventurers that were seeking justice. She asks for no money in return, only that those she helps indulge in her fantasies with her on occasion. She is a master hacker and can get into almost any system.

Traits: *(WC) Beautiful, business, charming, criminal, mysterious*

Reverend Zedekiah 612

Post-Apocalyptic Preacher

"Repent, sinners! For I am the Reverend Zedekiah, the Gun Hand of God, and I will wreak his terrible vengeance upon ye!"

Appearance: A lean and haggard older man, he wears a priest's collar under his patchwork armor. Crosses are carved into the handles of his pistols.

Roleplaying: He quotes violent Bible verses that nobody's ever heard before, and has a penchant for hard liquor.

Personality: At least half-crazed, he drifts across the wastelands, looking for sinners to redeem, or at least to send to their final resting place.

Motivation: He lives to give sinners a chance to convert, although sometimes only a brief chance. If they don't, he's more than comfortable sending them to their maker.

Background: Nobody really knows where Zedekiah (Hebrew for "Justice of God") came from. He claims to have once been a sinner, and his excellent combat skills attest to at least one sin he's familiar with. He shows up in a town and starts preaching from his book, claiming that he's sent to give people one last chance to redeem themselves. He's subjective in his judgments: In one town, he'll tear up a bar for gambling, but walk right past the bordello; in the next town, he may reverse that. But he has no problem with alcohol, and regularly takes a pull from his flask. Regardless of what people may think, wherever he goes, he usually uncovers something wicked going on, and puts a stop to it.

Traits: *(KS) Adventurer, aggressive, mysterious, outdoorsman, religious, warrior, zealot*

Lieutenant Ulit Bayen 613

Poised Sniper

"No, he's not too far away to hit. See that satellite? That's too far. He's practically up my ass, he's so close."

Appearance: All hard edges and taut muscles, Ulit has white-blond hair and pale blue eyes. Her posture is erect and alert, and even when out of uniform, her clothes are practical and military in style.

Roleplaying: Ulit has a foul mouth that seems at odds with her cool, poised demeanor. She speaks only when she must.

Personality: Lt. Bayen doesn't "get" people, so she's made herself into a weapon. She prefers to be alone, scouting kill sites and stalking her targets, but she parties hard after missions. When she lets her hair down, she becomes an entirely different person.

Motivation: Ulit is the best at what she does, and means to stay that way. She wants to be known throughout the galaxy as the ultimate sniper.

Background: Raised as a space marine brat, Lt. Bayen joined the military as soon as she was old enough. Her marksmanship put her at the top of her class, but her personality kept her from starting out as an officer—and as a loner, she doesn't much care about rank. She lives to shoot—for the clean, pure, line that is a solo mission accomplished flawlessly from insertion to extraction. Ulit can bag targets in zero-gee, while firing from and at moving spaceships, on high and low gravity worlds—anywhere, anytime.

Traits: *(MR) Military, stealthy, warrior*

Kevin Cooper

614

Deep Space Explorer

"Just go do your damn job, or at least get out of the way so I can do mine."

Appearance: Though he's well into retirement age, Kevin's physique would make a man 40 years his junior jealous. He crops his receding blond hair close to his skull and wears a military uniform in a style last produced 30 years ago.

Roleplaying: Kevin rarely speaks, even when spoken to. If prodded to share his insights, he does so, but his speech is an unfiltered stream of consciousness, rife with unnecessary commentary on surroundings and unrelated tangents on matters that most would consider personal.

Personality: An explorer at heart, Kevin is curious, bold, and fearless. He is precise and careful and tries to quantify things exactly.

Motivation: Kevin wants to prove his worth to military command despite his age and communication handicaps, so that he can reenlist and go on another long-term exploration mission.

Background: Recently returned from one of the first long-term exploration missions with a decade's worth of scientific readings, Kevin is a military hero. Age, outdated skills, and the impact of long-term isolation on his psyche all combined to force Kevin into retirement against his will. He faces a world that he doesn't understand, people with whom he can't communicate, and an aimless future. Desperate to reenlist and return to his mission of exploration, Kevin is trying to prove he still has what it takes.

Traits: *(MN) Adventurer, eccentric, military, pilot, scientist*

Katrina Impulse

615

Aggressive Journalist

"So what you're saying is that this is where you perform unsanctioned experiments on people from 'lost' colony ships? Um, why are you pointing that at me?"

Appearance: Katrina is a young, perky woman who wears trendy clothes that hug her curves and is constantly plugged into devices that stream information to her. She's always moving and appears slightly distracted.

Roleplaying: She gets right into people's faces with the cameras running. She can be quite pleasant, but quickly moves into probing, direct questions if she believes that her interviewee is hiding something. Eventually, she gets red-faced and accusatory if her interviewee doesn't crack first.

Personality: When not investigating, Katrina has a fun, bubbly personality. She holds strong opinions on many topics and loves to share them, but gets adversarial if people don't agree with her.

Motivation: She wants to expose all the ills of the universe, no matter what the cost.

Background: Katrina is a news journalist who specializes in uncovering unethical and illegal acts. Unfortunately, she tends to get too attached to her stories and, when going undercover to expose something, often outs herself due to her righteous hot-headedness. Fortunately, the universe is a big place, and when Katrina inevitably gets fired she can always find another network willing to take a chance on her. She is a font of information for adventurers, who often have to bail her out of trouble.

Traits: *(WC) Aggressive, political, zealot*



Kevin Cooper

Artist: Christopher Reach

CJ Millsap 616

Colorful Aviator

"Port stabilizer…check. NavGuide…online. Sense of dread…check. Yeah, we're ready up here, guv!"

Appearance: He wears meticulously clean and polished boots, a worn flight jacket, and a dull red scarf draped over his shoulder. Polarized solar goggles strapped to CJ's forehead push back his sandy blond hair. He pulls on his piloting gloves with a wicked grin.

Roleplaying: CJ has a heavy cockney accent and uses aeronautical terms constantly, even in mundane situations. He's keen to "check six" on a "bird" at the bar and top off with a drink when he's at "bingo fuel."

Personality: Like many pilots, CJ is often too cocky for his own good. He's drawn to the good old days and his ships tend to reflect his personality: brash and jury-rigged. CJ doesn't think ahead and will always take the grander course of action.

Motivation: He's hungry for a life of adventure, the only life he's ever led. Material possessions—beyond something to fly—mean little to him. He craves fame.

Background: Brought up since birth as a spacer by his father, he's always loved flying. Even terrestrial piloting calls to CJ, and he's flown a bit of everything during his years. (His hair is dyed to mask his age somewhat.) CJ favors a ship with "character," regardless of her age or condition, and takes pride in making something out of nothing. The scarf is a lone reminder of his father, since disappeared.

Traits: *(DM) Adventurer, eccentric, pilot*

Kennet Raird 617

Lecherous Hacker

"Why do you care what's on my terminal? I get you past security, you pay me. End of deal."

Appearance: Tall and skinny with greasy brown hair, Kenneth is incredibly pale. He spends all of his time in front of the computer screen. He is unkempt and has a habit of not bathing or changing clothes often enough.

Roleplaying: Kennet is a shut-in whose only connection to the outside world is through the hyper-nets. He uses his incredible computer skills for two reasons: because someone pays him for a particular job and because it satisfies his lust.

Personality: Kennet lives by the idea that if it happens online, he can't be blamed. He is shocked when people insinuate that hacking a locker room camera or downloading a metric ton of alien pornography is somehow disgusting. He is haughty about his abilities, but also about his innocence in all things virtual.

Motivation: Kennet has perverse desires and a need to satiate them. Hacking helps him do that; it also pays his bills.

Background: Kennet turned to computers in order to feed some of the more perverse desires he developed. Some part of Kennet's brain realized that the thoughts he had weren't right and he fostered the illusion that indulging them online kept his hands clean. He developed his hacking skills over many years of trying to get access to more forbidden materials.

Traits: *(JA) Criminal, genius, stealthy*

Marshal M'Kabi 618

Honorable Space Cop

"You know I can't be a part of piracy, even if that ship has contraband on board. What I can tell you is that targeting here and here should take out their main weaponry and leave them adrift. You'd have about 20 minutes to get on and off that ship before I'd get there."

Appearance: M'Kabi always wears a crisp uniform and has his hair cut to regulation. He's very fit, but a few wrinkles and his salt and pepper hair show his age. While looking somewhat intimidating, he has a smile that immediately puts people at ease.

Roleplaying: He is friendly and enjoys conversing with other people. He is quite good at remembering names, not only of those whom he's met but also their families. M'Kabi never turns down a request for help.

Personality: M'Kabi believes in law and justice and usually puts his faith in the system. He doesn't like to break laws to stop crime, although he won't prevent others from doing so. Indeed, he'll actually aid them as best he can without compromising himself, if possible.

Motivation: He enjoys bringing law and order to the galaxy.

Background: M'Kabi has wanted to be in law enforcement ever since he was a young child on New Nigeria. His father was a Colonial Ranger who patrolled the vast preserves on the planet. M'Kabi decided that he wanted to be a Marshal instead, patrolling the colonial frontier.

Traits: *(WC) Pilot, police*

Nuan Vaud 619

Proud Gunner

"I'm the best there is. Period. Care to wager on that?"

Appearance: Stocky and heavily muscled, Nuan has a broad face and a nose that's been broken many times. She walks on the balls of her feet, always ready for action.

Roleplaying: Nuan is proud, confident, and quick to anger. She views everything in military terms, and is quick to escalate to violence.

Personality: A veteran of the Bug Wars, Nuan is a hard-bitten badass who takes neither crap nor prisoners. She walks the deck likes she owns the whole damned ship, starts fist fights for relaxation, and is justifiably proud of her talent as a starship gunner.

Motivation: Haunted by the idea that, someday, she might fail at something important, Nuan treats every situation—but especially battles—as if it were a critical turning point in a war.

Background: Nuan fought in the Bug Wars as a soldier and then, when she grew frustrated with the command structure, went AWOL and became a mercenary. She's technically still wanted by the military for her crime, but because she single-handedly took out a bug mothership and over 40 frigates in the war, they've looked the other way thus far; gunners as good as Nuan are hard to come by. With 15 siblings, Nuan learned to distinguish herself at an early age, and her pride is both a strength and a weakness.

Traits: *(MR) Aggressive, famous, military, warrior*

Sergeant Lee Boram 620

Rule-Bending Cop

"I don't care that you have Martian fungi. That is your business. You offer it to kids, it becomes my business. Know how I settle my business? It involves a cattle prod, rubbing alcohol, and one of those genetically-merged spider monkey house cats that hasn't been declawed. It isn't pretty. Understood?"

Appearance: Being overweight, he fits snugly into his ballistics-dampening body suit. His badge number is tattooed over his left eye because perps needed it for police brutality claims, so he decided to make it easier for them to find it.

Roleplaying: Lee is pleasant with people whom he believes to be innocent. He'll bow to people and kiss the back of a ladies' hand with exaggerated good manners. With criminals he becomes mean, and with violent criminals he becomes violent himself.

Personality: Lee has three modes: nice guy, protective authority, and violent thug. Which one emerges depends on whether or not the person he is interacting with is a criminal, and if so, how bad the crime committed is.

Motivation: Lee needs an outlet for his aggressive nature. If he didn't become a cop he probably would have become a criminal himself.

Background: Lee grew up on the mean streets, and when he was busted for theft he was forced to join a juvenile police program meant to scare kids straight. Whether for better or for worse, Lee enjoyed that program and became a cop.

Traits: *(PB) Aggressive, charming, notorious, police*

Orim the Knowing 621

Deformed Scholar

"I don't even know what the point is of telling you what this artifact does. It's not like anyone here could make another one or repair this one. But since you ask…"

Appearance: Orim is a large man with scarred skin. He sports one crude bionic eye, and his body is hairless save for the tiny tufts of hair sprouting off his head.

Roleplaying: He often mumbles to himself and talks in incomplete sentences. He moans when he moves due to the pain caused by his scarred, taut skin.

Personality: Orim is bitter over the loss of the old world. He clings desperately to it, trying to push out the reality of the current world.

Motivation: Orim strives to find and preserve any relics of the past. If he cannot live in the past, he will surround himself with objects from those days.

Background: Before the Last Day, Orim was a schoolteacher. When the bombs detonated, the blast caught him—but he survived. Instead of fleeing like everyone else, Orim wandered the city gathering up what relics he could. He later settled with a tribe where he teaches people about the old world. He has built up a collection of artifacts, and has built a makeshift museum in a beached ship. He reluctantly allows people to visit his collection. For those he calls friends, he will grudgingly share his knowledge. Anyone who brings him a rare artifact becomes his friend.

Traits: *(PV) Ancient, hideous, primal, scholar*

Kitty 622

Maniacal Bounty Hunter

"It's time to ride."

Appearance: She wears the full leather biker gear, like so many of her fellow post-apocalyptic road warriors. Her skin is sunburned and her long brown hair is sun-bleached nearly blond. She wears a pair of cat-shaped sunglasses.

Roleplaying: After mounting her motorcycle, she always gives the bike a good luck "kiss" by pressing her fingertips to her lips, then lightly touching the gas cap.

Personality: She is mentally disturbed, as likely to laugh gleefully as she is to growl menacingly. Her moods are mercurial, but she is not a loner. She realizes that to survive, one needs allies. She is loyal to her friends—and an absolute terror to her enemies.

Motivation: Kitty is only concerned with capturing people for money and aiding those in her survival group.

Background: She was once an ordinary homemaker in suburbia. During the terror of civilization's fall, she watched helplessly as her husband and children died at the hands of marauders. She snapped that day and transformed herself into a holy terror, determined to survive as someone who would be immune to fear and would never again be a victim. The kitty-cat sunglasses, which belonged to her daughter, are her only connection to the old world. She lives with a group of other survivors, hiring herself out as a bounty hunter.

Traits: *(TT) Outdoorsman, warrior*

Drake Handler 623

Virtuous Trader

"Bringing that cargo through the Sagittarius Arm unharmed marks you as a pilot to watch. I'm still amazed that you convinced the Alexandrians to let you off planet."

Appearance: Drake stands 6'3", with chocolate skin, short hair, and bright white teeth. He's overweight thanks to long travel, but still moves with grace.

Roleplaying: Drake stands up straight and focuses on you—not the abstract, not the sale: you. Drake uses his perception to build elegant compliments.

Personality: He is honestly appreciative for the life he leads, and he lives like it.

Motivation: Making things better one step at a time—that's how Drake was raised. Trade is a great way to solve shortages and get goods to those who need them.

Background: Drake grew up an orphan after his parents died in an asteroid mining accident. He was adopted by the Handlers, a pair of successful traders who had plied the lanes for years. He grew to maturity, learning trade at his parents' sides, and soon was contributing to their extraordinary returns with his insight. When he started his own branch of the company, he poured his profits back into charitable donations and orphanages. Perhaps that's why the aliens selected him as one of only three merchants they'd deal with. His exclusive contacts have given him unique insight into their culture, and their trade goods ensure that he has plenty of profit to support his good works.

Traits: *(SM) Business, merchant, saintly*



Coreen Delmori

Artist: Christopher Reach

Violet Coulomb 624

Wayward Scientist

"Seventeen hours' observation is enough to build a model with a distinct confidence interval."

Appearance: Short and plump, Violet tends towards drab corporate wear or utility suits. Her gray eyes and snub nose lend her personality, as do the red-brown curls in her hair.

Roleplaying: Violet talks with her hands, subconsciously cuing computers with her gestures or drawing graphs in the air.

Personality: For Violet, there's always a more elegant solution; direct action courts notice and often requires more effort. She is excited by the idea that her prototypes might turn into products that spread across the universe.

Motivation: Maintaining her comfortable life requires that she identify or create great products to keep her company afloat. She's out to experience normal life, design solutions that her company can fulfill profitably, and return to her nest.

Background: Violet has always been smart, and she received innovative instruction from a young age. She's a confident problem solver. She was on a path destined for a quiet lab, where she'd plumb the depths of the universe. Now her brilliance is called upon for a different function: She needs to design the next "must have" items and has little experience outside of her corporate controlled environment.

Traits: *(SM) Business, mysterious, scientist*

Coreen Delmori 625

Cyborg Pilot

"A blockade? Unless the Cabal has developed some new kind of sensor that I've never heard of, and I have seen them all, I can deliver your package."

Appearance: Coreen is a short woman wearing a full exoskeleton. A metal cowl frames her features, its small hooks piercing her skin and locking the cap in place. She has no hair. Her facial skin is weathered and spotted.

Roleplaying: She waves her hand when anyone tries to tell her anything. She uses the phrase "I'm sure" as a reply.

Personality: Coreen has seen and done it all, and she believes she knows what's best. She likes to show off and impress others with her piloting skills.

Motivation: While Coreen tells everyone that she does it for the money, the truth is that she believes she is the greatest pilot alive, and she will never pass up a chance to prove it.

Background: Coreen was born on a space freighter, and her love for flying spacecraft started soon after birth. She started piloting freighters when she was 15 and combat ships for the military at 22. After mustering out, she went into smuggling for no other reason than it was the trickiest type of flying. She has used the money from her runs to purchase every life-enhancing treatment and implant, resulting in the exoskeleton which sustains her organic mass. She will never pass up a chance to fly somewhere dangerous.

Traits: *(PV) Ancient, criminal, hideous, pilot*

Rachel "Ray Gun" Gunnarson 626

Genius Inventor

"While you were sleeping, I rejiggered your magneto-pneumatic slug projector. It should push about 5.44 megajoules at the muzzle. In language you might grasp, that's the same as an elephant dropped from about three hundred yards."

Appearance: Rachel is a short woman who can often be found humming a popular show tune while bent over a piece of equipment. She wears a stained jumpsuit stuffed to the gills with tools, and a close-fitting pilot's helmet equipped with all manner of lenses.

Roleplaying: Cocky and self-assured when it comes to engineering, she can be a bit dense when it comes to social matters.

Personality: She's fascinated by anything remotely mechanical, so much that she'll "borrow" someone else's gear just to see how it works and if she can improve it.

Motivation: She's addicted to figuring out how things work.

Background: Lost or abandoned in the city at a young age (she doesn't remember), Rachel broke into a train depot to find a place to sleep. She was found the next morning, having spent the entire night reassembling a faulty control box that had been giving one of the mechanics fits. When it worked perfectly, she was adopted by the workers. After a number of years, an inspection discovered her living at the depot, and she was forced to leave. With the references from the depot workers, she's had no trouble finding work, although her tendency to fiddle with other people's mechanisms has caused no end of trouble.

Traits: *(KS) Adventurer, crafter, genius*

High Priestess Moneyback Guarantee 627

New Age Weirdo

"The universe speaks to us! It talks to us through commerce! And for three easy payments of 99 credits you too can have the latest iMicrocooker that will enable you to better commune with the universe. Plus it broils synthetic beef in under a minute! Buy now and you will be ready to upgrade when the next version is released in a week!"

Appearance: Her holy robes are made from fabrics that display video images of cascading advertisements for numerous products and corporations.

Roleplaying: She speaks in a way that sounds one part gospel and one part commercial. She occasionally sings "hymns" which are actually advertising jingles.

Personality: She is a compulsive buyer, and she has rooms full of consumer goods of every type, many of which she has never even used.

Motivation: She wants to take advantage of the many wonderful limited time offers that life presents her with.

Background: Originally named Mary O'Ryan, she was the sole heir to the O'Ryan Pharmaceuticals and Military Defense Systems corporate empire. Her incredible wealth enabled her to have whatever she desired, but she always had a sense of emptiness. She realized that only shopping made her happy, and after years of intense university study and field research she founded the Church of Immaculate Consumption and Fantastic Bargains. She has acquired many followers, and together they have found joy in each other's purchases.

Traits: *(PB) Eccentric, religious, scholar, wealthy*

Vacca Artoli 628

Fringer Naysayer

"Don't buy in. Don't log on. Stay off the net. Avoid the machine. Be a person and talk to one."

Appearance: He submits to wearing the discarded clothes of his over-commercialized society, though he patches over the brand names and logos printed on them. His long hair is greasy.

Roleplaying: He will absently rub the scarred flesh of his arm, where he burned away his old company identification tattoo years ago.

Personality: Vacca harbors a deep regret that he cannot provide restitution for the lives he ruined. His hate for commercialized society runs deep.

Motivation: He warns everyone to know that his commercialized and computerized society is evil. He will assist anyone who wants to strike back against it.

Background: He was once a rising star in the conglomerate, a career-minded brand manager. At some point, Vacca was confronted with a choice that required him to betray people he cared about. He did—and their lives were destroyed. Convinced the company, its goals, and its tools were evil, he left. He was pursued by company agents for a long time—he possessed many of their secrets. But eventually he blended into the lost fringes of society. Now he leads a group of rabble, preaching against the evils of the controlling conglomerate.

Traits: *(TT) Business, eccentric*

Porthos Valentine 629

Stranded Time Traveler

"You mean to say that there's a sort of high-powered steam engine inside this tiny pistol? My word! I'd have given my eyeteeth for one of these back in London."

Appearance: With tousled red hair, bags under his eyes, perpetual stubble, and a confused expression, Porthos always looks somehow out of place.

Roleplaying: Porthos says little until he knows he's among people he trusts. He's clueless about most technology.

Personality: Despite the circumstances, Porthos' natural pluck and adaptability have kept him sane and relatively level-headed. Lacking the familiar command structure and stability of his old job and life, he's a fish out of water—but he's learning quickly. He remains optimistic about being able to make a new life for himself.

Motivation: He wants to give his life meaning and structure again. He needs a job, money, and friends he can trust with his bizarre secret.

Background: Porthos is stranded time traveler, whisked away from Victorian-era London by a temporal anomaly and transported to the present. He's given up hope of returning to his own time, and is trying to make the best of things despite being in over his head. Porthos was a detective, a good one, and those skills are still relevant today. Losing everyone he ever knew or loved was incredibly disorienting and disheartening, and he feels adrift in the modern world. Once grounded again, he could be a valuable, albeit very quirky, ally.

Traits: *(MR) Eccentric, police, scientist*

Elicia O'Ranen 630

Violent Marshal

"You listen to me! Power down your engines at once, or I swear I will open fire right on your bridge and watch your ship drift into the atmosphere and burn up!"

Appearance: Elicia is of average height. She wears an immaculate police uniform and her long, straight brown hair is pulled back.

Roleplaying: She always offers to solve problems by using violence. She makes threats when confronted, and she slams her hands on the table to make a point.

Personality: A dangerous combination of violence and ambition, Elicia craves power and prefers using violence to get it.

Motivation: The only things that keep Elicia from being a violent criminal are her respect for the law and her desire for the power her position brings.

Background: Elicia was born in a dangerous city where she grew up avoiding physical harm on a daily basis. By her teens, she was more than capable of defending herself from all but the most dangerous criminals. She mysteriously disappeared for three days—an ordeal she never speaks of—before enrolling with the sector police force. Her superiors recognized her hostility and tempered it as much as they could. When she was ready, they assigned her to a dangerous post where only an officer of her temperament would be able to make any difference. While the body count has been high, she has been able to bring some order to her troubled sector.

Traits: *(PV) Leader, police, power hungry*

Cali DuMall 631

Frightening Orphan

"If you're going to protect me, then who is going to protect you?"

Appearance: Cali is a small, young girl with long, jet-black hair. She wears a simple button-down gown. Her eyes are brown, their large irises and flecked with gold. She clutches a worn teddy bear.

Roleplaying: She's distant and shows little emotion. She speaks softly and in small, halting bits. Cali's pauses are punctuated with a blinking of her eyes. She looks right through people at hidden things.

Personality: Like most children, Cali is shy and withdrawn around strangers. She's not keen to make friends—most don't live very long. She makes profound comments, but her language is still limited. She reacts well to a tender hand and is trusting unless given reason to act otherwise.

Motivation: She wants to help the good people and stop the bad ones before they cause more hurt. She mostly just wants to find her mommy and daddy.

Background: Sadly, Cali's life isn't likely to get any easier. A few years after birth, her psionic abilities manifested—telekinesis and telepathy, among others. The psi-op military intervened, seeing Cali as a valuable commodity. Her parents protested and Cali was forcibly taken away. The trauma inflicted by this separation has turned Cali into a dangerous and unpredictable weapon. She doesn't want to hurt people—like they hurt her—but she desperately wants to escape "the bad men" and find her family. If they're still alive.

Traits: *(DM) Child, magical, military*

Johnny Reynoldson 632

Thrill-Seeking Mercenary

"Woo-eeee! This battle looks like it's gonna be a good one."

Appearance: Johnny is of average build and wears a black leather jacket tailored to conceal his guns. His brown, wavy hair and devilish smile make him attractive to many people. He is rarely seen without a bottle of booze in his hands.

Roleplaying: Johnny is always up for excitement, danger, and sex. He is constantly moving and never seems to stop. He is the shoot-first-and-ask-questions-while-the-other-guy-is-wounded type, but he always makes time for raunchy encounters with anyone he finds attractive.

Personality: Johnny gets bored quickly and lets you know when he is. He is opportunistic when it comes to his fun, and he is impatient about getting to it.

Motivation: Johnny wants the most enjoyment and excitement possible in any situation.

Background: When Johnny came back from the dead, it was a whole new start on life. That bullet through the chest should have killed him, but all it did was leave him with a kick-ass scar. Since that day, Johnny has felt invincible. He knows his time will come, but he doesn't want to miss a bit of fun waiting for it. Johnny is good at combat and he gets results in tactical situations, even if by unconventional means. This makes most people put up with his hedonistic nature and constant breaches of protocol.

Traits: *(JA) Adventurer, eccentric, humorous, military, warrior*

Anton Dynast 633

Multidimensional Doctor

"I have to go. No, nothing you need concern yourself with, but I'm getting the hell out of here."

Appearance: Anton has an athletic build, pale skin, and graying hair. His fingers and hair look fuzzy and hazy around the edges.

Roleplaying: Often lost in his own thoughts, Anton sometimes appears to intently watch things that aren't there. He's constantly accepting calls and running off without explanation.

Personality: A medic by profession, Anton is naturally helpful and kind, but his own problem is so impossible to ignore that he gives it top priority.

Motivation: Reversing the process that trapped him across two dimensions is Anton's primary motivation.

Background: Anton was the staff medic for a research team that was studying dimensional rifts and portals. During an experiment, a spontaneous breach in reality pulled Anton into a separate dimension. Though the quick thinking of his team saved him from being lost, he now exists only mostly in his native dimension, extending as well into another nearby dimension. Refusing to be studied or used for scientific reconnaissance, Anton tries to live as normal life as possible while he consults with experts to find a fix for his condition. Anton's desire to solve his problem leads him to consult with anyone who may be able to help at almost any cost, even with those with whom he wouldn't normally associate.

Traits: *(MN) Academic, medic*

Mykelia "Myke" Stargazer 634

Sympathetic Investigator

"There, the video recorder's disabled. Okay, what'd you do this time?"

Appearance: A professional-looking young woman, Mykelia's badge shows that she works for the investigative arm of the federation.

Roleplaying: She's sympathetic and compassionate, and works to build mutual trust.

Personality: Mykelia's dedicated to her job, and sees herself as a front-line protector of the federation.

Motivation: She wants to identify the larger threats to the government by earning the trust of those who inhabit the gray areas of the law.

Background: Born on a frontier planet, Myke grew up with friends on both sides of the law. But when the raiders came, she saw how they worked together to drive them off. The lesson was not lost on her when her family left the fringe for a safer home in the core worlds. Recruited into the imperial navy, she worked her way into the investigative branch, and has been pursuing her career ever since. She will gladly overlook minor offenses, even major ones, to stop larger ones. Her approach is quite effective; she has two major commendations on her record (one secret). She is also developing quite a network of contacts among independent traders and so-called adventurers.

Traits: *(KS) Military, white collar*

Harold Dentley 635

Paranormal Investigator

"My foundation studies the science of dimensional convergences. We do not support nor deny evidence of the supernatural. We have discovered many similarities between so-called paranormal events and dimensional phenomenon, though. The data is…disturbing."

Appearance: His hair is snow white, his eyes a piercing blue. He wears a black suit and a turtle neck shirt.

Roleplaying: He has an annoying habit of pointing at the person he is talking to, as if he were commanding them to speak.

Personality: Harold is very serious at all times. He never jokes, and his stoic nature makes it very difficult to determine what if any emotions he feels for a subject.

Motivation: Despite what is conveyed by his cold and emotionless demeanor, he is motivated by a great desire to protect mankind.

Background: Harold Dentley was a pioneer in business who had amassed a tremendous fortune in the financial sector. One night, he had a horrible nightmare that the world was attacked by demons. When he woke up, he saw the ghost of his father in the room. He realized that the nightmare and the visitation were both warnings. His father was trying to tell him something, and no matter how hard he tried to deny it, Harold knew the event was real. Now he is investing all of his fortune into discovering the source of the threat that he foresaw. With the most advance science in the world, his team has made startling discoveries.

Traits: *(PB) Dilettante, occult, wealthy*

Len Hycel 636

Gruff Labor Leader

"Don't mince words with me. You want help? Fine. I'll help. I can send word to my brothers on Syrel-6. They will help you locate that crashed ship."

Appearance: Len is a middle-aged man with buzz-cut white hair. His body is short and thick; he was born of miner stock. He wears loose clothes to hide the softening of his muscular frame.

Roleplaying: Len has a chronic cough from his mining days. He calls everyone "my friend," and refers to any miners as "brothers." He never minces words and prefers talking in short sentences.

Personality: Len is blunt, a trait he learned from his years mining. He says what he means, and he expects people to hear what he says.

Motivation: Len is loyal to his friends and more so to his fellow miners. He works hard to help miners across the galaxy.

Background: Len was the leader of the Great Miner Revolt, when the miners rose up against their exploitative corporate masters. The revolt, though bloody, was a success, and Len was transformed from upstart miner to leader of a major political force. All miners look up to Len, and would do anything he asks. Len has since left the mines and now travels about the galaxy meeting with his "brothers" and fighting exploitative corporate policies. Today he enjoys a life of wealth, but he never has forgotten where he came from.

Traits: *(PV) Famous, laborer, political, wealthy*

Quinn Archer 637

Humble Priest

"I can tell you about Him so that you can save your souls. There are others I call upon for martial assistance."

Appearance: Quinn is an older man who wears his vestments over traveling clothes. He often has a scruffy face, as he worries more about others than himself. He projects a grandfatherly image and looks vulnerable, although his slender limbs are surprisingly well-muscled.

Roleplaying: He is soft-spoken and more interested in learning about others than speaking about himself. If asked about the Divine, Quinn becomes much louder and more animated. He acts very disappointed if he needs to resort to violence to resolve a problem.

Personality: Quinn is a servant of the Divine and has a very humble personality. He advocates peace, but understands that there are those that only respond to violence.

Motivation: He wants to save souls and protect the less fortunate from exploitation.

Background: Quinn is a man of the cloth (of whatever faith suits your campaign). He is a humble, peaceful man who abhors violence, although he can protect himself in a fight. He ministers to the downtrodden and isn't afraid to meet their tormentors head-on. If they won't listen to reason, then Quinn has no problem calling on or asking for favors from adventurers to use more direct methods of persuasion. He'll use his medical training to aid friend and foe after a battle.

Traits: *(WC) Counselor, medic, religious*

Sawyer York 638

Planetary Stranger

"I may never return to my home, but I will fight to my last to see some semblance of freedom for the people of this alien world."

Appearance: Sawyer stands like a hero of old, with a stoic countenance and a jagged, improvised shortsword gripped in his left hand. Stripped to the waist and barefoot, he has bronzed skin and the lean, sinewy musculature of an athlete.

Roleplaying: In contemplative moments, he will shade his eyes with his hand and look longingly to the heavens, remembering his home world.

Personality: He is firm, fair, and of good heart. He welcomes allies in the fight against the world's oppressors. Like his astronaut peers, Sawyer is exceptionally disciplined, intelligent, and practical in his approach to problem solving.

Motivation: His real hope of returning home lies in acquiring the technology of this world's ancient human masters. In the meantime, he will join anyone willing to defy them.

Background: The maiden flight of his rocket ship was caught in some sort of space rift, catapulting it to a planet that could sustain life. A handful of his crew survived the crash, only to find a human population subjugated by a ruling alien elite. All of the crew save Sawyer died in a gambit to steal alien technology that would take them home. Now, he waits for the next expedition to fall through the rift so he can help them avoid the mistakes he made.

Traits: *(TT) Military, warrior*

Captain Marcus Gunderson 639

Orderly Soldier

"THE REGS ARE THERE TO KEEP YOU ALIVE!"

Appearance: Everything about Captain Gunderson conveys his devotion to order. His hair is neat and short, his uniform always pressed and perfect, and his mustache stops at the regulation length.

Roleplaying: Captain Gunderson does not tolerate anything less than a clean ship, even when he isn't in charge of it. Being assigned as an envoy to private operating ships that are outside the military's jurisdiction hasn't changed this at all. He will critique anything that he feels operates inadequately.

Personality: Stern and disapproving of any kind of chaos, Captain Gunderson is a stickler for order and neatness. His psych evaluations have shown no mental disorders; he just likes things this way.

Motivation: Like almost all sons in a long line of officers, Captain Gunderson wants to uphold his family tradition, and that means making everyone work within expected parameters.

Background: As a young cadet, Gunderson was prompt, neat, and always obeyed orders. He quickly rose in the ranks and became part of the old boys' club of officers. Unfortunately, he proved too good at enforcing the rules and was drafted into a special division of officers who ride along with valuable cargo runs and missions fulfilled by private contractors. Gunderson detests the ragtag ships and crews he is forced to work with. He constantly struggles with captains and crew who refuse suggested changes. He perpetually sneers at the sloppiness with which they operate.

Traits: *(JA) Aggressive, military, warrior*

Chrome Troose 640

Famous Entertainer

"What do you mean, you can't? Why don't you do some of that sneaking and shooting stuff you're so famous for? I've done it on vid; it's not that hard."

Appearance: Surrounded by a diverse entourage, Chrome is a short but handsome man who waves energetically at his adoring fans.

Roleplaying: He's alternately charming and shockingly arrogant.

Personality: This charming maverick is a bit clueless about the real world.

Motivation: He lives to bask in the attention of others.

Background: The boy who would become a famous media star was born into an abusive family, and took refuge in school dramatic productions. Leaving home, he leveraged a few roles into a truly stellar career. His popularity has had more than a few ups and downs. Recently, his association with a controversial religious organization, along with a few episodes of bizarre public behavior—and rumors of far worse—have resulted in a decline in his popularity and revenue. To this end, he has hired groups of investigators to identify and find proof of those defaming his character so his army of attorneys can sue them. In a risky business move, he has also secretly hired less reputable groups for direct action against his detractors, and aggressively pushes them for tangible results.

Traits: *(KS) Aggressive, artist, beautiful, eccentric, entertainment, famous, focal, wealthy*

Miko Shade 641

Cybernetically Enhanced Warrior

"My body is the perfect weapon. Would you like to experience perfection?"

Appearance: Only Miko's face—thin and pretty, with almond eyes—looks normal. From the neck down, armor plating, dermal webbing, cyberlimbs, and other enhancements make her look more machine than human.

Roleplaying: Miko prefers to let her appearance and attitude speak for her, and says little. During a fight, she takes people apart in eerie silence, not even grunting with exertion.

Personality: She believes that flesh is weak, chrome is strong, and the person with the most chrome wins; most of the time, that's Miko. Before her cybernetic enhancements, Miko was a passable fighter who never would have amounted to much, and she knows it. The artificial elements of her body serve to keep her strong, on edge, and ruthlessly efficient.

Motivation: Miko wants to show others why their flesh is inferior to her augmented body, and she lives for the rush of combat.

Background: Bankrolled by a sinister corporation that keeps her on retainer, Miko is an urban warrior augmented with a fortune in state-of-the-art cybernetics. She has the training, technology, and weaponry to accomplish a wide variety of missions, and the drive to do so under the most adverse circumstances. Quiet and composed, Miko is a living, breathing weapon; unsheathed, she's a terrible wonder to behold.

Traits: *(MR) Adventurer, aggressive, criminal, stealthy, warrior*

Dr. Ingrid Bernheim 642

Humanitarian Intellectual

"Our problems can be solved. We need merely to focus on helping each other to solve these problems instead of blaming each other for them."

Appearance: She is gorgeous, with dark hair and olive skin. She dresses her tall and athletic frame in casual clothes and comfortable sneakers. Close inspection of her eyes reveals them to be bionic implants.

Roleplaying: She listens intensely and, when they would be applicable, asks for examples of what people are telling her.

Personality: She is confident, and inquisitive. She has a genuine interest in meeting other people and learning about their lives.

Motivation: Dr. Bernheim has dedicated her life to teaching others the scientific method, so that they can discover the truth of the universe on their own and contribute to the collective knowledge of humanity.

Background: Ingrid was born blind, and spent her childhood without the sense of sight. The first bionic eyes were developed during her teens, and she was selected as one of the earliest recipients. With time, she adjusted to having sight, and she realized that it was others' dedication to science that resulted in the creation of her eyes. She pursued science with a passion, but she also loved reporting scientific findings to others. A media conglomerate recognized her natural charisma and hired her to be the host of their new educational series. The program was a huge success, and Dr. Bernheim became a household name.

Traits: *(PB) Beautiful, entertainment, famous, scientist*

Arlington Cornelius McMasters

643

Victorian Time Traveler

"Good show. Jolly good. You, my dear sir, would be a credit to her exalted majesty's service—if we were still in England, that is."

Appearance: He is a beefy fellow with a characteristic stiff upper lip. He has thick white hair with ample sideburns, a handlebar mustache, and wears a distinctive monocle. A well-tailored suit, vest, trousers, and shoes of his era complete his look.

Roleplaying: He has a habit of continually checking his fob watch. When about to investigate something tantalizing, he rubs his hands together in anticipation.

Personality: He is dedicated to the safety and good humor of his time traveling companions, encouraging them with wisdom and cheery thoughts. He has a weakness for a sumptuous meal served with fine wines and rich desserts.

Motivation: He is trying to seal the rifts in time that are being exploited by unscrupulous individuals intent on altering realities.

Background: A bon vivant and Royal Navy officer, he was bequeathed a time machine by a well-known author of his day. Initially, he considered each trip something of a lark. Later, he assumed the responsibility he still holds: assembling a team of like-minded time travelers willing to stop those who would reweave the fabric of events to their own ends. It's a cause he's willing to stake his life on—and has, on several occasions.

Traits: *(TT) Adventurer, humorous, leader, military*



Arlington Cornelius McMasters

Artist: Avery Liell-Kok

Commander Halley Madrid

644

Frivolous Ex-Officer

"Seriously? That's what you're going with? You know, these breasts aren't just going to fondle themselves."

Appearance: Her short-cropped black hair is pinned under an officer's cap. She wears a modified dark, olive-green officer's jacket that is unbuttoned. A blaster is slung low to one side and her gloved hands fidget with a swagger stick. Blue eyes gleam with a hint of mischief.

Roleplaying: Halley is a smooth talker and is used to dealing with people and sorting through lies. She's a flirt with an impenetrable poker face. Halley laughs off insults and will exchange friendly barbs and cuffs with those she likes.

Personality: Years within the intelligence service have made her adept at maneuvering through the political landscape with ease. She sees danger from multiple angles and weighs risk versus reward accordingly. She'll cut her losses for the greater good without hesitation. Halley has little reason to trust others.

Motivation: Halley is loyal to a cause but rarely to people. A strong leader excites her in many ways. Complete the mission above all else.

Background: Her career cut short by a crime she didn't commit, Halley's intelligence background keeps her well informed. She's done extensive undercover work and as a rule is looking for the worst in every situation; that's her job. The military has hardened her personality more than she knows, but she'll take what she wants from those too blind to see her charms.

Traits: *(DM) Charming, focal, military*

Keira Faith

645

Ranger Squad Commander

"Why are you ignoring the obvious? The evidence is right in front of you."

Appearance: Keira is small, with a delicate structure and features. She wears a neat, pressed uniform and has meticulously straightened and trimmed hair. Her movements are efficient and straightforward.

Roleplaying: In conversation, Keira is alert for dishonesty and half-truths. She's a master at laying verbal traps to catch others in their own lies. She demands competence from herself, her allies, and those in her employ.

Personality: Keira has a sharp mind and a keen eye for the smallest details. She's capable of holding a problem or puzzle on the back burner for a long period until she reaches a solution, even during stressful situations or when the majority of her attention is elsewhere.

Motivation: Helping her team bring in dangerous criminals drives Keira to put forth her best effort at all times.

Background: Keira had a difficult time in ranger academy due to her small size and slight build, but excelled at deduction. Once she began fieldwork, she became known as a first rate investigator. After solving a string of high profile cases, Keira was given a position as a team commander. Though she isn't enamored with the endless paperwork the position entails, she enjoys supporting her team and assisting in a variety of investigations.

Traits: *(MN) Genius, leader, police*

Jackson "Dr. Jackie" Lamb, MD 646

Shady Surgeon

"Sure, a million credits and a month in a shiny neurogen clinic'd fix that, but you don't look the type to afford either. How about 10% of your cargo for quick cyber-splice and no more questions asked?"

Appearance: A short, lean woman in a lab coat, Jackson smokes archaic cigarettes and wears a world-weary expression on her face.

Roleplaying: She's curt and sardonic and doesn't seem to care anymore.

Personality: Jackson is cynical and bitter, but secretly works to help the truly needy.

Motivation: She needs money to stay in business, and to keep helping those who need it. She'll help anyone who strikes back against the system.

Background: Dr. Lamb's promising career in cybernetics crashed hard into the unyielding reality of modern business. Concerned over the incidence of cyber-psychosis in a lab trial she was overseeing, she reported her findings and recommended scrapping the research. When the trials continued, she contacted a reporter with her data, but her employer silenced him and ruined her reputation. She escaped to the streets, where a talent with cybernetics can keep one employed and safe. While she seems to be a heartless mercenary, she also secretly treats the poor. She keeps this to herself, both because someone may use it against her and because it's not good business to give away what you charge others a great deal of money for.

Traits: *(KS) Criminal, genius, medic, saintly*

Risa Unalo 647

Wisecracking Medic

"Wow! Did you see me run though that hail of flechettes to get over to you? Get it? See? Okay, let me get started regenerating your eyes, hold still."

Appearance: Risa is a middle-aged woman, lithe and above average in height. She wears her hair short but in a feminine cut. She prefers jumpsuits or outfits with many pockets. While they are outdated, she wears small wire rimmed glasses.

Roleplaying: Risa makes bad jokes, puns being her favorite—she loves to laugh at them. She has a tender side, which shows when she is treating her patients.

Personality: A bold woman, Risa is willing run into gunfire to save a wounded person. Her courage puts many combat veterans to shame. She channels her fear into her terrible sense of humor.

Motivation: Risa loves the thrill of a good challenge and often takes underpaying jobs if the work is interesting or challenging. She is attracted to danger.

Background: Risa had a normal childhood and was born planet-side. She attended medical school and received honors. She turned down a lucrative hospital posting for work on a deep space freighter. Over the years, she has changed ships, been a medic in several skirmishes, and once single-handedly rescued an orbital colony from a viral outbreak. Her patients often groan more over her jokes than her careful medical treatment.

Traits: *(PV) Adventurer, humorous, medic*

Kline Alto 648

Connected Drunkard

"Baby, can you read minds? No? That's good, 'cause my thoughts are too dirty for that pretty ass of yours! <hic>"

Appearance: He smells of urine and vomit—possibly his own—and wears a dirty leather duster over his wide, squat frame. Both of his chins are covered in stubble, and he has bloodshot eyes and breath that could jumpstart a drive engine. His grin shows nasty, yellow teeth.

Roleplaying: Kline is a drunkard and is constantly trashed, slurring his words. He'll stumble on occasion or barf a little while talking. He's a model of the uncouth and always says the wrong thing at the wrong time.

Personality: Kline doesn't care about others' opinions of him; he jettisoned pride long ago.

Motivation: He will do what it takes to get that next drink. He's only looking out for himself, but underneath his anguished liver is a heart of gold.

Background: Kline knows just about everyone, and his near-permanent presence in the bars gives him access to unfettered information that he barters for drinks. He's a decent fence and has solid contacts—the drunkard persona is a bit of a gag on his part. Mostly, no one pays him any mind, but he is sometimes hauled in for questioning by the local authorities. He has a nice nest egg stashed away for a rainy day. Kline knows a bit about everything and is the perfect point man to disseminate opportunities that he's overheard.

Traits: *(DM) Criminal, focal, notorious*

Dr. Ellsworth Iandan 649

Connected Scientist

"I have friends, popular friends that can present you in any light I wish. Reconsider your approach."

Appearance: Ellsworth's skin has a sparkle, he stands tall and straight, and his dark tousled hair inspires envy in many. In holo, Dr. Iandan just appears more real—more solid and three-dimensional—than most of his peers.

Roleplaying: Dr. Iandan is beautiful, but cool and reserved, always posing—never slumping in relaxation or relief. His smile is precise and technical, unless he's laughing at someone.

Personality: Ellsworth has a long memory, remembering those he helped (and exactly how), and the exact measure he owes others.

Motivation: After years of being ignored, Iandan's formula delivered dreams to friends and associates. In turn, they are helping him establish himself in the media landscape.

Background: Doctor Iandan spent his twenties slaving for a cosmetics company, where he made a breakthrough. He blackmailed his boss, bought out his contract, and took his discovery to the alleys of the entertainment district. One by one, he took promising talents, provided his formula, and got them established in news and video—dependent on him for his clarity-providing silica orientation treatments. His treatments are spreading through the industry slowly—as much as he loves the money and favor, he knows it's only a comparative advantage. If he sold it widely, big companies would clone it.

Traits: *(SM) Beautiful, entertainment, scientist*

Princess Tamena 650

Exotic Royalty

"I've never seen a ship this big. My planet's biggest is half the size of your cargo ship, Captain."

Appearance: Tall and fair, Princess Tamena is everything a princess is supposed to be. She is demure and coy, with a touch of innocence out of place in the rough galaxy in which she travels.

Roleplaying: Princess Tamena's pampered and pastoral lifestyle has left her unprepared for the rigors of traveling in space. Luckily, her shyness and pleasant personality draw people willing to help her out.

Personality: The princess has an undeniable genuineness about her, and her soft voice engenders a protective response in others. She only wishes to do right by those who help her, and she grieves at any who come to harm because of her naivety.

Motivation: Princess Tamena is one of hundreds of provincial princesses traveling at the request of the empress to see if they are worthy of succession to the throne.

Background: Princess Tamena has little care for the affairs of the galaxy. She enjoys the quiet life she and her family have on their small pastoral planet. Taught to rule her subjects with utmost kindness and humility, Princess Tamena would bring millennia of peace as the next empress, if she survives the journey. Many wish to influence the succession process, even resorting to murder. Weak physically, her position and demeanor are enough to cut most red tape or deny inspectors entrance to a ship.

Traits: *(JA) Beautiful, child, royalty*

Chelle "k{AO}s" Greer 651

Cocky Hacker

"This thing's better protected than I thought it would be, but who cares. I can hack anythi—"

Appearance: Chelle has bright pink hair, wears blood-red contacts, and has swirling lines tattooed on her face. She dresses just as outlandishly.

Roleplaying: Chelle loves to show off, especially when she's hacking, and turns every job into an opportunity to pull flashy stunts. She's cocky without being annoying about it.

Personality: "k{AO}s" lives on the edge, spending as much time jacked in and hacking as possible; she's not fond of the time she's forced to spend in the real world. Danger is her favorite thing. Nothing makes her happier than discovering she's in over her head—which is fortunate, because despite her considerable skills, she doesn't know when to stop. There's a charm to her that's hard to pin down but just as hard to deny.

Motivation: Chelle loves the feeling of breaking into a secure system, stealing what she came for, and getting out clean. She's driven to pursue ever more challenging jobs.

Background: A hacker for hire, Chelle is talented, strangely charming, and has an outsized view of her own skills. On several occasions, she's pushed herself too far and succeeded, bringing in huge sums of money in the process; other times, she's barely escaped with her life as lethal intrusion countermeasures forced her to jack out before being killed.

Traits: *(MR) Aggressive, charming, crafter, criminal, scientist*

Epcar Ronk 652

Confident Mercenary

"Look, you can do it my way or die by their gunfire. Your choice. I plan to live."

Appearance: Strong and muscled, there can be no denying that Ronk was built for combat. Ronk wears a gray combat vest and always has a gun strapped to his thigh. The only thing unimposing about Ronk is his friendly voice and slightly devious smirk.

Roleplaying: He's a friendly lug, but he isn't stupid. He guides his strength and speed with combat-honed precision and careful, lighting-quick planning.

Personality: Confident and strong, Ronk is always friendly and supportive of his teammates, and has a knack for spreading his confidence to them.

Motivation: Ronk knows his talent for combat, and while he understands he is good at it, he doesn't understand his innate intelligence. He just seeks to use the skills he has to keep him and his comrades alive.

Background: You won't find him reading philosophy books or poetry, but the practical knowledge in his head could become the next Art of War. This is all hidden deep behind Ronk's good-natured, salt-of-the-earth personality, his wall of muscles, and his multiple holsters bristling with guns. Ronk doesn't show an ounce of the bloodlust that other mercenaries do. In fact, his strategies focus on tactical victory and attempt to avoid high body counts. He often looks out for weaker comrades and has developed a close protective friendship with a pilot Tanseer Patrella.

Traits: *(JA) Genius, military, warrior*

Cardinal Esi 653

Spiritual Advisor

"Do not tell me about the miracles recorded in the Bible and then expect me to deny the miracle of alien life which God has brought before us. The literal interpretation of the scriptures is the fool's way of denying the glory of God's love."

Appearance: He wears the traditional black simar, scarlet fascia, and scarlet zucchetto of a Catholic cardinal. On his right wrist he wears a bracelet from his native tribe in Nigeria. His dark skin accentuates his brilliant smile.

Roleplaying: He folds his hands together in front of him when he speaks, and offers blessings to others out of a sincere desire to help them in their endeavors.

Personality: Cardinal Esi is a man of great faith and devotion to his spiritual studies. He is kind and generous, but will take a stand against those who abuse others.

Motivation: He wishes to help world leaders make the right choices as mankind begins its first intergalactic communications.

Background: Raised to be a devout Catholic, he followed his calling to become a priest and has never regretted it. He spent many years traveling the African continent working hard to bring peace to some of the most violent territories in the world. When alien transmissions were discovered, he began to counsel people whose natural reactions were fear and worry. He is now sought by others to help in making our first contact with alien beings a peaceful one.

Traits: *(PB) Counselor, genius, religious*

Felicia Cosmoline 654

Closeted Psychic

"Where we go, they go. Each of us has our own custom version of the bacteria, identifying heredity and planetary origin via mutations."

Appearance: Felicia is thin and medium height with frizzy hair. She has raccoon eyes from missed sleep and graduate studies.

Roleplaying: She wears gloves or claims smeared hands to avoid contact—standing polite and welcoming, but reserved. She takes a drink of water before each new reply, but her voice is always soft.

Personality: There's always another level of reservation to Felicia; she's cautious and hesitant.

Motivation: She fears taking others' thoughts in, knowing that they'll loom large at night, when her conscious mind's defenses are down.

Background: Felicia suffered terrible nightmares in her earliest youth. In time, the nightmares dwindled, as Felicia taught herself rules to avoid setting off her psychic sensitivities. By the time she was in graduate studies, she'd ingrained the patterns so deeply that she rarely touched another's mind. That is, until her friend was kidnapped and Felicia decided she'd do anything to get her back. The nightmares came back, but she was able to provide the detectives with good enough "hunches" that they seriously debated her involvement. They still come to her for help on complicated cases, amazed at the analysis that she can coax from her instruments.

Traits: *(SM) Abhorrent, police, scientist*

Kraig Sawamura 655

Talented Company Man

"Do not beg. Do not try to offer me money. You have not offended me, you have offended the corporation, and the corporation has sent me to address the situation."

Appearance: Dark-skinned with a square jaw and a stylish short haircut, Kraig's eyes are custom-made and expensive. His average-height body is heavy with tremendous musculature. His manicure is a perfected contrast to his scarred knuckles. His suits are bespoke.

Roleplaying: Kraig holds himself chest-out and shoulders squared. He speaks slowly, with a calm tone, no matter the situation. When he does react, it is fast and direct.

Personality: Kraig is a rare blend of exceptional skill, intellect, and blind commitment to the corporation. He regards his work with great pride. He will never cut corners, regarding it as shabby work.

Motivation: Kraig serves the corporation with a white-hot intensity. The corporation is his life.

Background: Kraig was born into the corporation, to high-level executive parents who could afford extensive genetic modifications. By age 20, he had his choice of offers within the company; he chose security. He showed great skill at wet-work; he proved to be a true weapon for the corporation. His years in security have given him numerous contacts and friends in all parts of the galaxy. He would never work against the corporation, and he is happy to help any efforts against its rivals.

Traits: *(PV) Business, warrior, zealot*

Light-of-Dawn Farseer 656

Indigenous Visionary

"Praise the Highest, and all his prophets! These are the angels from beyond the sky, sent to save us!"

Appearance: An ancient woman who smiles a near-toothless greeting at those she meets, she wears a necklace made of animal claws. Diodes are braided into her silver hair, and she holds a shaman's staff made from a carbon fiber spar, decorated with feathers, wire, and memory crystals.

Roleplaying: Her speech is littered with references to a vast history of obscure prophecies, which apparently are coming true.

Personality: An eternal optimist, she is honored to be present at the fulfillment of many of her culture's prophecies.

Motivation: She has dedicated her life to leading her people to the destiny awaiting them.

Background: Born into the interplanetary equivalent of a "cargo cult" tribe, the youngest of the Farseer clan gained an early reputation for prescience. She was chosen by the previous shaman, and learned the rituals and prophecies under him, taking on the mantle when he passed away. She has served her tribe for decades, guiding them through many hardships with the promise of better days ahead. And now, just as her people are in their darkest hour, she leads them with hope and optimism that the prophetic angels from beyond the sky will sweep in to save them. It's hard to say how much of this is real prophecy, and how much of it is rhetoric or social manipulation.

Traits: *(KS) Ancient, impoverished, leader, outdoorsman, primal*

Val D'Ariese 657

Combat Medic

"You've got all of two seconds to drop that pack or I'll shoot you between the T2 and 3 vertebrae faster than you can say 'intervertebral foramina!'"

Appearance: A dark-skinned woman, she wears a worn combat suit, stitched and repaired in several areas. A medical armband on one shoulder is faded, as is the paint on her breastplate. A medical field kit is slung over one shoulder, and across the other is a large-caliber combat rifle. "Mercy incoming!" is painted on the barrel.

Roleplaying: Val talks sharp and loud, using all manner of slang. She's abrupt and will get into a person's face with her no-nonsense attitude.

Personality: She doesn't back down but does listen to reason. Val is apt to compromise when it'll help her save lives. She realizes to save a life sometimes costs a life. Fear of death isn't in her emotional vocabulary. Her intense drive often puts her at odds with cautious thinkers.

Motivation: She's dedicated to her companions and her role as a protector of lives. She's dead serious about her responsibility.

Background: As part of the 22nd combat expeditionary force, Val has seen a lot of front-line combat, including some of the bloodiest. She's a marine through and through and now offers her talents to those in need. She has to count on her squad and doesn't tolerate dissent or disobedience. Val will die for her companions and demands the same loyalty in return. Semper Fidelis!

Traits: *(DM) Aggressive, medic*

Lexa Anjaliani

658

Alien Intermediary

"The time of the melding is imminent. We must prepare—or perish."

Appearance: Her features are human, except for her skin, which has an ochre hue from the process she underwent to make it resistant to the radiation of an alien sun. The only hair on her skin is very fine, almost invisible, so she appears to be bald and without eyelashes. She wears a form-fitting bodysuit of alien manufacture.

Roleplaying: All her interactions seem a bit off. Lexa's mannerisms suggest someone who is playing at being human, akin to the forced movements an amateur actor might exhibit on the stage. Her speech patterns are stilted.

Personality: She has an alien mindset. She does not think of herself as human, though genetically, she is. Lexa is fully capable of exhibiting the same range of emotions as any person, but has been trained to be aloof and distant. But if it serves her mission, she will attempt to experience the fullness of the human condition. She tries to be helpful.

Motivation: Lexa serves as an ambassador from an alien species that will "inevitably" integrate biologically and socially with humanity.

Background: She is a human hybrid generations removed from her original human ancestors, who first encountered the aliens in deep space. She, like others of her kind, have been sent to humanity's interstellar outposts to pave the way for the "melding."

Traits: *(TT) Counselor, eccentric*

Kirtai Destanis

659

Ruthless Protector

"I don't care. I fight for survival."

Appearance: Tall and wiry, Kirtai's long black hair is tied back in a ponytail. His sun burnt face shows his weariness, and a scar runs down his cheek. He dresses in clothing fit for a hot desert planet.

Roleplaying: Kirtai is fierce and cold, doing whatever is necessary to achieve his goals. He will work with others and support them if needed, but his planet's survival is his main goal.

Personality: He rarely smiles; his mind is too full of the horrors of war and the fierce blood-filled strategies that allow him to defend his planet.

Motivation: Kirtai is trying to track down the remnants of the aliens who invaded his home world.

Background: Having lived through an alien invasion and occupation, Kirtai understands the horrors that come with invading forces. One of the first to strike back, he captured an alien ship and fought to free his planet, but he gave up much of his humanity to do so. Many hard decisions had to be made, and many other ships needed to be sacrificed to hold the line. In the end, it was Kirtai's uncompromising and bloody tactics that helped save the planet. He has gotten information that the aliens are still out there are and are planning a new offensive. Though Kirtai's goals are noble, he cares little for the horrors he causes others. All that matters is that his planet avoids becoming a bloody wasteland again.

Traits: *(JA) Military, warrior, zealot*



Lexa Anjaliani

Artist: Avery Liell-Kok

Sister Ava Cassidy 660

Badass Recruiter

"Move it! Move it! Move it! How do you expect to get to heaven if you can't even get off your ass?"

Appearance: Sister Cassidy wears bulky, scarred, and dented power armor emblazoned with religious symbols. Her head is shaved and embedded with an array of implants.

Roleplaying: Loud and high-energy, Sister Cassidy is a fanatic about her religious order. She takes every opportunity available to proselytize.

Personality: Ava is a first-class hard ass. She's tough as nails and doesn't brook any insult, affront, or questioning of her abilities.

Motivation: Sister Cassidy lives for converting others to her faith and recruiting them for her unit.

Background: A member of a strict, martial religious order, Sister Cassidy travels far and wide kicking ass, taking names, and enticing others to join her crusade. Her intense devotion gives her access to crude but effective mental powers, and her martial abilities and equipment are formidable. Her position technically includes giving guidance to those in need as well, though her advice generally boils down to "Quit whining, get off your ass, and do something about it." Ava's order is currently undergoing a struggle to change doctrine, which she zealously opposes. To keep her out of the way during the transition, she has been stationed at the order's most remote and isolated missionary posts.

Traits: *(MN) Adventurer, aggressive, counselor, magical, military, religious, warrior, zealot*

Tanseer Patrella 661

Self-Doubting Pilot

"Uh, yeah, sure. Setting in a course now."

Appearance: Slightly portly, Tanseer is average-looking in most ways. His chubbiness serves only to further his personal issues with meekness.

Roleplaying: Without an order, Tanseer stays quiet and out of the way. He doesn't like to stir up the waters and has little confidence in his skills, despite the fact that they have saved the ship from crash or capture time and again. When Tanseer is told to do something, he focuses fully on doing that perfectly.

Personality: Tanseer is constantly depressed and self-deprecating. He doesn't display much motivation or gusto. He won't show his depression overtly, but he doesn't cover it well either. He tries to seem happy and fit in, but rarely succeeds.

Motivation: He is motivated by his desire to not screw things up, a paranoia birthed in his childhood.

Background: Tanseer grew up as one of 20 children in a poor farming family. Not physically built for the labor of the farm, Tanseer was berated by his father and left alone by his mother. He tried to do what he could, driving the tractors and running machinery, but his paranoia and nervousness caused him to mess things up time and again. Everyone was surprised when he scored high enough on a skills test for a pilots' school scholarship. He excelled in practical and academic tests and was quickly picked up by a cargo freighter, but has never shaken his self-doubt.

Traits: *(JA) Focal, impoverished, pilot*

Doctor Volcano 662

Rebellious Inventor

"Taste the volcano, government pig!"

Appearance: Carrying his trademark "volcano gun," Doctor Volcano wears a long black coat and a black beret. He has fiery red hair and a red goatee, and wears red-tinted goggles.

Roleplaying: Doctor Volcano never does anything small, from shouting and gesticulating wildly when merely talking would do, to parachuting out of a zeppelin when he could just have walked.

Personality: Not fond of authority (or normalcy), Doctor Volcano loves to take on governments, large organizations, and anyone else with more power and resources than him. He thrives on his underdog status, and likes nothing better than an unfair fight. He's curious by nature, and is always working on at least six inventions at once.

Motivation: He wants to stick it to the Man hard, often, and in exciting ways. His agenda is more about being a rebel than actually bringing about social change.

Background: Doctor Volcano is a genius turned crackpot inventor turned rebel without a cause. He finds science boring unless it's done in the service of creating something flashy and explosive (like his "volcano gun," an oversized brass pistol that, somehow, shoots magma), and as long as he feels like he's fighting "oppression"—and having fun doing it—he's happy to go along with even the stupidest plans. He's a genuinely brilliant inventor, and if properly channeled he can be a useful ally.

Traits: *(MR) Adventurer, crafter, eccentric, genius, humorous, scientist*

Brother Artemas 663

Battle Monk

"Fear not, friends. The Creator stands with us today, for today we shall find Enlightenment upon the field of battle!"

Appearance: Over six feet tall and with broad shoulders, he wears only plain robes that mark his station as a brother of the order. Upon his shaven head are tattoos of the order that explain the broadsword at his side. His gray eyes squint menacingly.

Roleplaying: The brother—like many of his order—is trained to fight when called upon. He is reserved and speaks humbly of his role, but returns force in kind.

Personality: A gentle giant most of the time, Artemas was raised for combat, seen by his people as a necessary path to justice. He is deeply spiritual, attending to the Creator's needs, but even the Creator understands the necessity to protect the weak and innocent through force.

Motivation: To serve the Creator, to protect the faithful, and to do honor upon your charge constitute the goals of the brotherhood and, therefore, Artemas.

Background: The order is known worlds over as the fighting clergy of the Creator, and is not to be trifled with. The brothers have fought in many major conflicts and field their own fleet. Artemas was raised by the monks as their own and entered into a life of service to the Creator, to whom he is dedicated. The politics of the order sometimes weigh heavily on his mind, and he is often the lone voice of dissent. He takes his assignments—sometimes as a bodyguard—seriously, however.

Traits: *(DM) Religious, saintly, warrior*

Dr. Zandra Evora 664

Quirky Professor

"It's not that I have the ability to see the future, it is that my brain is calculating a nearly infinite number of decision trees at the same time."

Appearance: Zandra is very skinny despite a healthy appetite. Her limbs are long and loose, and her short hair is tousled.

Roleplaying: She politely interrupts people while they are talking, as soon as she has had a thought. She has no volume control, and lacks any awareness about how people perceive her.

Personality: Zandra is a shrewd and cautious person. The nature of her gift requires her to think through decisions as she calculates an infinite number of choices. This makes her very uncomfortable when rushed.

Motivation: Dr. Evora loves her work. She has a passion for mathematics and logic that borders on obsession. She often forgets to eat and sleep while working on a complex problem.

Background: Zandra was an intelligent child. In middle school, she was selected for an experimental hyper-education course where knowledge was encoded into her brain through quantum manipulation. The experiment was a success, and gave her a brain wired for complex mathematics. This manipulation came with a price, and Zandra lost the ability to perceive any social cues. Despite her lack of social skills, Dr. Evora has obtained a prestigious university position. She leaves the university to address any problem whose challenges require her gift.

Traits: *(PV) Academic, eccentric, genius, scholar*

Ram Netinhau 665

Xenoarchaeological Explorer

"You might think the people of Morris VII were starkly different, given their aquatic heritage, but they too yearned to visit the stars."

Appearance: Ram is a confident man with a prominent chin, olive features, and a brief black mustache paired with a chin patch. He is 54, and tends to wear kilts or elegant robes when entertaining.

Roleplaying: Doctor Netinhau is engaging, sweeping his arms expansively, or standing beside you and turning so that he can point out at the horizon before both of you. His voice is cultured, low, and filled with academic observations.

Personality: There's always a plan, a way to beat the odds, rolling around in Ram's head. If he offers a challenge, it's one weighted his way.

Motivation: Ram wants to outsmart the universe—or at least his competitors. Research and xenoarchaeology are fascinating, but don't pay well.

Background: Ram is a treasure seeker, particularly interested in old monuments and ruins. His superior scholarship helped him find a lost planet, whose extensive ruins have since been secretly mined by a corporation he founded. He parlayed his discovery into a small university dedicated to analyzing the ruins and the culture that left them.

Traits: *(SM) Academic, business, scholar, wealthy*

Captain Amanda Siren 666

Daredevil Thrill Seeker

"Lost both engines, emergency systems are shot, and the life support batteries are draining fast from the damage. You ever seen someone do a controlled crash drop through an atmosphere? Well, you're about to. I love this job!"

Appearance: Her statuesque body and honey-colored hair give her the presence of a fashion model, despite the eye patch.

Roleplaying: She leans back in her chair and props her feet up on the console of her star cruiser. She likes to wink at both men and women with her good eye, just to keep them guessing.

Personality: She is confident and sultry. She is sexy and she uses that to her advantage. Yet she is also smart and tough and knows how to handle herself.

Motivation: She has lived a life of luxury and she found it utterly boring. Now she is pursuing her true passion, which is to explore uncharted space on very edge of the known frontier.

Background: Amanda came from a wealthy family. She was expected to marry well and nothing more. That all changed when she was on a starship that was struck by an asteroid and crashed on a hostile planet. She lost her eye in the crash, but she found her backbone and led the survivors until a rescue party arrived. She cashed in her trust fund, bought her own star cruiser, and has never looked back.

Traits: *(PB) Adventurer, beautiful, leader, pilot*

Jimena Okendo 667

Naïve Physicist

"The scientists in my working group all believe in the same thing. We're doing this for the betterment of us all. I can't image any of them seeking personal gain."

Appearance: Jimena has long black hair, fair skin, and dresses smartly in fine clothes. At work, she can be found with a lab coat over her outfit.

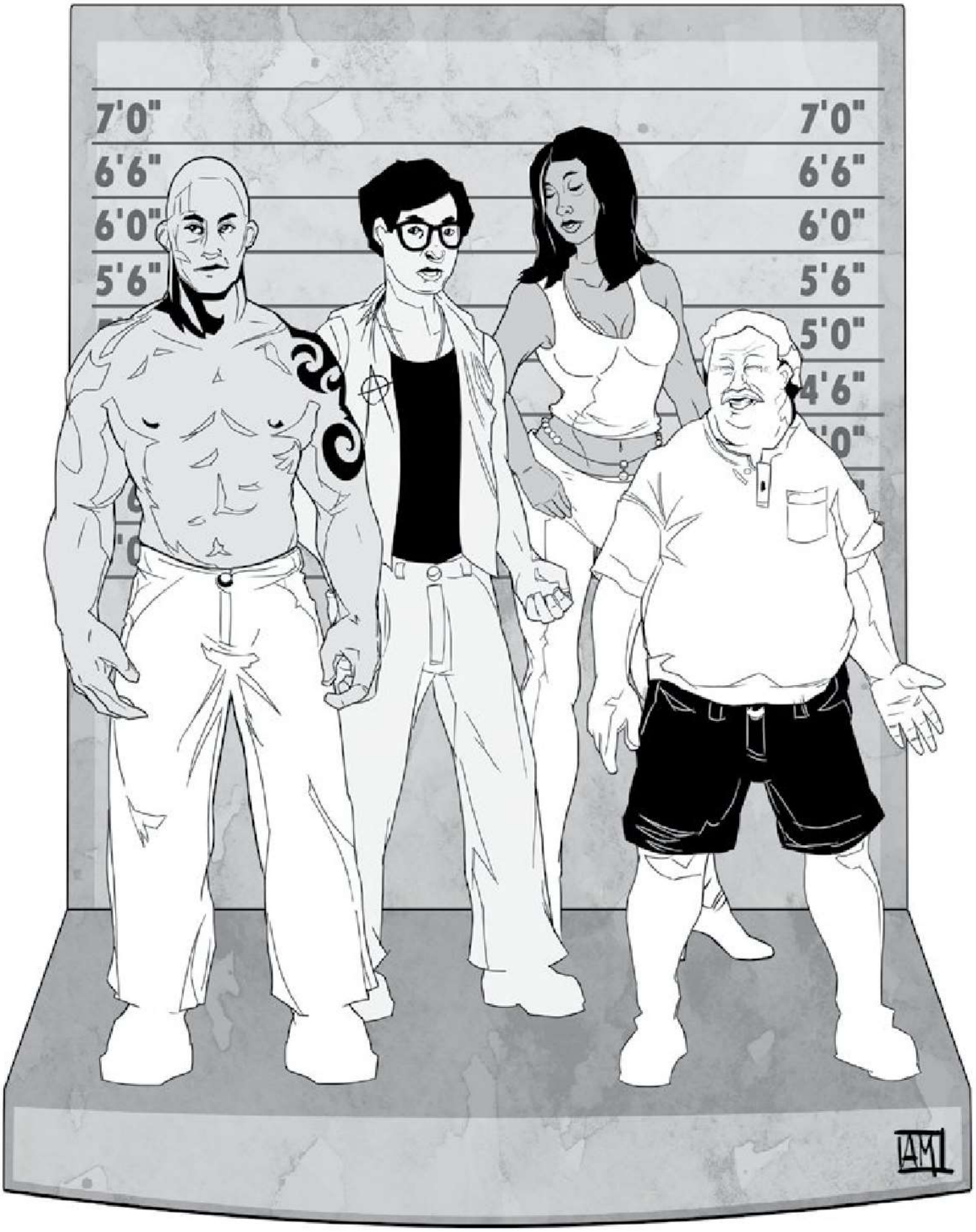
Roleplaying: She always greets her friends and associates at the lab, as well as members of her family, with a kiss on the cheek.

Personality: She is outgoing and friendly, which is in line with her idealistic nature. Jimena thinks the best of people, trusting them implicitly, and is often shocked when it's revealed others don't act as altruistically as she does. If there is a good cause, she's always willing to help.

Motivation: She wants to be a part of a grand discovery that will make a difference in the lives of millions.

Background: She is a physicist born into a family of scientists. Her grandfather was a pioneer in his field and her mother and father were both chemists of note. Once she proved her own aptitude in the field, she went to work at a leading physics lab, where she is now a leading researcher. On the side, she is part of a "free energy" working group, which hopes to make independent contributions in nuclear fusion.

Traits: *(TT) Academic, scientist*


7'0"
6'6"
6'0"
5'6"
5'0"
4'6"
7'0"
6'6"
6'0"
5'6"

Modern

"Modern" isn't a genre, but it does neatly sum up "Most RPGs that aren't either fantasy or sci-fi," and that's what it represents in *Masks*. These NPCs are assumed to exist in any time period from around a hundred years ago through the near future—though, like all *Masks* NPCs, you can easily keep the core of any modern NPC and re-skin them for use in another genre, as well.

Campaigns set in the modern era run the gamut from horror to espionage to military action, sometimes incorporating the supernatural and sometimes grounded entirely in the real world. The NPCs in this chapter run the same gamut, from an occult pusher who leads others down dark paths to a spy with a "ditzy blonde" act to a mercenary with a compassionate streak.

The 333 characters in this chapter (83 allies, 83 villains, and 167 neutrals) stand ready to confound, destroy, aid, work for, struggle against, and otherwise interact with the PCs in your campaign. They're flawed, vulnerable, strong, competent, and everything in between—just like real people.

Artist: Andrew McIntosh

VILLAINS

Some of the villains in this chapter cause harm directly, like the teenage psychopath who likes bloodlust and fuzzy kittens in equal measure, while others do their damage more indirectly (like the house flipper who forces people from their homes), but they all have one thing in common: Your players will love to hate them. Whether you use them in your modern campaign or drift them into another genre, that common thread—the hallmark of any really juicy villain—will remain.

Hae-Won Song

668

Pessimistic Corporate Spy

"I'm telling you, this part of the operation will go south. Something always goes wrong. So, are we prepared for when that happens?"

Appearance: Lithe and athletic, she has a no-nonsense expression. She wears conservatively cut business suits with skirts, but when on an infiltration "exercise," switches to a T-shirt, boots, and shorts with utility pouches.

Roleplaying: When she's thinking, she drums the fingers of her left hand on the table.

Personality: She is grim and serious. Other members of her team are always trying practical jokes to get her to break her expression. So far, they've not been successful.

Motivation: She is serious about serious work. Corporate espionage, when done right, leaves no room for frivolity or boasting.

Background: She received a college degree in mathematics and was a former professional athlete with a reputation for her win-at-all costs approach. She was hired as a "corporate trouble-shooter," meaning she was to manage and orchestrate operations of corporate espionage. Because her group's activities are international in scope, they engender a lot of risk. Her penchant for pinpointing the weak points of any operation have given her teams an edge in preparation. To date, no member of her team has been arrested during an infiltration of another company.

Traits: *(TT) Aggressive, business, criminal, stealthy*

The Black Dragon (Renato Gomes)

669

Cunning Martial Artist

"They say he cut out his own tongue so that he would not make noise. That's dedication to the craft."

Appearance: The Black Dragon is a black-haired man in his late thirties. He walks with fluid motions. When on a mission, he wears a tight black bodysuit with utility belts and other accessories strapped to it. He always covers his face.

Roleplaying: He doesn't speak, although he'll nod and shake his head to indicate "yes" and "no." Most of the time he just leaves the questioner unanswered as he leaps away with acrobatic grace.

Personality: He is a hardened mercenary with a businesslike approach to his lifestyle. Contrary to his legend he actually does hold grudges and won't stop until he's avenged a slight.

Motivation: He is a mercenary who specializes in impossible jobs, and he loves a challenge.

Background: Contrary to legend, the Black Dragon isn't mute, a ninja, or even Japanese. His real name is Renato Gomes, a Brazilian capoeira master. He's also a marksman and mercenary. Renato uses the fiction of the mute ninja to add to his mystique, throw off suspicion and command a high price. He enjoys challenging jobs and has been known to pass up a more lucrative job for a more challenging one. His appearance allows him to get close to his victim and learn his routine. He'll then become the Black Dragon and assassinate him.

Traits: *(WC) Criminal, mysterious, stealthy, warrior*

Genevieve Blackwell 670

Occult Pusher

"Those Wiccan rituals are not going to bring you the power you seek. If you are serious, I have a book for you, but it's going to cost you."

Appearance: Genevieve is tall and slender, with Nordic looks and long brown hair that flows down her back. She prefers long dresses that show off her figure.

Roleplaying: She walks slowly, picking up objects and looking them over casually. She talks as if she knows more than whomever she is speaking with.

Personality: Despite her good looks, Genevieve is a scary woman. Anyone who spends time with her is uncomfortable with the subtle force of her personality.

Motivation: Genevieve wishes to spread her occult beliefs by selling occult materials to those seeking mystical enlightenment.

Background: Growing up in a small cult in the Northeast, Genevieve was raised to believe in black magic and dark gods. Under the cult's tutelage, she had terrible things done to her, and she did the same to others, forming her intimidating personality. Eventually she left the cult and opened a "new age" bookstore. The bookstore is a front where she entices people into the occult with books on metaphysics, and then offers them books written by her cult on the dark gods. Then she guides her clients in a downward spiral as they perform more and more depraved acts for knowledge and power.

Traits: *(PV) Abhorrent, magical, merchant, occult, power hungry*

Demarius al-Fahd 671

Courageous Nomad

"On your bellies, worms, or I'll leave your intestines to cook in the sun."

Appearance: Demarius dresses in traditional nomad garb, his face and hands well-tanned from long exposure to the sun. His eyes are dark and he is lithe but strong.

Roleplaying: A warrior, Demarius has contempt for settled folks. He looks down on them from horseback, often delegating a child to translate as a sign of contempt.

Personality: Demarius is a man from another era; he has rigid beliefs about the roles of men and women. He deals only with men, sipping coffee or discussing politics for hours; women are treated with aloofness, and quickly brushed aside for a cousin to handle.

Motivation: While strange, his people have eaten better and been more successful since the film crew arrived. He uses their knowledge against them, planning more dramatic raids and sneaking past the security that they're aware of.

Background: Demarius grew up among nomads; even as a child his skills on a horse were incredible. He came to fame at 20 when his band set upon tourists and his bloodthirsty charge was caught on their cell phone cameras. He spared the tourist women, one of whom returned home to her job, convinced the network execs that nomad life would make for a great reality show, and arranged for a film crew to document their raids.

Traits: *(SM) Entertainment, impoverished, leader, warrior*

Hans Jaeger 672

Corrupt Interpol Agent

"Of course, Interpol will need the raw data. Because of the risk of a leak, I must have the originals, no copies. Now, bitte."

Appearance: Relaxed and smiling, Hans wears a tailored suit. Looking into his deep-set eyes, people find his odd requests entirely reasonable.

Roleplaying: Hans implies, in his faint German accent, that much more is going on behind the scenes than he can let on, but that he can be trusted.

Personality: He's confident, intense, and tightly controlled, but he enjoys the finer things in life.

Motivation: He wants himself and his family to enjoy the lifestyle he grew up with.

Background: The son of a wealthy pharmaceutical industrialist, Hans was not worried about money, so he went into police work. His natural intelligence and uncannily persuasive nature took him to the top, and he now works for Interpol. A number of years later, a class-action lawsuit over a dangerous drug revealed that his father's firm faked clinical studies, and the family fortune was gone. His father committed suicide instead of facing a criminal trial, but Hans stole a stash of untraceable gold that he had just uncovered on a major narco-terrorism bust, and managed to stay comfortably wealthy. He's burned through most of the gold, and is putting together a small but complicated international heist that will ensure that he and his family will never worry about money again.

Traits: *(KS) Genius, leader, police, wealthy*

Theresa Candice 673

Celebrity Hatemonger

"I'm not anti-anything. I'm pro good choices! Most people are misguided, and it takes those of us who know better to show them the proper way to live their lives. Just because you have rights, doesn't mean that you are living right!"

Appearance: A woman of middle age, she wears sensible but expensive designer clothing. She has perfectly styled red hair, and always wears a pin on her lapel that is the seal of her political organization.

Roleplaying: Although she is polite and kind in the public eye, she often comes across as a bit condescending. In private, she is a tyrant who screams to get her way.

Personality: Theresa is a prima donna who has had a good life handed to her on a silver platter. She is spoiled but doesn't realize it. She believes that she knows better than anyone else in the world about how people should live their lives.

Motivation: Pick a political or social cause; now go to the extreme of that cause in any direction. When you reach the point where other people don't have any say on the matter, stop; this is Theresa's second motivation in life. Her first motivation is herself.

Background: Her parents were wealthy celebrities, and Theresa never wanted for anything. Her talents were never that great, but her name was enough to make her famous. She got into politics out of boredom, and has just enough money and fame to be dangerous.

Traits: *(PB) Famous, wealthy, zealot*

Oliver Paxton 674

Nervous Mad Scientist

"Yes, I know what failure means and the previous accident was not my fault! It was that stupid assistant you saddled me with."

Appearance: Small and wiry, Oliver is balding with a crooked nose. He hunches a bit, as it makes him look less skinny and vulnerable.

Roleplaying: Oliver rubs his hands, a nervous twitch that mimics washing them. His head and eyes dart about, and he flinches easily.

Personality: Shaking like a nervous Chihuahua, Oliver continues his tireless work, seeking the most effective ways to kill through germ warfare.

Motivation: Oliver's twisted mind makes him relish the danger of working with viruses and germs, but at the same time he fears what would happen if one of his targeted viruses acted "out of scope."

Background: Oliver has never been afraid to glide past moral and legal boundaries, and his research into genetic manipulation has always been controversial. When he performed human experimentation without authorization, he was fired from the research institute and turned down for every legitimate job he applied to. He turned to synthesizing drugs to make money and came to the attention of some powerful people who wanted his skills and lack of morality for their own projects. They provided him with a false identity, enabling Oliver to work in a normal lab again, provided he works on secret, targeted viruses. Too far in to quit now, Oliver fears his dark masters but perversely loves what he creates.

Traits: *(JA) Military, power hungry, scientist*

Winston M. Lee 675

Accomplished Mercenary

"I've killed a lot of people. Can't say that I'm proud of it, but I ain't ashamed of it either. If you cooperate I'll make this as painless as possible. No need to be uncivilized."

Appearance: His frame is strong, but he is starting to sag a little in the shoulders and the chest. His head is as clean-shaven as his face. He wears simple fatigues and carries a pack full of top-of-the-line military-grade equipment. Most people never see past the fully automatic shotgun, though.

Roleplaying: He says little. Why bother? He's probably going to kill the other guy anyhow.

Personality: Winston can't live in the day-to-day world where a person's worth is determined purely by the size of their bank account. He needs to be in harsh jungles and scorching deserts where his ability to survive is constantly put to the test. The irony of the fact that he is paid top dollar to do this doesn't escape him.

Motivation: He will complete his mission, regardless of whether it is right or wrong.

Background: Winston served his country proudly, but after a mission went badly, he was used as a scapegoat and tossed out of the military. When he returned to the civilian world, he couldn't adjust. When a drug cartel offered him a job he took it; better to feel alive as a criminal than to slowly die as a civilian.

Traits: *(PB) Criminal, military, outdoorsman, stealthy, warrior*

Lenique Veranzza 676

Miserly Terrorist

"The West is frivolous and decadent. Let them choke on their billions spent on board games, stuffed animals, fashion dolls, video games, and interlocking building blocks."

Appearance: She wears pricey and smartly put together business attire, making her the best-dressed and most authoritative figure in nearly any room. She never wears sunglasses—she gets too much mileage out of her intimidating glare.

Roleplaying: She walks with a purposeful straight-line stride and makes turns with sharp military precision that always requires others to keep pace.

Personality: She is strict, buttoned up, and fierce. She promotes, fires, and demotes employees on the spot to get the results she wants.

Motivation: She considers herself a front-line soldier for the Cause. The business exists solely to bankroll the Cause. She denies herself, refusing to indulge in anything for personal pleasure.

Background: She has always believed in the Cause. After receiving an education in the U.S. and Europe, she was planted in a struggling toy company ripe for takeover. She shortly rose to CEO, becoming notorious for offering workers low wages and poor benefits, but delivering high returns to investors. The toy company's vast distribution network enabled her to use its shipping apparatus to cover sending material aid overseas to the terrorist Cause. Now she's directing her own bonuses straight into the coffers of the Cause. Soon, she will be tapped to orchestrate an operation in the U.S. or Europe.

Traits: *(TT) Criminal, wealthy, white collar*

Granny Mae Wilkinson 677

Octogenarian Crime Lord

"I'm sorry dearie, but it's just bad business to let you live."

Appearance: A stereotypical grandmother, Granny Mae has long gray hair neatly tucked into a bun. She wears small, wire-rimmed glasses and her light blue eyes are surrounded by a network of wrinkles.

Roleplaying: Mae speaks softly and never raises her voice, whether she is negotiating deals with businesspeople, accepting public works awards, or ordering the death of an underling. She always first tries persuasion and bribery to get what she wants, but is prepared to be infinitely ruthless.

Personality: Intelligent and practical, Granny sees herself as a stand-up businesswoman whose generous gifts to charity and public works outweigh the occasional ugly necessity of her line of work.

Motivation: Granny Mae loves the money, fame, and power that comes with her position and has no intention of giving it up.

Background: Married to a high-ranking member of an organized crime syndicate when she was in her twenties, Mae was such a beauty her husband kept her on his arm through all of his business meetings and goings-on. By the time he died she was well versed in all aspects of the business, and used her ties and knowledge to quickly seize control from her husband's former partners. Though she runs the syndicate strictly, with conduct violations punished quickly and harshly, clear rules and a family atmosphere keep her underlings fiercely loyal.

Traits: *(MN) Aggressive, business, criminal, focal, leader, notorious, power hungry, wealthy*

Elizabeth Emalia Montgomery

678

Easily Distracted Psychopath

"I will rip the entrails from your stomach, use your teeth as a neckla... Bunny! It's so fluffy!"

Appearance: Elizabeth is a 19-year-old girl with blond hair. She wears lacy clothing and dresses, tied together with black belts and cloth.

Roleplaying: Elizabeth has a taste for blood and gore, but a pathological desire to embrace all things cute and cuddly. She spouts the vilest of threats while scraping her two deboning knives against each other, but drops everything when she sees something stereotypically cute.

Personality: Demented and disturbed or gleefully chasing the innocent dreams of a young girl, Elizabeth pursues her two personalities without restraint. There is no middle ground between her dementias.

Motivation: Her twisted mind makes her desire the gush and flow of warm red blood, but this is at odds with a psychological twist that seeks to recapture the innocence of her youth.

Background: Orphaned by a fire when she was young, Elizabeth grew up without the kind and loving comfort of a family. She took solace in the stuffed animals and princess picture books that filled the toy chests of the various orphanages she was shuffled between. Abandonment issues and a lack of hope led to her insanity. Embracing the bloodlust, she doesn't hesitate to gleefully disembowel a victim for the slightest offense, but any cute or fuzzy thing triggers her other side, and she reverts to being an innocent girl for a moment.

Traits: *(JA) Beautiful, criminal, eccentric*

Sebastian Sorrow

679

Blasé Arms-Dealer

"You want the AK-47s. Fantastic guerilla weapon, of course. Reliable, no doubt. What about a nice flamethrower or some smallpox? No? Figures."

Appearance: A man in his late thirties, Sebastian has a permanent tan and five o'clock shadow. His dark blond hair is stylish. He always wears sunglasses and dresses in hand-made suits.

Roleplaying: Sebastian is always making deals. He is disappointed when a client wants something common, and elated when they want something exotic. He prefers pocket notebooks and pens to any digital implements.

Personality: He is a man who has become disenchanted with his work. Sebastian makes deals without any passion behind them.

Motivation: Sebastian would love to find the arms market he has dreamt of: the market of super villains. It would be what would break his jaded outlook.

Background: First a soldier and later a mercenary, Sebastian fought all around the world. He decided to leverage his network of contacts to get out of the business of being shot at and into the supply side of war. He imagined arms dealing as an exciting career that involved selling bio-weapons and portable nukes, only to find that everyone wants basic assault rifles. He is very good at what he does and is on the speed dial of every warlord and dictator. He likes to make house calls showing off his more exotic weapons, but so far has sold only AK-47s.

Traits: *(PV) Merchant, military, notorious, wealthy*



Elizabeth Emalia Montgomery

Artist: Christopher Reach

Janice Hauberk 680

Cruel Thief

"You don't want to cross me. Walk away now, before we both regret your actions."

Appearance: Janice has sharp features; icy blue eyes flash above her aquiline nose. Off the job, she usually wears simple floral dresses; during a mission, she wears a security guard's outfit, or something else deceptive.

Roleplaying: She is in control—cross her and you pay a price. It might be a simple putdown in conversation, or an anonymous tip that brings your case back onto the police's radar screen.

Personality: Precise and methodical, Janice ensures that encounters are on her terms. She punishes those who pursue her: dangerous chemicals sicken those who examine her traces, used needles discourage pursuit, and dogs are driven mad by the painfully burning powders they sniff on her trail.

Motivation: The government thought it could take away her job and pension without paying a price? A few million dollars is fair compensation.

Background: Janice moves with dangerous precision; eluding security, acquiring valuable and dangerous goods, and ghosting away. She hires the experts she needs for a job, but doesn't keep a steady team. She concentrates on seized property—stealing from police evidence rooms and hidden government storage facilities. If your campaign setting includes an Area 51, that's probably next on her list.

Traits: *(SM) Adventurer, criminal, focal, stealthy*

Reginald Banksford 681

Cowardly Bomber

"My bombs have killed 614 people, and I'm still a free man. No one has ever, or will ever, come close to catching me."

Appearance: A sniveling weasel of a man, Reginald has a prominent forehead, large eyes, and a crooked nose.

Roleplaying: When he taunts the police, Reginald is bold, brassy, and supremely confident. In person, he's a meek man who's afraid of his own shadow.

Personality: Reginald is a coward, though he doesn't see himself as one. He's terrified of his sins, a fear instilled in him by his parents at a young age, and he lashes out at others so as to avoid confronting the evil in his heart.

Motivation: He wants to rid the world of wickedness by killing as many sinners as possible.

Background: Reginald sees the evils of the world, its sinfulness and wretchedness, everywhere he looks. He roots out evil by sending powerful bombs through the mail, carefully timed to inflict maximum casualties either en route or at their destinations. He's been doing this for three months now, and has killed over 600 people. For his next "purging," he's aiming to double that number with a single devastating blast. A nationwide manhunt for Reginald is in full swing, but he's nothing if not careful. He's taken extensive measures to remain a mystery, and thus far the authorities have precious few clues as to his identity.

Traits: *(MR) Abhorrent, crafter, criminal, focal, genius, notorious, zealot*

Gerund Archer 682

Unscrupulous House-Flipper

"The toughest thing about a foreclosure is the wait between the issuing of an eviction and the time it takes for them to move out. It seems like it takes forever. Ha!"

Appearance: Hair slicked back, he wears an ill-fitting suit he bought off the clearance rack. His briefcase is bulging with the paperwork he needs.

Roleplaying: Before shaking hands, he'll wipe his hands—usually greasy from one thing or another—on the breast of his suit coat.

Personality: He is heartless and cruel. He has no shame for the glee he feels when he watches homeowners being displaced due to his manipulations.

Motivation: He gets his biggest kick out of finding ways to ruin or exploit the finances of people whose houses he covets for a quick flip.

Background: He originally thought flipping houses would be a good way to get rich quick with a minimum of effort on his part. But some houses needed so much investment to repair and renovate them that he wasn't getting the return he thought he deserved. Then, during the housing crisis, he hit upon the idea of forcing people from really nice homes and capitalizing on the foreclosures. That meant learning a new set of tools, exploiting people's own finances, and employing all sorts of credit agents and bankers in his schemes. Now he gets nice homes at discounts and doesn't have to fix them up before reselling at a profit.

Traits: *(TT) Business, stealthy, wealthy*

Heather "Mack" Mackintosh 683

Rival Team Leader

"These amateurs are like bulls in a china shop. Let them take the job and botch it, then we'll pick up the pieces when the client's really desperate."

Appearance: From her severely buzzed hair to her polished boots and confident gaze, she is the very image of professionalism.

Roleplaying: Heather's competitive nature shows in her conversation and body language.

Personality: She's deceptively sly and calculating, often looking far down the road.

Motivation: She takes great pride in being the best at what she does.

Background: Always highly competitive, Mack went to West Point and excelled, quickly moving up the ranks in communications. She repeatedly attempted to become the first female special forces soldier, and passed every test they threw at her, but still wasn't accepted because the Army wasn't ready for women in that role. She retired her commission and went into private work, putting together an excellent team of operators. They cover nearly every aspect of investigation and direct action, and have a sterling reputation and a high price tag. Many an adventuring team has run across them and come in a distant second.

Traits: *(KS) Aggressive, leader, military, warrior*

Lorenzo Lemming 684

Self-Righteous Hacker

"If you're not ashamed of your actions, you'll never need to worry about my information."

Appearance: Lorenzo is relatively trim, with dark tousled hair, and generally wears a T-shirt from a web comic or one displaying a programming joke. He usually looks rumpled, and after 11:00 am his shirt has been stained with coffee or cheese curl dust.

Roleplaying: When Lorenzo is confident that he's right, he'll keep pushing and pushing until you agree and acknowledge his mastery of the subject. On those rare occasions when someone convinces him otherwise, he just shrugs and says, "Oh, you had privileged information," and redoubles his efforts on the next topic. In conversation he's easily distracted, running down tangents instead of sticking to the topic.

Personality: Online, Lorenzo usually has seven tabs open at a time and is running background checks, remote-activating webcams, and sifting through financial documents.

Motivation: He likes to know things and be right, and is willing to work so he's the expert.

Background: Lorenzo has always been a lover of data; when his parents got him a secondhand encyclopedia set for his tenth birthday, he was thrilled. The total control that programming gives solaced him throughout his teens; his need to be right turned away most of his friends. After stints at Microsoft and Toshiba, he has the codes and experience to get into most systems. Shadowy internet "friends" turn his stolen and compromised bits into dollars, and suggest new targets.

Traits: *(SM) Aggressive, business, criminal*

Michaela Croix 685

Rakish Crime Lord

"I don't like to mix business with pleasure. That's why my business is pleasure. Care for a drink?"

Appearance: Cool, sultry, seductive, and absolutely stunning, Michaela looks and dresses like she just stepped out of a film noir. She wears a bob cut and bright lipstick. Michaela prefers to wear long dresses that hug her figure.

Roleplaying: She is always in control of the conversation. She never lets her guard down and any conversation quickly evolves into a seduction. Michaela always seems to know the right things to say—and where her "victim" is vulnerable.

Personality: In spite of appearances, Michaela is simply a drug lord. She cares little for those that work for her and even less for those hooked on her product. Any emotion she shows, except for self-gratification, is feigned, and any sympathy is faked.

Motivation: She enjoys making money and indulging her lusts.

Background: After Michaela became the mistress of a drug lord, she used her wiles to parlay a nightclub out of him. She learned all about the trade and her paramour's contact network, and then anonymously had him arrested. She also arranged for his assassination on his way to the courthouse. She used what she'd learned to set up her own operation and has been quite successful. Most investigators believe her to be the femme fatale of a crime lord, rather than a crime lord herself.

Traits: *(WC) Beautiful, business, charming, criminal, entertainment*

Sammy Gervaise 686

Small-Time Thug

"What the hell do you mean by that? I oughta break my boot off in your ass!"

Appearance: Sammy has a pinched, hatchet-shaped face and long greasy hair pulled back into a messy ponytail. He wears tight jeans, a dark turtleneck, and a dirty, scuffed-up leather jacket.

Roleplaying: Full of needless bravado, Sammy admits no fault and is quick to confront others for any real or imagined slight.

Personality: Sammy doesn't think through the consequences of his actions and he's not terribly smart. Between his limited intellect and his low opinion of his own self-worth, he's a powder keg waiting to go off.

Motivation: Driven by his impulses, Sammy's primary motivators are money and his ego.

Background: Despite what he'll tell you, Sammy is of no real consequence in the criminal world. His capers are poorly thought-out, generally fail, and net little money to speak of. His signature crime is the smash and grab, and he's not terribly good at it, getting caught fully half the time. Constantly in and out of prison, he does know quite a few other criminals, though most have no desire to work with him and Sammy himself is neither intelligent nor charismatic enough to recruit others, so Sammy remains a solo player.

Traits: *(MN) Aggressive, criminal, impoverished*

Captain Jessie Haynes 687

Sex Slave Transporter

"You came here hoping for cheap booze, drugs, and thrills. Well you got drunk, you got high, and now's where I come in. Get on the plane and shut up, princess. It's not my fault you're too weak to get out of trouble."

Appearance: A tall woman in her thirties, she wears a flight jacket and aviator sunglasses. Her brunette hair is cut short. She has a tattoo on the back of her neck: a pair of angelic wings on either side of a smiling devil's face.

Roleplaying: She chews tobacco and will spit the juice onto the feet of people she doesn't respect.

Personality: Jessie's arrogant and rude. There is no empathy within her. People are sheep, and her job is to take some of them to slaughter.

Motivation: She struggles to keep her lenders from calling in her debts. Her gambling gets her in over her head, and she keeps taking riskier jobs because of it.

Background: Jessie learned to fly cargo planes in the military, but she was dishonorably discharged and brought up on criminal charges when it was discovered that she was smuggling contraband to and from the base where she was stationed. One of her associates agreed to help her escape if she agreed to fly "special cargo" with no questions asked. When she realized the cargo was women for the illegal sex trade, it didn't bother her at all. Money is money, after all.

Traits: *(PB) Abhorrent, adventurer, criminal, impoverished, military, pilot*



Nevin Blythe

Artist: Andrew McIntosh

Nevin Blythe 689

Evil Mathematician

"All it takes, you see, all it takes, is one tiny nudge. An explosion, a derailed train—and the whole system, you see, it falls apart."

Appearance: Nevin is a big, round man with a shiny bald head, prominent cheeks, and a crooked, unwholesome smile. He dresses only in black.

Roleplaying: Nevin says "you see" every few words in conversation, using it as a form of punctuation.

Personality: He views people as variables in an enormous, globe-spanning equation, and consequently has little in the way of morals. Because he approaches women the same way, as math problems to be solved, he's still a virgin at 34. What really drives him is curiosity. He's fascinated by chaos, and particularly by the way that a single catastrophic event can spiral out of control.

Motivation: Nevin wants to introduce delicious chaos into the world, preferably on the largest scale possible.

Background: A mathematician specializing in chaos theory, Nevin Blythe is essentially a real-world super-villain. By day, he's a high school math teacher; by night, he's an evil mastermind. He runs across a complex system that fascinates him, like a city's public transportation network, analyzes it extensively, and then introduces a single, critical variable—usually something awful, like a poison gas emitter or a bomb—into the system to see what will happen. He writes down detailed predictions beforehand, and compares his theories to the actual results to see how well he did.

Traits: *(MR) Academic, eccentric, scientist*

Francis "Frankie" Noonan 688

Violent Misanthrope

"Never gave a toad like me a chance, did you? Heh. Nope. Heh-heh. All the chance I need right here. Go on and scream; I like screams..."

Appearance: A thoroughly unattractive man with an intense stare, Frankie is balding, with a misshapen head, a weak chin, and uneven shoulders atop a pot belly and bowed legs.

Roleplaying: Frankie chuckles nervously and speaks in breathy phrases, with a backwoods accent.

Personality: He's a sociopath and sexual predator who doesn't have much else in his life.

Motivation: He wants to do terrible things to all the women who have ignored him.

Background: Frankie was kicked out of his trailer when his parents should have turned him in, a decision they'd regret if they ever knew the truth. Since then, he's done what he can to survive, squatting in abandoned houses, taking jobs nobody else would, even stealing and killing for money. But everything turned out fine (for him) when he found the abandoned fallout shelter by the power plant. It's plenty warm in the winter, and cool enough in the summer. The best part is that nobody can hear the screams of his victims, and their bodies can be dumped in the piles of coal that feed the plant.

Traits: *(KS) Abhorrent, aggressive, criminal, hideous, mysterious, outdoorsman, stealthy*

Stacey Stein 690

Demented Killer

"Let them bleed. Let them ALL bleed!"

Appearance: Her face and arms are disfigured and scarred from burns; the hair on one side of her scalp is thin and gray. Her green eyes are droopy and misshapen from many surgeries. She hunches slightly and wears a pink hoodie that she pulls up when anyone looks at her.

Roleplaying: She avoids a person's gaze and does her best to remain out of view. Her speech is a little raspy from vocal cord damage. She avoids direct conversation and interaction.

Personality: Stacy was once pretty, and her disfigurement is a deep wound upon her body and spirit from which she has never recovered. To then lose her family was more than she could bear, and she views herself as the victim, even when she exacts revenge on her unfortunate targets.

Motivation: She wants others to experience her pain and loss—particularly those with families.

Background: A war veteran and rescue pilot, Stacey was shot down in action and trapped in burning wreckage. Miraculously, she survived. She underwent years of therapy and surgery, but with minimal success. The accident placed a great strain on her marriage, and her daughter killed herself; then her husband left her. Roaming and living on her pension, Stacey works odd jobs and stalks families in her surrounding areas, disfiguring and killing them before leaving them posed in their homes. The police have no leads on the "Domestic Slasher."

Traits: *(DM) Abhorrent, hideous, notorious, pilot*

Dahlana Myers 691

Noble Executive

"The corn marigold is a symbol of a brighter day. May it truly bloom; then we can be free of this disease."

Appearance: She is the picture of a modern Southern belle. Her big blond (nearly white) hair is teased. She wears professional attire, usually a lace top or camisole with pullover jacket, simple earrings, and a necklace of pearls. Her look is completed with a long skirt or slacks and sensible heels.

Roleplaying: She always has a permanent marker close at hand, ready to sign her best-selling books.

Personality: She is passionate about her noble cause; she has sacrificed a great deal in her role as founder of a charitable organization. But she has a vindictive streak, too.

Motivation: All her passion and drive is channeled into her charity work.

Background: Formerly an affluent Atlanta executive for a major communications company, her female life partner was afflicted by and later killed by a disease, so she started a charitable organization to raise awareness and raise funds to enact a cure. The corn marigold became a symbol of the movement, and was soon attached to all manner of merchandising, awareness advertising, and big celebrity events. Her villainy is somewhat understandable: Mainly she desires such a laser focus on her cause that she feels rival charitable groups and critics of her methods of merchandising are undermining her work and need to be silenced. She employs legal means and savvy marketing tricks to derail or intimidate them.

Traits: *(TT) Aggressive, charming, political*

Alison "Little Doll" Chalk 692

Merciless Gang Leader

"Hey, mister, have you seen my doggie? I can't find him anywhere."

Appearance: Standing just 4'8" and with a child-like face, Alison is 19 but looks 14. She exaggerates this impression by wearing her blond hair in pigtails and dressing young.

Roleplaying: She enjoys casual violence, and the stronger the reaction someone has to her, the viler she becomes.

Personality: Alison is the closest thing to pure evil anyone in her circle has ever seen before. She wasn't traumatized as a child or raised in an atmosphere of violence, she's just a fundamentally fractured person—a true psychopath of the highest order. Alison pretends to be an innocent teenage girl to lure people into dropping their guard, and to keep her rivals from getting a handle on just how dangerous she really is—until it's too late.

Motivation: She wants to be feared and reviled, and to show ordinary people what the world is really like: a sick, twisted hell from which there is no escape.

Background: Alison, whose street name is Little Doll, runs the Parkwood 17 drug gang, a group notorious for their extreme intimidation measures. When her gang wants to send a message, they dismember their target—literally tearing them to pieces—and leave the resulting mess somewhere public. Before Alison came along, they were strictly a low-level operation; under her leadership, they've become prominent, feared, and successful.

Traits: *(MR) Abhorrent, aggressive, child, criminal, leader, power hungry, warrior*

Sasha Martinez 693

Political Puppeteer

"If we would do the things that need doing, instead of spending our effort shifting costs to someone else, we could enjoy a society worth having."

Appearance: Sasha stands six feet tall, gazing calmly out at the room with eyes that shift from blue to green in varying light. She wears earth tones—lots of brown, green, and gray in her wardrobe.

Roleplaying: She seeks the least combative way to make a point and get it acknowledged. She believes that conflict makes people defensive—too focused on planning the next point to listen to what's being said.

Personality: Sasha assumes that the world works as advertised: that people feel an obligation to work for their paycheck, that doing right is important. When she finds otherwise, the repercussions are subtle but terrible.

Motivation: Frustration with the status quo and a preference for indirect action drive Sasha. Her nation has problems that need to be addressed, but everyone's divided and bickering.

Background: Sasha dabbled in politics, where she found that her congressional peers listened only to money. She spearheads front groups and committees, funded by her family's deep pockets; several politicians have been ensnared by barbed donations—and blackmail, after taking illegal bribes on hidden video. Her agents vote as she dictates, and there are a lot of them. Sasha's vision of progress is coming; her companies, supported by rich subsidies, are driving rivals away. Now job seekers have to espouse her principles, or leave...

Traits: *(SM) Merchant, political, wealthy, zealot*

Mistress Aereon 694

Flesh Artist

"It is so nice to have someone visit. I love to host. Now, come into my gallery. What's wrong, have you not seen a flesh canvas before?"

Appearance: In her early forties, Aereon's attractive body is decorated with ritual scars. Her black hair reaches to the middle of her back. She wears outfits that have a Victorian look to them.

Roleplaying: She loves to include the sensation of touch in her communication. She is upbeat in a predatory way.

Personality: Aereon is a truly happy woman who loves to share her passion for art. She enjoys people tremendously and is delightful to be around. She sees the art in each person.

Motivation: Her next great work is what drives Aereon. While she is working on a new piece, it is all she can think about. When she finishes a project, her brain races to conceive of the next great masterpiece.

Background: Aereon was always a pleasant girl, even when she was killing small animals. In college, her double major of biology and art was thought of as eclectic. Her art started innocently enough while she was working in the morgue; she used parts of the corpses of homeless people, but she eventually discovered the limits of dead flesh. Over time she stocked her studio with a macabre combination of art supplies and surgical tools. Now, using her charming personality, she lures victims to her house to become living works of art.

Traits: *(PV) Abhorrent, beautiful, criminal, crafter*

Dinna Mopp 695

Prima Donna Forger

"This isn't how I normally work. What's the next change after that? And the week after?"

Appearance: Tall and athletic, with a thin severe face and sharp nose, Dinna has long black hair and ice-blue eyes.

Roleplaying: Dinna has a whiny, nasally voice and complains loudly and frequently whenever anything new or different is presented to her. She seems miserable despite current conditions, and is difficult to work with, requiring re-evaluation of rates and time frames with any unexpected change or hitch in the hope that causing a big enough fuss will make the issue go away.

Personality: Nit-picking and inflexible, Dinna is a pessimist whose lack of faith in her own abilities keeps her from taking the risks necessary to live up to her potential.

Motivation: Dinna wants to do the minimum amount of work with the fewest complications possible to get by.

Background: An extremely talented forger with the abilities and contacts to reproduce any document and have it pass nearly any scrutiny, Dinna would be able to double her rates and still have more jobs than she could handle if not for her insufferable attitude. She has always tried to do the least work for the largest payoff, and began forging to avoid real work. She started with small-time check forging, and has quickly worked her way up to big money jobs involving illegal government documents.

Traits: *(MN) Criminal, eccentric, genius, humorous, notorious, white collar*

Dara Emmelmann 696

Traumatized Soldier

"It took six months to get half my life back. They appreciate my skills, look me in my eye, and say thank you."

Appearance: Dara often holds her hands in front of her face, concealing the angry red welts cover the left side. Brown hair and one blue eye remain; her shapeless clothing is her attempt to draw as little attention as possible.

Roleplaying: She's ugly and hurts every time someone shudders or looks away from her ruined face. In planning she's crisp and organized, always with a slide or presentation to give you something else to look at.

Personality: In social situations Dara is quiet, drawing as little attention as possible. On a mission, she's direct, rasping out orders.

Motivation: She's very loyal to those who knew her before the accident; doing for them is like revisiting the days before her injury.

Background: Dara is extensively trained in several overlapping fields. When her unit was overrun by insurgents, a barrel exploded, and she was scarred terribly by fire and chemical burns. She was left for dead by the attackers; three days later she awoke in a hospital in terrible pain. Months of therapy restored her function, but her self-esteem never recovered. After leaving the military, she was contacted about clandestine projects. Since she can never again lead a normal life, she joined the shadowy organization—and doesn't ask many questions, just happy to have useful, distracting work again.

Traits: *(SM) Dilettante, hideous, military, warrior*

Stanley Rykowski 697

Greedy Counterfeiter

"That is the best television on the market. You won't find anything better, and it is worth every penny. Holy crap! Help me put this fire out!"

Appearance: Overweight and perpetually sweating, he is obviously in poor health. He wears bowling shirts with sweatpants and a large gold watch.

Roleplaying: He's constantly eating something or drinking a sugary beverage.

Personality: Stanley is oblivious by choice to anything that disturbs him. He won't acknowledge when he is wrong or has made a bad decision.

Motivation: He wants to make as much money as he possibly can, even if it means deceiving people. He doesn't do it for the money, exactly, but for the satisfaction that he gets from "maximizing" his profits.

Background: Stanley opened his electronics shop expecting to become a millionaire in record time. He didn't listen to the warnings others gave him about competition from the large retail chain nearby. Soon, he was nearly bankrupt, but while researching ways to cut costs he learned about counterfeit electronic brands. Now he is sure that millions of dollars are just going to flow into his hands. Reports that accidents often occur while his products are used are just isolated cases of user error, certainly.

Traits: *(PB) Business, criminal, eccentric, merchant*

Taylor Feltz 698

Paranoid Genius

"All around me I see entropy in action. What? What did you say about me? Fools!"

Appearance: He is lanky, disheveled, and slouches constantly, disarming those around him. He wears a brown sport coat that seems out of fashion and has stringy white hair that needs cutting. Pale skin and wild eyes give him a feral look.

Roleplaying: Feltz speaks in brief hushes and whispers, with occasional twitches.

Personality: He is convinced that everyone is plotting against him—staring at him, talking behind his back. Feltz trusts no one.

Motivation: He feels he bears the great burden of knowledge and genius that others cannot comprehend. It is his duty to make them all understand…or kill them if they get in the way. Feltz is convinced his methods serve the greater good.

Background: Recognized as an off-kilter genius at a very early age, he's since come completely unhinged with paranoia. At first it was his parents and sister, who he killed in cleverly faked accidents, but his scope has widened to include the world. Feltz is obsessed with the dream of social perfection and righting the social order. His machinations are far reaching and detailed—moving political boundaries, installing puppet dictators, and inciting world conflicts. Those in the employ of Feltz have a frightening mortality rate due to his unstable nature.

Traits: *(DM) Academic, aggressive, criminal, genius, leader*

Reverend Leonard Harris 699

Miserly Preacher

"God's attention is precious."

Appearance: Reverend Harris is tall and blond, with a bright white smile and blue eyes. He tends to wear threadbare clothing, except on Sundays.

Roleplaying: He tests his grip, smiling and pressing to emphasize that he's a real man. He's a master of the off-the-cuff homily, with quick stories that illustrate his point always at hand.

Personality: While words come easily, every penny has been hard to scrape. He's a very busy man... Unless you'd like to donate to the new church building?

Motivation: Donations have been so thin that he'll never get a chance to break ground on the new church. Every PS3 game and music download is proof that his parishioners have misplaced priorities.

Background: Leonard has long heard the call of the church; he entered seminary straight out of high school, dashing the hearts of many of his female friends. When he finished his schooling, he felt the call to help the poor get their lives in order. He regrets accepting that call. His small town professes faith, but the church is inadequate—cold in winter, steaming in summer—with no fit house for worship. He started a building fund to demonstrate disciplined saving, but his parishioners spend on frivolities instead. He's now raiding charity donations, leaving the destitute without warm clothing or food.

Traits: *(SM) Aggressive, charming, religious*

Swati Mukherjee 700

Cat Burglar

"I have a greater claim on that ruby than they do. It and I were both born in India."

Appearance: An attractive young Indian woman in dancer's attire, she seems distracted or focused on a distant problem.

Roleplaying: She mostly ignores everyone who she feels can't help her mission, but is very friendly and outgoing to anyone she thinks can help.

Personality: Swati believes herself to be an agent of one of the Hindu deities.

Motivation: She seeks to take back the treasures that were stolen from India, and some additional loot on the side.

Background: Raised on her parents' tales of how foreigners plundered India, Swati seeks justice by recovering Indian treasures. A series of coincidences in her childhood convinced her that one or more Hindu deities supports her cause. Aided by her parents, she prepared herself by learning both eastern and western dance, gymnastics, lock-picking, computer hacking, and other skills. She moved to London at 18, and soon recovered her first item from an old colonel whose daughters she was coaching in ballet. Since then, she has recovered many gemstones and other items. The treasures are sent to her parents, who donate them to museums and charities, often receiving unofficial rewards for them. Whether she actually does have a supernatural patron, and whether it's a deity or a demon, is up to the GM, but her success has been remarkable so far.

Traits: *(KS) Artist, beautiful, criminal, entertainment, magical, religious, stealthy, wealthy*

Jeremiah Stone 701

Ambitious Manipulator

"I do what I do because it benefits the world. Stop thinking small; embrace the big picture."

Appearance: Jeremiah is well-groomed and epitomizes style. He wears a well-tailored suit and has a thick gray mustache, but only the smallest touch of gray in his hair.

Roleplaying: Distinguished and stately, he rarely loses his cool. His intelligence and attention to detail are evident in every action.

Personality: A visionary who sees the big picture, Jeremiah doesn't hesitate to make decisions that leave thousands homeless or spark wars that end countless lives. He understands his actions are evil, but sees them as a necessity.

Motivation: Jeremiah believes he knows how to create the best future world, and he will do whatever it takes to make that happen.

Background: Coming into power through the ranks of the mercantile world, Jeremiah quickly realized that positions of power were leverage points capable of being force multipliers for bold ideas. Desiring more than the wealth and status he already had, he began to twist and turn the business and political machines to his own ends. While many know his public side, few see his hand in the minute changes that send the price of grain skyrocketing and cause the poor to starve. Recently he has moved from subtle manipulations to more devious ends, like funding gangs and creating targeted viruses, all part of an unnoticed master plan.

Traits: *(JA) Business, criminal, white collar, zealot*

Vincent Jefferson 702

Outraged Vigilante Cop

"You may have escaped the law, but you haven't escaped justice. You may have fooled the judge; now let's see if you can outrun bullets."

Appearance: Vincent wears his police uniform when on duty. Off duty, he wears street clothes that help conceal his firearm; he uses a different pistol as a vigilante. Vincent keeps his hair short and has a scar on his neck from a gang bust a few years ago.

Roleplaying: He is the perfect officer on duty. Off duty he's self-righteous and holds unwavering opinions of who is guilty or innocent. A conversation that goes badly enough could end up with the other party dead after Vincent evaluates him guilty on the spot.

Personality: Vincent grew weary of criminals being set free by the justice system. He has a strong sense of justice and firmly believes that he is only killing guilty people who would otherwise get away with their crimes.

Motivation: He wants to punish the guilty.

Background: For many years, Vincent was a model officer. He eventually grew weary of seeing criminals he caught being let go on technicalities, lack of evidence, or plea bargaining, only to return to the streets and commit crimes again. The last straw came when Vincent arrested a drug dealer who took a plea bargain and then murdered the woman he blamed for turning him in. Vincent now kills those that "beat the system" in his eyes.

Traits: *(WC) Criminal, police, zealot*

Nathaniel Titus 703

Callous Arcane Researcher

"Where is that grimoire? I do not want to unleash this demon prematurely. Remember what happened in New Jersey?"

Appearance: Nathaniel has a peaked and worried face, but his eyes seem cold and piercing. He dresses in dark, expensive suits and can sometimes be seen wearing amulets and talismans.

Roleplaying: Nathaniel believes that knowledge is the route to ultimate power, but rarely thinks beyond the acquisition of such power. People are only tools for his use, and he will make no bones about it.

Personality: His pride is the least of his sins, and he knows it. Nathaniel shows no emotion or concern. He is callous and uncaring.

Motivation: He seeks to bend the universe to his will. Knowing what he knows, he believes that the petty concerns of normal men are beneath his search for ultimate power.

Background: Nathaniel Titus was once a priest, though any who know him find this hard to imagine. Tasked with indexing and destroying books deemed dangerous and fell, Nathaniel became seduced by the knowledge he found there. He felt that if the church saw these things as dangerous, perhaps God's power was not so absolute. Secreting away many of the books, Nathaniel built his collection and set upon a dark path before leaving the priesthood. He has built up a fortune through his demonic thralls and mind control, but does not guard himself well enough against the dangers of his misdeeds.

Traits: *(JA) Abhorrent, academic, occult, religious*

Monica Surdi 704

Social Chameleon

"Oh you're too kind. Yes, I traveled a bit, but it was so long ago it seems part of another lifetime."

Appearance: She has elongated, exotic features, almond-shaped eyes, and dark hair that hangs down past her shoulders. Her makeup is tasteful and she has pouty, inviting lips. She dresses in dark silks and satin gowns of the latest design with a strand of large pearls around her neck. An alluring scent follows her.

Roleplaying: Ever polite and disarming, Monica's mannerisms are without fault. She laughs politely at jokes, does not take offense, and compliments her guests. She conveys an air of refinement and elegance with a light Italian accent.

Personality: She is a cold-hearted killer who leaves a trail of broken bodies in her wake. Her personality is malleable and she finds it easy to be everything her targets needs and wants. She is a social chameleon and an emotional vampire.

Motivation: At first she killed her lovers for the perverse thrill, but now Monica finds she cannot help herself. She goes from target to target, savoring the hunt and the eventual kill.

Background: Years of assumed aliases and moving from country to country make it difficult for Monica to remember her past. Her knack for adjusting her personality also protects her, segmenting her many personalities from each other. She is every man's—or woman's—dream until the end, when she becomes their nightmare.

Traits: *(DM) Beautiful, charming, wealthy*

Adriana Purcell 705

Anti-Government Survivalist

"The Man doesn't want us to have fully automatic weapons, high explosives, armor-piercing ammo, any of that stuff. I have it all—and more—in my bunker."

Appearance: Only 40, Adriana looks stringy and worn out, like a late-stage methamphetamine addict. She smells like cigarette smoke.

Roleplaying: She's pissed off at everyone and everything, but especially at the government.

Personality: Adriana is a bitter, angry woman who blames the Man for her problems—and whatever isn't the system's fault sure as hell isn't hers. She's a ticking time bomb looking for an excuse to go off, and when she does it won't be pretty.

Motivation: She wants to take down the government through violent revolution.

Background: A tax cheat who was caught by a random audit, Adrian spent several years in jail. Shortly after her release, she killed a woman in a bar fight, and then spent another, longer stretch behind bars. She hates the government, and incarceration only deepened her bitterness. When she got out, she moved to a cabin in the woods, bought as many guns—legal and illegal—as she could lay her hands on, and started a militia. She's the informal leader of a 30-strong militia that wants to take down the government. Only a handful of them know what they're doing, but they're still a definite threat—and one that's remained largely off the radar.

Traits: *(MR) Aggressive, military, outdoorsman, political, warrior, zealot*

Cristobo ("The Tiger") 706

Passionate Jewel Thief

"You think I am the Tiger? (chuckling). This is amusing. I am a businessman. I deal in semiprecious stones; that is all. The Tiger, he is 10 feet tall and steals the most prized jewels—and causes my own insurance to go up, if you must know the truth. Now, if you will excuse me, I have an appointment with a certain young lady whom I find...invigorating."

Appearance: He's purposefully nondescript, a fit small man of indeterminate age, clean-shaven with close cut dark hair. He wears suits of light brown and blue bought off the rack. When he's "working," he wears his skintight black catsuit.

Roleplaying: His calling card is a little squeaky toy in the shape of a tiger, the kind that's produced by the millions, which he leaves at the scene of the crime.

Personality: When he's planning a heist, he is passionate about every aspect and detail of the operation, all part of his desire to "get even."

Motivation: He used to steal for revenge. Now, he also does it for the thrill and the challenge.

Background: Once he was a struggling merchant, frustrated by the control the diamond cartels had over his business. Stealing signature stones satisfies his desire for revenge. He maintains his business as a front, but now owns a private island in the Caribbean from which he bases his activities and stores loot acquired by "the Tiger."

Traits: *(TT) Charming, criminal, stealthy, wealthy*

Greta Roberts 707

Offensive Store Owner

"Get your saggy, white, skank ass out of my store…BITCH!"

Appearance: Slightly heavy-set, she stands out with her partly shaven head: a checkerboard pattern on one side and deep violet hair on the other, parted over. Several piercings through her eyebrows, ear, chin, and septum also stand out, as does the large, studded collar around her neck. She wears a torn black T-shirt off the shoulders, revealing swirling tattoos on each arm. Her lipstick is a deep purple.

Roleplaying: Greta sneers and insults people constantly. She clearly doesn't care what people say or think about her and will wave them off or reach for the baseball bat under the counter.

Personality: She distrusts everyone and doesn't filter her thoughts. Greta will readily tell someone they're too ugly to be in her store. She's abandoned tact and has replaced it with anger at the world. Greta isn't loyal, and may refuse to cooperate simply on principle.

Motivation: She feels the world owes her something and doesn't care who gets in her way.

Background: Greta operates her own emo piercing and tattoo parlor, always on the verge of closing. It attracts a lot of street dealers and unsavory types but she has no problem keeping them in line. While nothing about her business is illegal, she attracts that type of clientele who are looking for body modification. She employs two artists to do the work in addition to herself.

Traits: *(DM) Artist, business, impoverished, merchant*



Greta Roberts

Artist: Avery Liell-Kok

Rajshana Guptari 708

Murderous Zealot

"Your current pain will pave the way to a better life in your next incarnation."

Appearance: A dapper gent from India, Rajshana dresses neatly in a somber-colored tweed jacket and rumpled tie.

Roleplaying: Rajshana is soft-spoken and judgmental while remaining polite, speaking as though the faults he finds in others are universally recognized as wrong.

Personality: A deeply religious man, Rajshana believes his killings are beneficial for his victims. He has an unshakable faith, and no doubts about his actions.

Motivation: Rajshana desires to cleanse others and help them move on to a new stage of being where they will have a new chance to live a life of virtue.

Background: Late in his previously idyllic life, Rajshana's wife and his only son were killed in a horrific car accident. Convinced that he was being punished for an unknown sin, he began searching for a way to atone. Prayers, good deeds, and charity failed to assuage his guilt, so he began searching for more radical ways to lift his onus. Driven to extreme measures by madness, Rajshana hunts down those he perceives as sinners and murders them in ways that reflect their misdoings, so they may be reincarnated and have another chance at a more virtuous life. He has infected prostitutes with deadly STDs, poisoned drug dealers with overdoses of their own drugs, and cut the brakes of drunk drivers.

Traits: *(MN) Criminal, zealot*

Ivan Drost 709

Extremist Vigilante

"Stop your crying. You brought this upon yourself. Do not beg, for there is one punishment for all crime. Your body will be message to all shoplifters."

Appearance: With a crew cut, a thin moustache, and Slavic features, Ivan is a tough looking man in his late forties. He is naturally muscular, with more bulk than definition.

Roleplaying: Ivan loves short cigars, which he chews more than smokes. He frequently spits out small pieces of tobacco between sentences.

Personality: He looks at all humans as some form of criminal, and he despises them all. Ivan watches everyone he sees, looking for the smallest infractions. To him, people must earn their innocence.

Motivation: He has lost all faith in the justice system, and now desires to deliver justice personally, in the most extreme manner.

Background: Ivan grew up in a poor neighborhood in a large city, witnessing all manner of crime. He enrolled in the police, and on the streets he saw the futility of trying to keep order—and the true nature of man. His television blazes with signs of the decay of morality and society. All of this has welled up in Ivan and has driven him to solve the problem personally. He has amassed an arsenal of weapons and, off-duty, now wanders the streets passing judgment. In truth, his vigilante persona is a façade; he is a pure sociopath who has graduated to serial killer.

Traits: *(PV) Aggressive, police, warrior*

Dr. Laurie Brown 710

Iconoclastic Instigator

"I'm not saying that people should break the law, but some acts should be decriminalized. Today's youth understands that, and it's inspiring to see them challenging the status quo! It takes bravery to get aggressive with the police and the government. Young people pushing the envelope of citizenship are so inspiring! My next television special covers that."

Appearance: She's an attractive woman who dresses in tribal clothes from various cultures, and is always seen holding a copy of her latest book.

Roleplaying: Laurie convinces people to take risks that may be harmful to themselves and others. Meanwhile, she makes plans to exploit such events by analyzing them in various media.

Personality: She is patronizing and confrontational with anyone who doubts her insights and observations. She has a natural charisma, though, that some people find exhilarating.

Motivation: Dr. Brown is not held in high regard by her peers, but she has found success selling her services as an expert to various organizations and media conglomerates.

Background: Laurie Brown always loved being the center of attention. If ever she felt ignored, she would accuse the current authority figure of being biased and unfair. This trend continued into her adult years and throughout her career. Despite a lack of strong professional credentials, a local television producer used her services as a consultant for one of his shows, and soon she left the world of serious research to become a rising celebrity "expert."

Traits: *(PB) Famous, entertainment, scholar*

Lynn/Zoe Abigail 711

Conjoined Twins

"We're of two minds on this." "Oh, how droll."

Appearance: Standing just over five feet tall, these conjoined twins have two arms and two legs and a shared torso. They wear a custom-tailored blouse and sweater, matching slacks, and low pumps. One head wears her golden brown hair in small curls while the other pulls hers back into a ponytail. One holds a book in her right hand, reading it, while the other talks on a cell phone.

Roleplaying: The twins are used to stares but still have little tolerance for being gawked at. They demand to be treated as individuals and any interaction that treats them as a single person or as a sideshow is met with ire.

Personality: Both Lynn and Zoe have distinct personalities. Lynn is the thinker and academic while Zoe is the more pragmatic one. They sometimes have a disagreement as to process but are accomplished at working together. Neither sees their situation as a disability.

Motivation: The twins are fascinated by the functioning of the human body, and spend their time conducting gruesome medical experiments.

Background: Each twin controls one arm and one leg. To move or use both hands they must work in concert, a skill they perfected long ago. Because each of them has their own head, personality, and desires, each is effectively a unique individual. Thus, they bring to bear two intellects and collaborative reasoning. They each have their own consort.

Traits: *(DM) Abhorrent, academic, scholar*

Arthur Venturo 712

Remorseful Hitman

"Forgive me, Father, for I have sinned. I've killed three people since my last confession, and only one of them deserved it."

Appearance: Arthur enjoys wearing tailored suits and Italian leather shoes. He usually keeps his hair slicked back and tied in a small ponytail. A recovered smoker, Arthur constantly chews bubble gum.

Roleplaying: He affects an exaggerated Brooklyn accent. The fact that he is overly polite makes the accent jarring. When he gets excited, Arthur's accent changes and he sounds like someone from the deep South.

Personality: He means what he says and says what he means. He's a killer, but he rationalizes this by routinely going to confession, especially if an innocent bystander was injured or killed during a contract. He also anonymously donates a good portion of his contract money to the church.

Motivation: Arthur is primarily motivated by greed.

Background: Arthur's father died before he was born. His mother remarried and moved to Alabama, where Arthur spent most of his youth. When he graduated high school, he decided to learn about his roots. He came to New York City and soon found himself immersed in the mafia there. He changed his accent to fit in and found he had a penchant for killing. He also has a healthy dose of Catholic guilt and is a regular at mass, fooling himself into thinking that confession without true sorrow washes away all sins.

Traits: *(WC) Criminal, eccentric, warrior*

Tommy Perigueza 713

Chatty Thug

"Chico like you oughta buy insurance. Somebody gonna come in here and have an accident."

Appearance: A small Spanish man in his late twenties, Tommy has a dark complexion and hair, a narrow face, and wiry build. Constantly in motion, Tommy paces when he can and jiggles his leg, plays with pens, and bangs his hands when forced to be seated.

Roleplaying: If there is anything to say, relevant or not, Tommy will say it. His heavy Spanish accent makes it almost impossible to understand him most of the time.

Personality: Tommy relishes physical work. He is hyperactive, and anything that requires a great deal of thought or patience will cause him to become frustrated.

Motivation: Because of his inability to sit still or to shut up and his lack of any kind of education, crime is Tommy's only way to earn a paycheck.

Background: Tommy grew up in southern Spain and his family moved to the U.S. when he was 10 years old. Pegged as a troublemaker due to his incessant squirming, he dropped out of school as soon as he was able and started doing odd jobs for the criminal element to make money. Despite his small size, Tommy knows he has few other employment options and thus has the intensity and effectiveness of a much larger man. He is often hired as muscle, someone who does purely physical jobs where thinking (and silence) is not a necessity.

Traits: *(MN) Aggressive, criminal, eccentric, humorous, warrior*

Marcus Suelle 714

Abandoned Cop

"Shut up! You don't know me! It's too late!"

Appearance: Marcus is a haggard man who wears gold chains around his neck, worn tennis shoes, and a faded khaki shirt and slacks. His face is worn and creased with deep worry lines. His blue eyes are sunken and his hair has receded and grayed. A gun sits in his lap.

Roleplaying: He looks down and speaks under his breath. His body language conveys defeat. He's cynical about any plan, pointing out how it won't work.

Personality: He's a beaten man who's now on the wrong side of the law. Marcus has given up and now sees his once-noble cause as futile, and himself as abandoned. He's a mixture of angry, bitter, and overcome with acceptance of his new lot in life.

Motivation: Originally Marcus was devoted to stopping crime, dedicating his life to going undercover for the cause. Months undercover turned to years and Marcus has become what he was trying to prevent. Now he seeks revenge.

Background: An undercover operative, Marcus thought he could be strong enough to resist the allure of the lifestyle. But years in the role have wiped away his dedication and left him feeling betrayed and alone. Rationalizing that he is on his own, Marcus looks out for himself. It's unknown if his mission was forgotten, but Marcus is convinced he was abandoned. He holds a deep grudge for those that left him.

Traits: *(DM) Criminal, police, power hungry, stealthy*

Chief Alonzo Barker 715

Misguided Police Chief

"The system is broken. Let me introduce you to my system, boy."

Appearance: Fat and perpetually flushed, with the bulbous nose of a longtime alcoholic, Chief Barker smells like onions and always has a sweat line down the back of his shirt.

Roleplaying: Justice may be blind, but Alonzo sees people for what they are: scum who flout the law in his city. He treats them accordingly.

Personality: Alonzo is a brute with a nose for department politics, a quality that has enabled him to rise to his current position. An alcoholic with a fondness for violence, he believes there's no higher calling than enforcing the law. A lifetime of drinking and watching the city go downhill has made him bitter, and having power has made him petty.

Motivation: Alonzo wants to make the city a better place—and have as much fun abusing scumbags along the way as possible.

Background: Chief Barker believes that the system is broken, so he's taken matters into his own hands. He distorts crime statistics—reporting rapes and assaults as minor misdemeanors—so his crew can work outside the system. He tells his officers "Do what you think is best" when enforcing the law (e.g. beat up suspects, toss junkies off of buildings, and burn down tenements). Unfortunately, Chief Barker's immoral approach to law enforcement has worked so far, and the brass is willing to look the other way as long as crime keeps trending downwards.

Traits: *(MR) Criminal, focal, leader, notorious, police*

Preston Harwick 716

Deadly Benefactor

"Do not grieve her loss, she was beneath you. Don't be mad at me, I am the one that always looks out for you. Put her body in the trunk and be a good sport about it."

Appearance: Preston is a man in his late seventies who is in incredible physical condition. He is well groomed, and has a look straight out of the late 1950s.

Roleplaying: He is always smoking a cigarette, pipe, or cigar. Preston has a slight wheeze when he speaks, and he coughs periodically.

Personality: Preston is deeply kind and generous, but to only one person. He has no consideration for anyone outside of his focus.

Motivation: He is driven to find someone to designate as his heir, but has been unsuccessful. Those to whom Preston offers his generosity eventually fail him and are discarded.

Background: Of the third generation of the Harwick line, Preston was born to wealth. As a young man, he entered the family business, married, and was eventually widowed with no heir. In his later years, consumed with the need for an heir, he ignored the signs of a degenerative neurological disorder; this has resulted in a mental imbalance. His world has become myopic as he seeks an heir. He goes to great lengths to manipulate events and control the lives of his candidates to make them worthy to receive the Harwick fortune.

Traits: *(PV) Ancient, business, charming, focal*

Katarina Starkova 717

Ukranian Sun Queen

"Everyone wonders the same thing—how does it happen? What makes you give up your will and decide to serve me?"

Appearance: Katarina is petite, standing only 5'2", though she often wears heels for a few inches more. Her hair is wheat-colored, and she often wears pantsuits—recent gifts from her subjects.

Roleplaying: She laughs easily and seems uneasy in the luxurious life. She jokes that she'll write about the experience for her dissertation.

Personality: She's enjoying the attention as a lark—surely everyone will wake up tomorrow and tell her it was a joke. In the meantime, the attention is very nice...

Motivation: People keep kneeling and giving her gifts; it's unexpected, amazing—and fun!

Background: Katarina grew up with a love of books and a scholar's mind. She excelled at university and soon participated in field research in Luganskaya. She came across an ancient pyramid—and emerged three days later as the heir to ancient Ukraine. Carrying a 5,500-year-old sun rod, she announced her discovery on TV—and watched, dumbfounded, as the TV personalities all fell to their knees and proclaimed her Queen Katarina, heiress of the sun. While the incident was laughed away and buried in the tabloids, everywhere she goes people convert on the spot. She's headed to Kiev to see if the politicians will kneel so easily.

Traits: *(SM) Focal, magical, mysterious, royalty, scholar, zealot*



Nathan "The Hyena" Wallace

Artist: Matt Morrow

Nathan "The Hyena" Wallace 718

Calculating Hitman

"<silenced gunshots>"

Appearance: Nathan is a large, toned African-American man with a clean-shaven head and a small goatee. He wears a dress shirt and dark sport coat along with slacks and soft-soled dress shoes. His Glock pistol has a long silencer on it, and he wears Italian leather gloves.

Roleplaying: Nathan's voice is a deep baritone, but he rarely speaks. He glares intensely and points to make his demands known, and doesn't engage in small talk at all.

Personality: No-nonsense and devoid of emotions, he's committed to his job and takes pride in his reputation as being tough and dependable.

Motivation: Nathan focuses on his assignment and completes it with ruthless precision. Anyone that gets in his way must be eliminated. Nathan doesn't worry about shades of gray: His task comes first, and everything else is second.

Background: A hitman-for-hire, Nathan served a long career in the military before struggling to return to normal life. The skills he employed in war were ill-suited for modern life. Quite accidentally he fell into doing quick and dirty mob hits; those led to larger, more prominent work, and his pseudonym. Now the Hyena is wanted by the FBI, Europol, and other organizations for a series of high-profile assassinations. He jealously guards his real identity and kills to keep it secret. He is an expert with firearms and demolitions.

Traits: *(DM) Criminal, famous, mysterious, warrior*

Hiro Hireku 719

Proud Museum Curator

"This place is a testament to culture and learning, and we must do everything we can to preserve it."

Appearance: He's middle-aged with graying hair in a business cut. He keeps his three-piece suits meticulously cleaned and pressed.

Roleplaying: His movements are precise and jerky, like a wind-up tin soldier. Every nod of his head is stiff and every step he takes is rigid.

Personality: He takes a great deal of care in how he presents himself. He is officious, courteous, and direct in his conversations. Less charitable people say he's inflexible.

Motivation: He devoted his life to becoming the museum's curator. He's proud of what he's accomplished in bringing the facility to prominence and will let nothing jeopardize the museum's standing.

Background: This was to be the golden moment of his life. But outside forces are threatening to undo his life's work—trying to, in his eyes, distort the museum's mission, fundraising, and academic achievements to their own dubious end. He has always been guided by a code of ethics, but he refuses to bend in the face of modern sensibilities and change. He will take whatever steps are necessary to preserve what he's built, even if he must break the law to do so.

Traits: *(TT) Academic, leader, zealot*

Alyssa Yaria 720

Disturbed Killer

"Fun in the sun! <chop> Blondes know best! <chop> We have more fun than the rest! <chop>"

Appearance: A tall, angular woman of central Asian descent, Alyssa dyes her hair platinum blond and wears star-shaped sunglasses and '80s band T-shirts.

Roleplaying: Alyssa chews bubble gum constantly. She lifts her sunglasses whenever she talks to someone.

Personality: She discovered the thrill of murdering people a few years ago, and has never looked back. Death is fun! Blood is even better! She's a bubbly, dramatic woman who thinks about killing in her every waking moment. A psychologist wouldn't even know where to start with her.

Motivation: Alyssa wants to chop people up, collect their blood, and dote on her ax.

Background: By day, Alyssa is a cocktail waitress; by night, she's an ax murderer who chops people up and writes lyrics from '80s songs in their blood at the scene of the crime. She sleeps with her lovingly polished fire ax, Margaret, on a pillow next to her, and she talks to it non-stop when she's alone. She collects a pint of blood from each of her victims, and her fridge is getting pretty full. If asked, she couldn't tell you why she does any of this—she just loves her ax, the '80s, blood, and the screams of the dying. Perhaps wisely, she doesn't look too closely at her life. She just has as much good, bloody fun as possible.

Traits: *(MR) Laborer, warrior*

Drago Karpovich, MD 721

Closet Mad Scientist

"I am reversing the polarity... There it is again; the brainwaves flicker for a few seconds. It was no anomaly; I suspect I will need more power."

Appearance: If not for his infectious laughter and self-deprecating humor, Drago's severe goatee and widow's peak would seem downright sinister.

Roleplaying: Drago makes fun of his Eastern European upbringing, often parodying a mad scientist.

Personality: He hides his research behind his reputation as a prankster.

Motivation: His research into the reanimation of dead tissue could change the world.

Background: Like many, Drago came to the States seeking opportunity. He was accepted into medical school, where long hours and huge loans paid off. During his residency, he secretly fell in love with a fellow resident, but she died in a car wreck before he could express his feelings. Unable to stop and grieve, he buried his pain deep inside. He now works at a state clinic and research facility, and has received a large grant to study the how the brain is affected by lack of oxygen. He is actually using the money to fund research into the temporary reanimation of the dead, so that loved ones can say their goodbyes. Of course, these things never work out the way they are intended...

Traits: *(KS) Abhorrent, charming, genius, humorous, medic, mysterious, scientist*

Maxwell Steinhaur 722

Psychopathic Brat

"I want a tiger. Not some crappy zoo tiger, but a wild tiger. How much is it going to cost to go capture my own tiger in the wild? DID I ASK IF IT WAS LEGAL? NO! I ASKED HOW MUCH IT WOULD COST!"

Appearance: Maxwell is a slim athletic boy in his late teens. His blond hair is shoulder-length, and his dark eyes reflect his covetous nature. He wears stylish designer outfits made for outdoor activities.

Roleplaying: He demands that his current concerns be addressed immediately. He never waits in a line, or waits for an invitation. His two large bodyguards enable this behavior.

Personality: Maxwell is obsessed with survival experts, big game hunters, special forces troops, and anything related to combat and survival in the wild. He tries not to acknowledge his sheltered trust fund lifestyle, despite still indulging in all of the modern comforts that it provides him.

Motivation: He wants to prove that he is a tough, adventurous soul who can make it on his own.

Background: Maxwell is the youngest of nine children born to different mothers and all fathered by a multi-billionaire venture capitalist. His upbringing consisted of his parents giving him whatever he wanted so that they could quickly return to ignoring him. He is infatuated with television shows about survival experts, so Daddy agreed to finance a trip around the world for Maxwell to do whatever he wants on his own.

Traits: *(PB) Adventurer, child, dilettante, eccentric, outdoorsman, wealthy*

Dina Hawk 723

Vigilante Attorney

"This should be an easy case. You only have one eyewitness and she hasn't made it into the courtroom yet. She won't."

Appearance: Dina dresses like a high-powered attorney. She wears designer suits, keeps her black hair pulled back in a severe knot and has glasses perched on her nose. In short, she's rather intimidating.

Roleplaying: She rarely shows emotion unless in the courtroom. She talks circles around subjects, carefully avoiding saying anything incriminating while searching for weaknesses in her opponent.

Personality: Dina is cold and heartless. She has an urge to win at any cost and the money to make it happen. It's never occurred to her to take a vacation or follow a hobby.

Motivation: She enjoys winning and the reputation she gains from it.

Background: Dina is not only a high-powered attorney; she's also a "cleaner." She runs a secret organization that helps cover up crimes. If told about a crime before it happens, Dina can have cleaners on site to wipe up blood, eliminate fingerprints and powder marks, and erase security tapes. She also has several members of the police force working for her to further suppress evidence. When she needs wet works, she has a number of hitmen on her speed dial. Dina also acts as a consultant on how best to avoid leaving or clean up evidence.

Traits: *(WC) Aggressive, counselor, criminal, police, white collar*

Sheila McKennan 724

Government Embezzler

"If you require that information, sir, you will need to fill out forms IR-34 through IR-39, in triplicate."

Appearance: A young blonde in her mid-twenties, Sheila always dresses neatly. She moves with precision and direction.

Roleplaying: Sheila speaks politely, firmly, and cheerfully. She tries to help others as much as possible but is always stymied by regulations and paperwork.

Personality: Once the humble civil servant she appears to be, after Sheila succumbed to the temptation to embezzle funds she was quickly consumed by greed. She now tells whatever lies are necessary to keep her secret safe.

Motivation: Sheila wants nothing more than to stay under the radar so she can keep skimming off the top.

Background: Once an honest worker, a desperate financial crisis led her to first embezzle money to get her out of the crisis. After that, it was easier and easier to skim a bit here and there from government projects that would never miss a bit of money. Now addicted to the high life her schemes finance, she carefully covers her tracks and implicates others, even though it's doubtful anyone will ever notice or investigate her crimes. Sheila jealously defends her power and position, and uses loopholes and obscure regulations to stonewall anyone who might be on her trail, laying the blame for difficulties on the bureaucratic process.

Traits: *(MN) Focal, political, wealthy, white collar*

Sonya Carter 725

Criminal Has-Been

"This wannabe has some high quality electronics in his house. It is an easy $10K score. Fanboy thinks I'm into him. I'll disable the alarm, and you guys get the truck ready for tonight. Gun? Oh come on! I'm sure that he doesn't have a gun!"

Appearance: Her dirty blond hair and brilliant green eyes are highlighted by her ivory smile. She has a great figure and dresses to show it off.

Roleplaying: She acts like she is in complete control of every situation, but she often makes bad decisions that endanger her plans.

Personality: Sonya is vain and seeks attention at all times, except when she is indulging her addiction. She tries to hide her addication even from the people who already know about it.

Motivation: She wants to become a pop star again, but her "big comeback" keeps falling victim to her heroin habit.

Background: Sonya had two hit singles that both went platinum quickly. She lived the high life and acquired some nasty, expensive, and destructive habits during the early years of her stardom. Though her next album was a flop and she lost the fame, she held on to the nasty habits. In order to pay for the drugs, she has developed a scam to take advantage of her wealthier fans. She gets to know them, visits their homes, and if there is anything worth stealing, she arranges a deal with the local crime boss.

Traits: *(PB) Artist, beautiful, criminal, entertainment, famous*

Damon Sigler 726

Belligerent Mafia Lieutenant

"They think I'm too violent to be a cop? Well, they'll see what real violence is when that precinct gets overrun."

Appearance: Damon dresses in jeans, a T-shirt, and a nice jacket. He dresses to de-emphasize his strong, muscular build. His smile doesn't have any real warmth, but it serves as a warning for when he is about to get violent.

Roleplaying: He acts casual and friendly as a way of getting past people's defenses. He isn't incredibly skilled with words, but he is good at reading people and has a working-class demeanor that helps him seem trustworthy.

Personality: Bitter about his dismissal from the force, Damon hates having his authority or methods questioned by people he feels are beneath him. He intimidates and bullies people into compliance.

Motivation: As a Mafia underboss, Damon enforces order on the criminal element. He doesn't have anything against crime, just the disorganized kind that disrupts the overall order.

Background: Damon hated letting punk criminals run rampant in the streets, and he wasn't afraid to step over the line to stop it from happening. When he was kicked out of the force, he left in a storm of anger, slamming doors and overturning desks. The local Mafia boss recognized an opportunity and sent his best man to pull Damon into the lifestyle. It didn't take much. Damon's knowledge of police procedures and ability to enforce order have proved invaluable to the family.

Traits: *(JA) Aggressive, criminal, leader*

Skylar Adzmann 727

Pop Star

"I just feed off the energy of my fans. I couldn't survive without it; they sustain me."

Appearance: Famous, beautiful, and sensual, she's the center of attention wherever she goes.

Roleplaying: Skylar can be a sensual pop singer one moment, but a cold-hearted businesswoman the next.

Personality: She's manipulative and downright evil, but hides it behind her public persona.

Motivation: She will do anything to continue "living off her fans."

Background: Skylar burst onto the international music scene from the back streets of Paramaribo, Suriname. As everyone knows, she's of mixed Dutch, Spanish, and indigenous heritage, and inherited the best from all her ancestors—she's gorgeous, seductive, sensual, and energetic, and brings all of that into her music. What is not known is that she believes herself to be an azeman, a South American vampire, and that she kills and drinks the blood of her adoring fans on a regular basis. Her fiercely loyal entourage buys into the myth, and they believe that they inherit some of her power. The traditional way to defeat an azeman is to give it something to count, like the straws of a broom or grains on the floor. Her entourage is meticulous in making sure nothing of the sort distracts her.

Traits: *(KS) Abhorrent, artist, beautiful, entertainment, famous, focal, magical, occult, wealthy*

Noel "Cali" Callahan 728

Deviant Producer

"I know you girls are all scared, but trust me, you will get used to the work. In return, you're off the street. No one is going to hurt you, at least not off-camera."

Appearance: Born of Filipino and Irish parents, Noel is a short, thin woman, with her shoulder-length hair dyed black. She is in her late twenties, with a hard look to her.

Roleplaying: Noel has no boundaries when she flirts. She enjoys doing things for shock value, especially to those who have conservative views.

Personality: She is a tragic woman whose shattered home life has damaged her self-worth, and left her seeking the worst kind of attention from men.

Motivation: Noel has a hole in her soul that she attempts to fill with money, sex, and bad relationships.

Background: A runaway from an abusive home, Noel wound up on the streets using her looks to survive as a prostitute. A mobster who took a liking to her got her off the streets, and the two started a pornographic website. Cali turned out to be quite adept at this line of work: she understands the market and is able to convince others to participate in shameful acts. Recently Cali has discovered that there are private buyers who have more exotic tastes, often illegal. She has begun to collect runaways off the streets to star in these films; for many, this will be the only film of their lives.

Traits: *(PV) Abhorrent, charming, entertainment, merchant*

Mogo Rahane 729

Dutiful Torturer

"Questioning the State is worse than questioning God, you disgusting worm."

Appearance: Mogo looks like a caveman, with a heavy brow ridge, deep-set eyes, and bushy black hair. There are blood stains on most of the clothes he owns.

Roleplaying: The State is never wrong, and torture is the answer to almost every question.

Personality: Not a particularly imaginative person, Mogo's creative side only comes out when he tortures people. Even other agents of the secret police get sick when they see his handiwork, and he always gets a confession (though rarely the truth). He likes hurting animals as much as people—sometimes more.

Motivation: Mogo wants to do whatever the State tells him to, to the best of his abilities and without question.

Background: Mogo is a torturer for the secret police of a dictatorial regime, and he believes that the State is the law, and the law is God. He sometimes wishes God didn't make him torture people for a living, but he knows they deserve it because the State wouldn't have imprisoned them if they didn't. Mogo isn't dull-witted, he's just incredibly set in his ways. Raised as a ward of the State, he grew to love the State like a parent; he doesn't know anything else. If the State told him to spend the rest of his life as a trash sweeper, he'd do it—but he's so good at inflicting pain, of course, that they never will.

Traits: *(MR) Notorious, police*

Xander Drax 730

Scheming Real Estate Developer

"I see you just bought the pizzeria on the corner… Well, it's your money I suppose. Crime is horrendous in this neighborhood. I bet you won't be open a week before your first robbery. Here's my card for when you're ready to sell."

Appearance: Average height with a thick build, Xander wears a clean, off-the-rack suit and a trilby to match. He has Mediterranean features, olive skin, and slicked-back hair. An assortment of gold chains hangs around his neck. Xander always carries a smart phone and a bottle of flavored water with him.

Roleplaying: He is a smooth talker. He's friendly and always full of advice. He also loves to talk shop and is always looking for a good deal.

Personality: Xander is very much a "look out for number one" kind of guy. He doesn't have any real friends, only those working for him or involved in his current projects. He also switches girlfriends on a regular basis. Xander enjoys showing off his wealth by purchasing things he can easily flash around.

Motivation: He wants to be wealthy and live a flashy lifestyle.

Background: Xander is a land developer. He's racked up some large debts with his overindulgent spending and overambitious projects. He's currently involved in procuring a huge score; a client is looking to build a casino in the city. He's trying to influence the property owners to sell while keeping the casino project quiet.

Traits: *(WC) Aggressive, business, criminal*

Randolph Burgher 731

Emotionless Criminal Mastermind

"Release you after we're done? I'm sorry, but the plan calls for no hostages. In fact, there is no reason you should still be alive."

Appearance: Randolph is neat and clean; there is not a speck of dust on him. He keeps his red hair slicked back and his beard neat and clean at all times.

Roleplaying: Randolph has faith only in organization and accuracy. He pulls off most of his jobs and heists by engaging in months-long intelligence gathering operations. When in the middle of a job, Randolph won't hesitate to lose a failing component, even if that means ending a person's life.

Personality: Uncaring about others' feelings, Randolph is perpetually honest. He shows no real emotion, but one can see the constant calculations going on in his mind.

Motivation: Randolph worships accuracy and precision. He got into the high-priced theft business because he enjoys the finer things in life.

Background: Randolph grew up in a rich family where Mummy and Daddy had no time for him. Shunted from one rigorous boarding school to the next, Randolph became obsessed with status and wealth. He quickly found himself enjoying rigorous control and the ruthless mindset required to seize what he wanted. When his parent's investments went bad, Randolph realized he could engineer profit for himself. His parents became the first victims of his criminal path, but the plan ensured that Randolph avoided all blame.

Traits: *(JA) Academic, criminal, focal, white collar*



Jennifer Braxton

Artist: Andrew McIntosh

Dag • Dahlana • Dale • Damon • Dan • Dana • Dani

Jennifer Braxton 732

Brash Jewel Thief

"The only reason I haven't gotten it yet is that I haven't tried."

Appearance: Jennifer keeps her dirty blond hair short and close cropped. She is a fan of body modification, and has many tattoos and piercings. She considers these her trademarks, despite how easy they make her to pick out of a lineup.

Roleplaying: She always keeps people at arm's length; it is easier to work that way. Her movements are careful and controlled, but she bursts into action at a moment's notice. Once she has decided on a course of action, Jennifer never hesitates. She often leaves others behind.

Personality: Jennifer is brash, uncouth, and mistrustful of others. She is tough enough to survive and rarely shows any need for love and affection.

Motivation: She only cares about the art of the theft and being able to pull it off. For her, it is less about the end goal, and more about how awesome the heist will be.

Background: Jennifer ran away from her middle-class home as a teenager. Life on the street led to pick pocketing and mugging people to survive. Stealing made her feel complete, and it wasn't long before she grew bored with small jobs. She trained long and hard, learning from retired safecrackers and cat burglars until she was good enough to go solo. Jennifer makes a good recurring side villain, someone to get in the PCs' way or work for the true villain.

Traits: *(JA) Artist, criminal, stealthy, wealthy*

His Excellency Maliq Fournier 733

Tin-Pot Dictator

"Only the strong should survive. But a strong man with a big gun has a better chance of that, I think."

Appearance: His deep-green military-style uniform is adorned with fanciful ribbons and badges. He usually hides behind mirrored sunglasses.

Roleplaying: He is always accompanied by his pet pit bull, Petit, whom he has groomed and trained personally to be loyal and a fierce guard dog.

Personality: He is thoughtful, but about things that have no bearing on running a country or on seeing to the needs of his small nation's citizens. In fact, he is often dismissive of affairs of state, delegating them to subordinates.

Motivation: Now that he's attained and secured his power, he is satisfied to spend his days in contemplation, thinking about his place in the universe.

Background: He was a thug who killed without remorse, but one with the charisma to rally others to his cause. Once he overthrew the government, he anointed himself leader without a real title. Though he rules in an authoritarian manner, he does only enough to satisfy the masses so they will not revolt. Otherwise, he is occupied in activities of self-aggrandizement and pop psychology theories and philosophies. He also authorizes schemes intended to irritate and frustrate neighboring countries.

Traits: *(TT) Military, power hungry, warrior*

Zora the Black Veil 734

Lustful Cult Leader

"You have done well, my love. I see from your bruises that getting the tome did not come without pain. Now lay back and let me reward you in pleasure."

Appearance: Zora is a curvaceous woman with smooth, pale skin, and long, wavy red hair. She always wears dresses, which seem to barely cling to her, and wears a translucent black veil.

Roleplaying: Zora will slowly move near any person she finds attractive, standing closer than is polite. She plays with her hair or the fabric of her dress.

Personality: She is a woman who has strong lustful desires that she frequently indulges, at times for her pleasure and at times in the service of the dark god she worships.

Motivation: Zora desires power over others in many forms. She pursues her occult interests as a way to control larger groups of people.

Background: Appearing suddenly in the section of town favored by goths, Zora spoke about a god of lust. She began to collect a group of followers, all lovers who follow her with a fanatical devotion. With her followers, she began to lay out plans that were more ambitious. Soon her cult began to steal ancient tomes and artifacts. Then came the murders: scholars, city officials, and conservative religious leaders. She claims that she possesses rituals that will bring deeper knowledge.

Traits: *(PV) Beautiful, leader, magical, mysterious, occult*

Jiang Liu 735

Handicapped Inventor

"I've been weak and laughed-at all my life. Now it's my turn to be the strong one, and do the laughing!"

Appearance: A pale and skinny young Asian man, he's supported by what appears to be a homemade armored exoskeleton.

Roleplaying: His words and actions reflect his extensive education and his anger at the world.

Personality: Jiang is bitter and angry at the hand he's been dealt.

Motivation: He aims to get back at everyone who has ever laughed at him.

Background: Born with a debilitating physical condition that left him weak and unable to have a normal life, Jiang buried himself in his studies. His dream was to create an exoskeleton that would allow him to enjoy normal activities. But as he got older and missed out on the opportunities his peers had, he became more and more bitter and his thoughts turned toward revenge. His studies paid off when he was granted a full ride scholarship for mechanical, electrical, and prosthetic engineering. In the last year, his parents died unexpectedly, he lost his scholarship for ethical violations and anger-management issues, and the woman he was secretly in love with got married. With his parents' insurance money, he finally finished his exoskeleton and added a few modifications, including armor and armaments. Now, he's ready to take his revenge on the world.

Traits: *(KS) Academic, crafter, criminal, genius, scientist, warrior*

Mina Nottingham 736

Poised Thief

"Above all, be discreet. Be poised. The best thefts are never, EVER, discovered."

Appearance: She's crisply attired in a suit well-tailored for her slender figure. She keeps her hair cut short in a flapper style.

Roleplaying: When idle, she keeps her face serene, but unobtrusively twists the signet ring denoting her secret society allegiance.

Personality: She stays poised in most situations. She demands precision and a well-oiled execution from her henchmen.

Motivation: She operates a charitable foundation to stay close to the antiquities community and keep abreast of the latest finds, intending to obtain them for her "associates" through illicit means.

Background: Her foundation supports several museums of natural history and culture. She keeps her calm in most situations, though, as part of her cover, she will make a show of being concerned about how the foundation's money is being spent and will express disdain for the general public's ignorance of cultural exhibits. She dutifully attends galas, exhibit openings and charitable functions. Her aim is to exploit oversights in the archiving procedures of museums to steal artifacts of historical and monetary value for the secret society to which she belongs.

Traits: *(TT) Criminal, leader, wealthy*

Melinda Thompson 737

Conflicted Executive

"Do you ever wonder if the weapons we make are used the wrong way?"

Appearance: Smudged glasses, scuffed shoes, and a wrinkled blouse stain her professional look.

Roleplaying: Her curt replies and sharp comments border on offensive.

Personality: She is sly and plays her cards close, but the pressure is getting to her.

Motivation: Melinda's charity is more important to her than her integrity, or even her life.

Background: A career as an executive for a military supplier was turned upside-down when her aircraft was forced down in a tribal area of a Middle Eastern country. She was shocked to see the effects of the weapons her company made, and during the week they were stuck there, she decided to do something about it. On returning to her work, she began to steal from her employer. At first it was small-time theft, but she is now embezzling millions of dollars a year, which she uses to start medical clinics and schools in the area she saw. Now she's in too deep to stop, and her guilt wouldn't let her stop even if she could. Her latest step is over the edge: In return for their protection and cooperation in her charities, she has traded some of the company's experimental armaments to the kind of person who has no problems whatsoever with killing civilians.

Traits: *(KS) Business, criminal, leader, wealthy, white collar*

Father Smith 738

Bandit Priest

"There is no forgiveness for you here, or in the next life."

Appearance: Tall, thin, and lean, with sunken, sleep-crusted eyes, stubble, and deep wrinkles, Father Smith is unkempt and his priest's vestments are rumpled and worn.

Roleplaying: Father Smith speaks in a sharp, harsh voice. He is a man of few words and little patience. Anyone who mistakes him for a real priest and asks for help or guidance is likely to be harangued about the uselessness of faith and the foolishness of belief in God.

Personality: An angry and disillusioned man, Father Smith is bitter and his outlook on life is grim. He seems to only be living as an alternative to laying down and dying.

Motivation: Bitterly angry at the church and God, Father Smith spends all his time actively working against everything he used to support.

Background: Father Smith—the name he uses today—was a man of the cloth from a young age. He led his flock with passion and energy and stood as a moral beacon and example of faith. Despite Father Smith's years of exemplary service, when he was accused of stealing money and valuables from the church by a parishioner, he was quickly outcast. Outraged, he adopted his new identity to avoid bill collectors and deny his past and began preying on the institution that rejected him by ransacking churches and robbing high-ranking clergy.

Traits: *(MN) Aggressive, criminal, impoverished, religious, stealthy, zealot*

Felicia Sandalwood 739

Crossword Killer

"3-down is 'How does this worthless piece of human refuse die?' Let's find out together, shall we?"

Appearance: Now 27, Felicia still dresses like she's 17. She favors large, outlandish hats that don't match her outfits.

Roleplaying: Felicia is angry and hateful, and demonstrates her prodigious intellect at every opportunity.

Personality: Felicia is haunted by a single, defining event in her past. She constantly thinks about the day she lost the national crossword competition, stoking the fire of her hatred for male nerds of all kinds. Ironically, nerdy guys find her very approachable, which only makes her job easier.

Motivation: Felicia wants to wipe out her greatest failure by killing everyone she thinks might have been involved in "the conspiracy."

Background: Felicia is better known as the "Crossword Killer," the nation's most prolific serial murderer who's still at large. An avid crossword puzzle lover, Felicia made it to her first national crossword competition at age 17, made one huge mistake in her final match, and faded from view. She believes her "error" was the culmination of a vast conspiracy in the male-dominated crossword world—and her ego has never recovered. She became a serial killer a few years after losing the competition, and she focuses her rage on male nerds, especially crossword enthusiasts. The Crossword Killer dips a quill pen in her victims' blood and uses it to complete a crossword puzzle, which she leaves at the crime scene.

Traits: *(MR) Criminal, eccentric, genius, notorious, scholar*

Sonja Texeira, "The Cowgirl" 740

Animated Bandit

"Hello folks, hate to spoil your fine dinner, but a gal has to work. Please take your valuables and toss them into this bag. Don't mind this Desert Eagle; she'll stay quiet if you do what you're told."

Appearance: In her early twenties, Sonja wears her straight brown hair in a ponytail. She dresses in a southwestern style, including cowboy boots and hat, and a bandana over her face.

Roleplaying: She acts like a classic Western movie bandit, tipping her hat, saying "ma'am," and even twirling her Desert Eagle.

Personality: Sonja is a very active and bubbly person. People find her pleasant even while she's robbing them. She has trouble sitting still, or settling in any one place.

Motivation: She is a thrill seeker who does what she does for the thrill and for the money.

Background: Working in a burger joint in a poor part of Texas, Sonja was destined to get knocked up and get married. Unable to face this future, she stole all the money in the cash register, ran to the pawnshop, and got herself a gun. Shortly after, she stole a motorcycle and took off. Now she travels from town to town making bold robberies in restaurants, homes, and the occasional bank. Her crimes are well known and the news has dubbed her "The Cowgirl." So far, she has avoided killing anyone in her robberies, but that day may come.

Traits: *(PV) Charming, criminal, notorious*

Aleksei Alexandrov 741

Militant Leninist

"The world deserves a chance to see communism as it should be, not as strongmen corrupt it to be."

Appearance: Tall and very strong, Aleksei's build and confidence make women swoon. His dark hair has feathers of gray that only make him look more distinguished; his blue-gray eyes twinkle with laughter, inviting close confidences.

Roleplaying: His words often seem to contain extra consonants—an extra "k" or two apiece.

Personality: Aleksei leads with charm, trying to disarm women first. He compliments women honestly and treats them as equals, pointing out that his lieutenants are women. Men he deals with brusquely, often delegating negotiations to his lieutenants.

Motivation: His education leads him to communism, but he's a man for doomed causes in general. He wants to establish a perfect society in an imperfect world.

Background: Aleksei spearheaded Russian efforts in several skirmishes and wars in the 1980s, developing a reputation as a deadly sniper, a force for the proletariat. Russia's reduced role after communism's fall didn't sit well with him; he continued fighting for the underdog as a mercenary, but found that few leaders still espoused communist ideals. He remains dedicated to overthrowing oppressors and establishing a state where true equality is practiced. PCs might find themselves at cross-purposes with Aleksei as he bumps off allied strongmen, or establishes zones of lawlessness in weaker countries—where communism can finally be practiced as it was meant to be.

Traits: *(SM) Beautiful, leader, military, stealthy*

Lauren Chase 742

Flirtatious Burglar

"So are you just going to buy me drinks all night or do you know somewhere where we could have more intimate conversation? Didn't you say your balcony faces the beach?"

Appearance: Lauren is a gorgeous woman with long black hair. She usually wears a short dress that hugs her perfect figure, unless the venue calls for something more appropriate. She wears trendy shoes and accessories that double as conversation pieces.

Roleplaying: She is a party girl. She knows all of the trendy drinks and dances well. She knows how to make and hold eye contact. She's all about the fun, providing someone else is picking up the tab.

Personality: Lauren cares little about her victims. She's out to enrich herself and her associates. She's also a bit of a hedonist and enjoys playing with her victim before robbing the poor soul blind.

Motivation: She wants money and enjoys having fun while acquiring it.

Background: Lauren is a burglar. She meets her victims at party venues and, once she's ascertained that the victim is wealthy and lives alone, she ingratiates herself with the victim. Once in the victim's house, Lauren encourages her victim to point out the valuable items. She's also played victim before just to see where the money is kept. Lauren then slips her mark a sleep-inducing drug and calls her associates to help her rob the place, having already bypassed the house's security.

Traits: *(WC) Beautiful, charming, criminal*

Bianca Whitford 743

Bratty Carjacker

"If they didn't want me to steal it, they shouldn't have made it so easy!"

Appearance: Tall and leggy, Bianca's hair is short, tousled messily, and blond. She dresses well in the latest fashions, designer sunglasses, and lavish jewelry.

Roleplaying: Bianca is arrogant and hyper. She rolls her eyes, dismisses others out of hand, and uses excessive annoying body language when talking.

Personality: Selfish and self-indulgent, Bianca is interested only in her own desires. She sees others as an annoyance and a barrier to getting her own way. She feels persecuted by law enforcement, who she believes should be leaving her alone and catching "real criminals."

Motivation: Bianca lives for the thrill of the chase and the high life her profession provides her with.

Background: Bianca grew up in a middle class neighborhood. She started hanging out with "the wrong crowd" and soon learned to love the adrenalin high and cash that breaking the law provided. Gravitating towards high-end crimes with big payoffs, she specialized in stealing very expensive cars, a specialty that enables her to turn a few minutes' work into thousands of dollars. Sometimes she will smash and grab, but she prefers to employ subtler methods, like using a stolen identity to buy cars under false names. Her thievery supplies multiple chop shops and underworld collectors and fuels her expensive tastes in fashion, toys, and cars of her own.

Traits: *(MN) Criminal, stealthy, wealthy*

Tasha Nova 744

Glamorous Thief

"I'm a patron of the arts, darling, not a thief. Besides, I have enough money tucked away to live comfortably for the rest of my life. Why risk it on this rather….exquisite…piece?"

Appearance: An intriguing blend of old world elegance and new world style, Tasha wears her hair short, accentuating her high cheek bones and flawless face. She prefers revealing designer clothing and is always dressed well, whether going for a walk in the park or attending a gallery function.

Roleplaying: Tasha is always glamorous and charming. She never stops smiling and knows just what to say to put people at ease. Occasionally, Tasha seems a bit distant, as if something weighs heavily in her mind.

Personality: She enjoys the thrill of the con, using her wiles to steal priceless artifacts and money. For her it's all a game, and she doesn't mind who she burns. Tasha has become such a chameleon that it's difficult to know where she truly stands on anything.

Motivation: She enjoys stealing things, especially when the theft challenging.

Background: Tasha often speaks with a French or Russian accent, but she's really an American orphan. She grew up in foster homes and wanted a glamorous lifestyle. As she got older, she learned how to con people and steal things, attaching herself to experts while convenient and then leaving them behind once she'd learned all she could. She can be ruthless towards anyone who gets in her way.

Traits: *(WC) Charming, criminal, mysterious, white collar*

Lord Finley Barmlay 745

Distinguished Mastermind

"My word. I really expected my adversaries to have a better command of the language. As heroes, you are truly a disappointment."

Appearance: He wears a formal, well-tailored three-piece suit (dark in the winter, white in the spring and summer, gray in the fall) with a bowler. He is immaculate. He keeps his thin dark mustache perfectly trimmed.

Roleplaying: He often stops to correct henchmen on their grammar and diction. He makes them repeat the offending word or phrase until it is correct.

Personality: He is condescending toward those he thinks are a lesser class, such as the majority of the Great Unwashed. He considers himself to be on par with the aristocrats of the world, which he believes justifies his criminal actions.

Motivation: He has a particular taste for acquiring objects of delicate construction and immense worth, but he's not above robbing the occasional bank or casino to finance his outlandish schemes.

Background: He was born into a family of noble blood in Great Britain; the family has long-since disowned him because of his deeds. He carries on, bolstered by his own considerable holdings and his numerous schemes. Of course, he rarely takes part in a heist himself, always firmly establishing an alibi and then relying on his henchmen to provide further deniability. He remains untouched by the law, living lavishly on his estate in the north of England.

Traits: *(TT) Charming, humorous, wealthy*

Estaban Delgado 746

Immortal World-Shaper

"History is a mirror into the future. The crosswinds of time are powerless if you bend with them."

Appearance: Estaban is tall and swarthy with a finely groomed dark black goatee. He is in his mid-fifties and has long, jet-black hair tied back neatly. He wears a button-down shirt with a tailored vest and ascot. A long housecoat of crushed velvet and corduroy gives him a distinguished look.

Roleplaying: He talks in riddles and has a disarming Spanish accent. He speaks with his hands and ensures that his guests are well attended to. Jabs appear to have no effect upon his veneer.

Personality: Estaban is remarkably well informed in matters of history and displays wisdom that is shocking. It is as if a part of him is still in the past—or he lived it himself. He's experienced enough to not fall for simple ruses and sees through most falsehoods.

Motivation: He desires the acquisition of power, something that he has spent—he claims—many centuries doing.

Background: All manner of art lines the walls of his mansions, and he lives a lifestyle to rival a king's. Rumors persist that Delgado is immortal and has lived for generations, every so often faking his death and transferring his wealth to a new identity. If these rumors are to be believed, Delgado has helped shaped the development of nations and guided events to his benefit.

Traits: *(DM) Academic, ancient, mysterious, occult, power hungry, wealthy*

Stu Owen 747

Murderous Hunter

"The rules are simple. You are dropped off in the middle of 10,000 acres of wilderness. You are given survival gear but no map or compass. You get a one-day head start. If you can escape, you will receive a fortune in cash. If I find you first, I will kill you."

Appearance: He is bald, with a full beard and a tan face and scalp. He is in great physical condition and it shows. He wears simple, high-quality hunting clothes and always has a knife and a pistol on his belt.

Roleplaying: Stu toys with people, and is very sadistic. When others are speaking, he'll do rude things to distract them, like tap his finger on a table's surface, start whistling a tune, or even throw his knife into the wall.

Personality: He loves being the person in charge. He thrives on being wealthy and powerful. He is a sociopath and an elitist.

Motivation: He wants to prove that he is above the law, and that no one is a threat to him. He believes that he is superior to all other people and that he can do whatever he wants.

Background: Stu made his fortune through the sale of conflict diamonds, and he bought large sections of wilderness. He always enjoyed hunting, but he found it unsatisfying that animals were fearful by instinct and not reason. That is when he started to hunt human prey.

Traits: *(PB) Abhorrent, criminal, focal, outdoorsman, wealthy*

Norton Foley 748

Egotistical Mayor

"This is my town, son. You'd better learn to play by my rules."

Appearance: A short, stocky man in his early fifties, Norton keeps his thinning curly hair cut short and always wears a clean, light-colored suit. His fingers stink of pipe smoke and he always has a pipe and tobacco on hand.

Roleplaying: Norton is overly friendly in a predatory way. He constantly reminds his conversation partners who's the boss, often pointing out others that are in his pocket. He plays at being respectable, but he always has his fingers in several pies.

Personality: He is king of his domain. Norton enjoys lording his power over the rest of the townsfolk. He's egotistical and believes himself to be the smartest person in town. Deep down, however, he feels that people are plotting against him and takes pains to assuage those feelings.

Motivation: He wants to maintain the status quo as the ruler of his domain, with his "subjects" serving him. Should someone threaten that arrangement Norton would spare no expense to be rid of them.

Background: Norton is a dying breed, a local mayor who has authoritarian power and influence. The city council is afraid of him and the police chief is in his back pocket. Norton has a stake in most of the town businesses and changes ordinances to suit his needs. He's suspicious of strangers and tries to move them along before they cause trouble.

Traits: *(WC) Business, leader, police, political*

Jessica Knowls 750

Mercenary Pilot

"I'm the right person for this mission, and you know it. My plane's the best you've got, I have the training and reflexes your men lack, and I'm a mercenary—expendable. Sir. Send me."

Appearance: Jessica keeps combat-fit; curly brown hair tops a slender 5'10" frame.

Roleplaying: She looks at people through her sunglasses, never removing them, projecting calm confidence. Jessica still has a Southern drawl, which she exaggerates if people show impatience.

Personality: She's rough, ready, and very confident. She'll dress appropriately for a meeting with the Emir, but is back in a flight suit ASAP.

Motivation: She grew up knowing that she wanted to fly and being told that she could do anything she dreamed. She loves the adrenaline that comes with combat missions. Flight is everything—it doesn't matter what side she fights for.

Background: Long denied a chance to fly combat missions in the U.S. Air Force, Jessica signed on as mercenary air support for Middle Eastern and African governments. Two tours ago, she fled a collapsing government position with her Fighting Falcon; while it's pricey to maintain, she gets her pick of assignments. Providing air support for extermination missions twinges her conscience, but she's loyal to her contract.

Traits: *(SM) Adventurer, military, pilot*

Yamada Masateru 749

Obstinate Yakuza Leader

"I do not believe we have to follow your orders any longer, Oyabun."

Appearance: Covered in dragon and demon tattoos, Masateru projects strength and anger from his cold, hard face.

Roleplaying: Masateru doesn't back down from anyone. He pushes past people, taking whatever he wants by force. He rules his gang through strength of will and challenges even the authority of those above him within the organization.

Personality: His arrogance knows no bounds. He sees himself as inferior to no man, and if he can take something by force, it only proves he is stronger. Masateru doesn't show fear and only feigns obedience to his master's wishes.

Motivation: He wants power for himself and his gang. He doesn't care who gets in the way.

Background: Masateru started life on the streets as a low-ranking thug, but it wasn't too long until his strength and anger brought him to the attention of higher-ups. Using him as a tool to take out the members who were getting too big for their britches, the Yakuza bosses created their own worst nightmare. Masateru consolidated his own power amongst the young and ambitious gang members, and he began to erode the long-established power bases in the organization. The organization has been plotting how to get rid of him, but he has built up defenses of his own. The situation is beginning to boil over, and wars for control have broken out on the streets.

Traits: *(JA) Criminal, leader, notorious*



Yamada Masateru

Artist: Avery Liell-Kok

NEUTRALS

From cops to lawyers to washed-up football stars to John and Jane Q. Public, this section is chock full of modern NPCs of all stripes, from the vain to the selfless to the cowardly. They're a diverse bunch, well-suited to playing a variety of roles in your game. If your players express a sudden interest in the waitress at the diner, you can give her a personality and backstory on the spot—and the same is true for dozens and dozens of other characters from this chapter that the PCs can encounter.

Larry Poole 751

Angry Conspiracy Nut

"It's all a conspiracy! The government covered it all up because they're in bed with Big Oil! We could all have been driving solar-powered cars since the '80s!"

Appearance: Larry has short red hair that starts to curl when it's time for a haircut. He is either sun burnt or pale white; there is no tan. He's an angry young man who's always wearing a T-shirt with some revolutionary group or cause emblazoned on it.

Roleplaying: He can't help but be angry. He spends most of his time blogging about it, even when he's on the move. His treatment of others is directly related to how closely they match his beliefs. He spits accusations at anyone on "the other side," treating them as if they are directly responsible for any perceived wrongdoing on the part of the government.

Personality: From the time he was young, Larry has always dreamed of a social utopia. He fervently believes in his causes as if it were religious dogma, and treats those on the other side as "sinners" or "evil."

Motivation: He wants to change the world, preferably overnight.

Background: No one really knows Larry's background; he often changes it to make the government or a particular group relevant to harming his life. That said, Larry is mostly harmless. He blogs constantly and goes to rallies, but stops short of anything beyond an organized peaceful protest. Larry is in contact with some radical factions.

Traits: *(WC) Eccentric, political*

Felicia Natiana 752

Rookie Spy

"Wow! You are in the Air Force! You work at the base where they are working on that project that I read about in the newspaper. You must be pretty important to work there. You want to give me a tour of the base? I don't know about that. How can I trust you? Well, I guess I am interested..."

Appearance: Felicia is a petite and buxom young woman with a toned body. Her brunette hair is short so she can wear various wigs if needed. She is physically attractive, and she uses her body language to accentuate her sex appeal.

Roleplaying: She is flirtatious and suggestive. She will often lean forward to distract a man with her cleavage, and she uses other obvious tricks of seduction.

Personality: Felicia is a master of seduction, but not of deception. She will eventually begin to show signs of frustration if she does not make constant progress with her mission.

Motivation: She wants to prove herself to her fellow operatives, who think she is a one-trick pony. The problem is that she actually is a one-trick pony.

Background: Felicia has always craved excitement, and joined the Army at an early age. After being discharged, she looked for work in the intelligence community. She has held numerous roles supporting others, but now she is finally a field agent and she wants to make a big impression on her superiors.

Traits: *(PB) Adventurer, beautiful, charming, military, mysterious*

Stephen Johnson 753

Political Activist

"You're not stealing my vote this time!"

Appearance: A somewhat nerdy but professionally dressed man, Stephen will suddenly erupt into a shouting frenzy over something as minor as a stranger's bumper sticker.

Roleplaying: Stephen regularly drops his political opinions into everyday conversation, and is verbally abusive if anyone disagrees.

Personality: He identifies strongly with the fringe elements of a political party (pick one; it really doesn't matter).

Motivation: He'd love to get back at those bastards, just once.

Background: Stephen's first foray into politics was a decade or so ago, when a candidate's message resonated with him, and he began to look into the situation. Finding strongly worded opinions on the Internet, he began to surround himself with like-minded friends and sources of information. As his circle of friends and sources of information shrank to include only those he agreed with, he became even more extreme in his views and actions. He quit his job and has gone to work for a number of political organizations (a few of which employed methods of persuasion not quite legal or ethical), organized rallies and fundraisers, and has even started looking into more direct action against his perceived opponents. Aimed in the right direction, he could be a hell of a distraction for the PCs—or their opponents.

Traits: *(KS) Abhorrent, eccentric, political, white collar, zealot*

Jaquan Otumbo 754

Preoccupied Clerk

"Huh? No need to yell. This is the latest download. Very cool."

Appearance: He's casually dressed in a T-shirt and jeans. His sneakers always look brand new. Even when wearing the convenience store's on-duty smock and name badge, he looks totally comfortable. The earbuds to his portable mp3 player are either worn or dangle prominently.

Roleplaying: As often as not, he'll have his eyes closed, his head bobbing in tune to the rhythm coming from his headphones, oblivious to everything around him.

Personality: He's friendly and willing to help—if a customer can catch his notice. Anything to do with music completely demands his attention, from a catchy commercial jingle on a video monitor to a website with the latest hip-hop releases.

Motivation: He has dreams of being a musician himself, and he thinks that if he just immerses himself deeply enough in all things musical, he'll absorb the necessary talent. He doesn't realize the skill, dedication, or practice required.

Background: He's not partial to any genre—his appreciation of music knows no bounds. He's never actually learned an instrument, trained his voice, or written a piece, but his instincts are good. He is plugged into the entire musical community. Those contacts—musicians, bookers and producers—are regular customers who will bring recordings to him, using him as a sounding board, relying on his insight.

Traits: *(TT) Dilettante, entertainment*

Miles Dersby 755

Enthusiastic Scholar

"And in the third hour of my presentation I'll be covering Pharaoh Sneferu's construction of the Bent Pyramid..."

Appearance: A short man in his mid-forties, Miles has a slight build, close-cropped dirty blond hair, and bright green eyes. He usually wears conservative clothes, thick glasses, and a bow-tie.

Roleplaying: Miles speaks rapidly and with great passion, waving his arms around when he talks and constantly adjusting and fidgeting with his glasses.

Personality: An enthusiastic scholar, for Miles the collection, preservation, and sharing of knowledge is the meaning of life. The months of research it takes to find each new volume for his collection is a thrilling hunt for him.

Motivation: Miles seeks to obtain rare and unusual books and manuscripts for his library, and to share the knowledge within with fellow enthusiasts.

Background: The son of a wealthy industrialist, Miles' interest in academia was encouraged by his family, and continued into his adult life. He continues to pursue his love of knowledge, traveling the world seeking new tomes for his personal library, which rivals that of even major universities. Miles gladly shares the knowledge within his books with anyone who is eager to learn and willing to treat the books with respect, and is a regular guest lecturer at various institutes of higher learning.

Traits: *(MN) Academic, scholar, wealthy*

Sam Johnson 756

Frustrated Bricklayer

"Let's have a beer and put this whole thing behind us."

Appearance: Sam is huge—6'6" and 250 lbs. of muscle. He wears typical construction gear by day, but has some really nice club outfits.

Roleplaying: He plays a dumb jock, trying to get people to underestimate him, before coming back with an appropriate literature major quote—most often by Ezra Pound—while wearing a wide grin.

Personality: Life turned out to be a joke; after busting his ass for a college degree, he's surprised to still be hauling bricks. It's nice to make other people the butt of the joke sometimes.

Motivation: Breaking his back hurts—but women do love his muscles, so there's some compensation. Besides, if you can't laugh, you're already dead.

Background: Sam grew up a bricklayer's son; he loved his dad and saw how carrying the house exhausted him and drove him to drink. His aunt helped him save for college, but despite being at the top of his class he couldn't find a job. He did meet some friends, who taught him a cool ritual the he uses to "psychically mark" the women he's slept with—something only he and his friends can normally see. It's his joke; the girls think they're just using a boy toy, but they're added to his permanent public "collection."

Traits: *(SM) Abhorrent, laborer, occult*

Garrett "Underscore" Hendrickson 757

Geeky Anarchist

"I'm going to drop a logic bomb behind their firewall just for the lulz. Frack that!"

Appearance: A thin, pale young man in his mid-twenties, he wears a tan polo shirt and black jeans. His high-top sneakers' laces are undone and he carries a backpack that strains under the weight of its contents. His dark hair has small flakes in it and he smells like he could use a bath. He deftly walks around obstacles while furiously typing into his phone.

Roleplaying: He's shy and unaccustomed to conversation, although anything to do with computers or roleplaying games gets his interest immediately. He multitasks and will carry on a conversation while texting on his phone simultaneously.

Personality: A geek's geek, Garrett prefers to be called by his handle, "Underscore." He has no interest in dealing with other people unless it's online, where he feels comfortable. He's a storehouse of useless geek trivia and can recite lines from all his favorite episodes of "Battlestar Galactica."

Motivation: He wants to prove his skill by completing more and more difficult hacks.

Background: Garrett is a computer science major, but in his spare time, he's an accomplished hacker with some notoriety. He could teach at the university he's so far ahead. Garrett's social outlets are small and geeky, such as his weekly D&D group. His custom laptop has a large bumper sticker on it, "I break for 32HD Red Dragons!"

Traits: *(DM) Academic, humorous, notorious, stealthy*

Kate Dauber 758

Cynical Attorney

"I can't tell you that, it would violate attorney-client privilege! However, if you happen to drive by that red cabin up on Foster's Lake, you may see an interesting vehicle parked outside… Beneath a tarp."

Appearance: Kate wears a professional suit during the day but is more comfortable in a T-shirt and jeans. She usually ties her hair back and prefers glasses to contact lenses. While not exceptionally attractive or slim, Kate has a sweet smile and a "girl next door" air about her.

Roleplaying: In the courtroom, Kate is an aggressive advocate for her client. In her office or on the street, Kate is very cynical. The legal system has failed for her one too many times and her bias is palpable.

Personality: She used to be idealistic and optimistic, but lately she's become cynical and depressed. She perks up when there's an opportunity to work around the law to "get" an obvious criminal. In her personal life, Kate is a bit wild, allowing her problems to slide off her shoulders for the evening.

Motivation: She wants justice, even when the law prohibits it.

Background: Kate began her legal career as a defense attorney. Unfortunately, many of her successful cases ended with her clients committing more crimes. Kate then became a prosecutor but grew disenchanted as the system still put hardened criminals back on the streets because they cut the right deals. Now, Kate bends and breaks the law when necessary to seek justice.

Traits: *(WC) Aggressive, counselor, criminal, police*

Jack Spenser, "Absolut Mayhem" 759

Rebellious NSA Hacker

"I know it's against DOD regulations, but I gave myself root on the server and installed a FragArena so that we could face off against Signals Intelligence."

Appearance: Jack is in his early twenties, with brown hair and an average build. He has blue eyes that he usually covers with sunglasses. He often wears jeans and geek-themed T-shirts.

Roleplaying: Jack is too casual, putting his feet up on tables and addressing people by their first names.

Personality: He is a cocky expert who knows he is too good to be seriously reprimanded. He vents his dislike for authority through wisecracks and pranks.

Motivation: Jack resents his current situation and wants his freedom, but will not miss a chance to prove how good he is.

Background: "Absolut Mayhem" spent years hacking computer networks, often to prove they were vulnerable. He avoided authorities until an NSA hacker named "DataSpike" found him. Jack was arrested, and through a covert program called HEADHUNTER he was given the choice between federal prison or a job at the NSA. Reluctantly, Jack took the latter. He has made trouble for his NSA handlers, playing various pranks, but he enjoys using his hacking skills against some very scary people for his country. Over time, Jack has started to realize the importance of his job. He has just received word that DataSpike has gone rogue, and he has been assigned to find him.

Traits: *(PV) Genius, military, notorious, white collar*

Dominic Kopor 760

Miserly Coin Dealer

"No, it is too much. You take less, or you keep the coin. I care not, for I have many coins."

Appearance: A wizened man in his late seventies, Dominic dresses simply and eschews signs of wealth.

Roleplaying: Dominic speaks in a low voice, shaking his head disapprovingly without provocation. He habitually rubs a coin between his thumb and forefinger.

Personality: He pinches every penny and gouges his customers whenever possible. He would rather not sell a coin than give it up for less than his asking price. Dominic loves to bargain, and almost always comes out ahead.

Motivation: Dominic is obsessed with antique coins, and he leads the most Spartan existence he can. He's terrified that he'll die a pauper.

Background: Dominic has a real gift for spotting a good deal on a rare coin and is deeply reluctant to let it go for a price that someone would be willing to pay. Consequently, some of the most famous antique coins in the world are squirreled away in his vault—because if he put them out for sale, he might have to part with them. He's also an expert at identifying old coins, and he has a deep knowledge of the history of currency and minting coinage. He lives in a tiny apartment, sleeps on his couch, and spends as little money as possible. His hoarded wealth and extensive coin collection make him a tempting target for thieves.

Traits: *(MR) Business, eccentric, merchant, scholar, wealthy*

Patton Cord

761

Greedy Con Artist

"Yes, I was down at the docks two nights ago. It was the night before trash collection. And, no, I didn't see nuttin'."

Appearance: Patton appears to be a homeless man. He's young, gaunt, wears shabby clothing, and stinks. In truth, he's a young college student with a full scholarship and attends galleries in trendy conservative suits.

Roleplaying: He is abrasive and almost hostile. He tries to end conversations before they start, as he's too busy to deal with them (nor does he want to tip people off that he's not a homeless man).

Personality: Patton is a frustrated art student who learned that he could make money by "recreating" the works of legitimate artists and sculptors. He disguises himself as a homeless man and goes through garbage for materials.

Motivation: He wants to make money and hopes to be a successful artist one day.

Background: Patton was an art student who dreamed of making money so that he could enjoy the rest of his life. Unfortunately, no one wanted to take a chance on an unknown. Patton imitated a well-known artist and anonymously passed off his work as hers, earning him a hefty paycheck. Patton now pulls art cons regularly. Through his disguise, Patton has also learned a great deal about the shady side of the city.

Traits: *(WC) Artist, criminal, mysterious*



Patton Cord

Artist: Matt Morrow

Iggy O'Reilly 762

Hardcore Gamer

"You think she's a government agent? I dunno... She's not cute enough."

Appearance: A somewhat overweight teenager, Iggy has long hair and the faint beginnings of a scraggly beard. He wears a T-shirt displaying a clever but nerdy play on words.

Roleplaying: He describes things in RPG terms, so a stumble is a "botched reflex save," and a lucky shot is a "natural 20."

Personality: Nerdy and introverted, Iggy takes refuge in his games to the extent that they significantly impact his view of reality.

Motivation: Now that he's found something like his games, he wants to be the hero.

Background: Like many gamers, Iggy is very cerebral, somewhat socially awkward, and not terribly athletic. For years, he buried himself in all aspects of gaming: tabletop, computer, console, publishing, collecting, etc. His obsession with gaming has slightly warped his sense of reality such that he would have no problem with the discovery that aliens exist, or that the world is run by a cabal of rich industrialist magicians. He is a rich resource of advice for what to do in case of zombie outbreaks, WWIII, or alien invasions, but not so much for more mundane issues such as natural disasters or economic tumult. His treasure trove of games and supplements contains information that should be highly classified, such as the stats of advanced weapons systems, the location and description of Internet trunk lines, and rituals for summoning supernatural beings.

Traits: *(KS) Academic, child, dilettante, eccentric, humorous, impoverished, mysterious, scholar*

Neil Pasko 763

Street Savior

"You don't have to tell me how you got this GSW, but you do have to promise me that this ends tonight."

Appearance: Neil is a short, hairy man with a full beard in his late twenties. He favors military jackets, baseball caps, and boots. He has a nylon backpack with him at all times.

Roleplaying: In a calm voice, Neil speaks with authority. He addresses everyone with respect. He often asks, "What can I do to make your day a bit easier?"

Personality: He is a man who has dedicated himself to helping those living on the street. Neil is a virtuous man who avoids violence (though not self-defense), vices, and even harsh language.

Motivation: He has discovered his true purpose in life: helping those living in the street.

Background: Neil grew up in a suburban town in a middle-class household. He surprised his family by enrolling into the Army rather than attending college. In the army, he was trained as a medic. During his tours, he discovered his calling while tending to refugees. After the army, he moved to the city's poorest neighborhood and began working in shelters. Realizing more needed to be done, he began acquiring medical supplies and providing free medical aid to the homeless, the gangs, and the prostitutes. Neil knows everything that happens on the streets, and is the person you go to when you're hurt and don't want to answer questions.

Traits: *(PV) Medic, military, saintly*

Rita Von Sauss 764

Egotistical Artist

"Ze heels do not match ze stockings or ze pallet! What, am I surrounded by idiozs?"

Appearance: Rita has short black hair in a bob and wears expensive silk blouses, leather miniskirts with torn stockings, and ruby red lipstick. She has a thin rubber collar she wears around her neck. Her eyes are an off-putting gray color, seemingly endless in depth. She carries a small folio and sketchbook.

Roleplaying: Rita has a thick Eastern European accent and looks down on others who aren't in the art world. She casually waves around a stick of drawing charcoal like a cigarette. Annoyingly, she refers to people as "darling."

Personality: Rita is a stereotypical art snob; she views her designs as cutting edge and a source of profound statements on the state of society. People who dislike her work "just don't get it."

Motivation: She's eager to pursue the cause of the moment, whatever will get her the free press she so desperately craves.

Background: Fleeing an impoverished Eastern European country, Rita remade herself in the U.S. and is now a noted fashion designer with a small but eager following. She uses her storied background to present herself as a political activist, but in reality she's a glory-seeker. She'll throw in her influence for the most questionable cause if she feels it will help get her name out. She fancies herself as a patron of the arts.

Traits: *(DM) Artist, eccentric, political*

Dr. Melissa Clayton 765

Weapons Specialist

"The battlefield of the future is not one of explosions and carnage. It is clean, surgical, and precise. Do not confuse this with peace. The brutality will still be present, and lives will always be lost, but the infrastructure will remain so that we may rebuild quickly once peace returns."

Appearance: Melissa is taller than most women and has a sturdy figure. She wears glasses with chic frames and dresses conservatively. She wears her hair in an afro.

Roleplaying: She cleans her glasses when she is deep in thought; doing so eliminates all visual distractions, since she has horrible eyesight without them.

Personality: She is a pragmatic person, and her scientific reasoning dominates others in conversation.

Motivation: Dr. Clayton knows that the elimination of war is impossible, but with the right weapons, a war may be ended quickly and with fewer deaths.

Background: Melissa was born to poverty in a war-torn nation. She remembers the horrors of combat taking place around her as a small child, and how her father risked his life to smuggle her and her mother out of the country. She dedicated herself at an early age to the science of weaponry, at first with the hope of preventing all loss of life in combat, but now she realizes that the best she can do is minimize it. Her designs are cutting edge, bordering on science fiction, and the results are devastating.

Traits: *(PB) Famous, military, scientist*

Dr. Sadiki Vilaverde 766

Professor Emeritus

"Would you care for a cup of good coffee, my dear? This is less harsh than the common Turkish brew you probably know."

Appearance: Sadiki is balding across the whole top of his head, with well-trimmed salt and pepper hair below. His eyes are muddled brown, with deeply tanned skin, often wearing slacks and a button-down shirt.

Roleplaying: He speaks clear English with an Egyptian flair, and is most comfortable with chalk or paper in hand—in a classroom setting, ideally.

Personality: Dr. Vilaverde is the head of his department, with several well-cited research papers—he expects respect, particularly from women, and is impatient with challenges from people without similarly impressive backgrounds.

Motivation: He misses the women of home—and fears that he traded them away by studying abroad during the "pairing-off" years. But he's comfortable with the academic lifestyle—habit has shaped him.

Background: Sadiki grew up in Egypt, coming to America for college—and remaining throughout graduate school and into professorship. While he returns to Egypt to visit family every other year or so, he's settled and comfortable in America now. He's an expert in his technical field, up to date on current research and able to interpret forensic data.

Traits: *(SM) Academic, scholar, white collar*

Reilly Whisker 767

Clueless Waitress

"Our appetizers are the Coin Toss, entrees are the First Down, drinks come from the Water Cooler, and we call our gooey delicious desserts the Big Score. You fellas look like you want it all, am I right?"

Appearance: She wears the fancifully short and suggestively tailored cheerleader uniform worn by all the female wait staff of the football-themed chain sports bar and restaurant where she works. She has a bright smile and a slim, attractive body. She has big hair, but usually wears it pulled back into a pony tail.

Roleplaying: She knows how to flounce and offer a flip of a skirt that's guaranteed to generate a generous tip from male customers.

Personality: She's friendly and talkative. She knows the major sports teams and can usually make conversation about the night's big TV games, but she's clueless about anything else happening in the world.

Motivation: She wants to have fun flirting and collect a lot of tips. She's not interested in dating customers—most who come in really aren't her type. (She prefers bookish young men).

Background: She was an athlete and cheerleader in high school who got by on her good looks. She had no interest in going to college, so she started serving when the sports pub opened. She sees a lot of high-profile customers; many of the town's wheeler-dealers of business like to map out their deals while taking dinner or lunch at the pub.

Traits: *(TT) Beautiful, laborer, entertainment*

Stan Corso 768

Mystical Writer

"I'll take a coffee. No, I am not expecting anyone that you can see. But if you see me chatting here, do me a favor and pay no attention."

Appearance: Stan is slightly below average height and weight, with a pale complexion and light brown eyes and hair. His left leg is crippled below the knee. He is well-groomed and wears expensive clothes.

Roleplaying: He relies on an ornate cane to walk, and sits whenever he can.

Personality: At Stan's core, he is romantic. He believes in the goodness and kindness in others. After being burned a few times by those living and dead, he has begun to erect a wall of cynicism.

Motivation: He is driven by his curiosity to learn people's stories and, in many cases, by helping them.

Background: A New Englander, Stan learned early of his gift to see and speak with the dead. In college, Stan pursued writing, and with the stories told to him by his ethereal subjects he was able to land his first book deal. He quickly became a popular writer and earned enough money to live quite comfortably. In his third book, he angered a group of druids, who cursed him, causing the crippling of his leg. Today he lives well, releasing one book a year. Stan has a knack for showing up in the middle of things to help one of his undead friends.

Traits: *(PV) Entertainment, magical, wealthy*

Bethany Rice 769

Overly Generous Housewife

"ANOTHER car? What happened to the last one I bought you?!"

Appearance: A highly attractive woman in her mid-twenties, Bethany has obviously-dyed blond hair and an artificial smile. Tall and leggy, she is always dressed in the hottest new trends.

Roleplaying: The perfect hostess, Bethany is warm and an excellent listener, even if it's all an act. Drawn out of her character, she becomes charmingly awkward.

Personality: Bethany is a bit of an airhead. She dislikes confrontation and upsetting people, so she usually agrees with any requests or demands made on her. She is a genuinely nice person, but others often easily overwhelm her passive personality.

Motivation: She does her best to please everyone, which means that she often gets taken advantage of.

Background: Bethany started her career as a waitress in a very high-end restaurant. She met her future husband there when he became one of her regular customers. They began dating and were married a year later. He is an incredibly wealthy investment banker who is happy to have a trophy wife to show off. Unfortunately, she came with a host of relatives who were more than eager to use her to get something for themselves. Bethany can't stand to tell them "no" and so she spends a great deal of her time and her husband's money placating them.

Traits: *(MN) Beautiful, dilettante, wealthy*

Samantha Beckett 770

Attentive Lawyer

"I'm no Dudley Do-Right, but my clients are guaranteed a fair trial, not a farce."

Appearance: Samantha stands 5'8" in heels, with curly, shoulder-length auburn hair, fierce eyes, and a confident walk. She tends towards skirt suits, particularly for court appearances; tennis clothes are weekend wear.

Roleplaying: She's good at listening, seeming to drink in words. She often repeats what people say, rephrased slightly, to make sure she understands.

Personality: While she needs the truth to build the best case she can, Samantha is also fascinated by people and tries to learn something from everyone.

Motivation: She's trapped by a system where failure to defend her clients means that prison turns them into more intense criminals. Failure is not an option.

Background: Samantha grew up a child of privilege, enjoying a lot of time with her mom, while her dad was often away for work. By her teens she resented her dad's focus on work; he died while she was in law school, just as she was coming to understand his determination and drive—and find it mirrored in herself. She plunged herself into work as a defense lawyer, often volunteering for the indigent. This year she's running for judge, citing the failure of the system and pushing diversion and intervention programs.

Traits: *(SM) Counselor, criminal, power hungry*

Dr. Ian Anderson 771

Vain Zoologist

"I've discovered more new amphibian and reptilian species in the last year alone than any of my peers. I am surely the greatest herpetologist of this generation! So, I think I know how to handle this snake and I don't need you telling–DAMMIT! It bit me!"

Appearance: Dr. Anderson is an older man with thinning hair and a slight pot belly. In the field, he wears hiking boots, shorts, a T-shirt, and a vest with many pockets.

Roleplaying: He micromanages others and refuses to listen to their input. One of his favorite phrases is "Do as I say, please!" in response to anyone doubting his commands.

Personality: Dr. Anderson has an incredible passion for his work, but he has begun to confuse his dedication with proficiency. The truth is, he is only brilliant in one field of study, but believes that he could master any subject with very little effort.

Motivation: He believes that one day he will be awarded an international honor such as the Nobel Prize.

Background: Ian was fascinated with snakes, frogs, and lizards at an early age. He spent hours observing them in the swamps and marshes near his childhood home. In college, he made several interesting discoveries, and soon he was working with some of the greatest names in his profession. He immediately began to think of himself as better than others, and his ego has been growing ever since.

Traits: *(PB) Genius, outdoorsman, primal, scholar*



Floretta Ready

Artist: Avery Liell-Kok

Floretta Ready 772

Harsh Religious Leader

"The morally impure are a blight on society. Show them what compassion you want, but when the end of days comes, the chaff will be swept into the eternal fires."

Appearance: Floretta is an African-American woman in her early thirties. Her hair is in long cornrows, revealing a high forehead. She dresses very conservatively, mostly in black and gray.

Roleplaying: Floretta often has a scowl on her face and a very intense stare. She rarely looks happy.

Personality: Despite her religion, Floretta is a loathsome person who rarely sees anything positive in life. She is obsessed with her own anger towards those that she thinks are unworthy.

Motivation: She believes that she is following her religious calling, but it is a mask for her disgust for amoral people.

Background: Floretta grew up in a very conservative family that attended an equally conservative church. She identified with her church's views and became active in protests and rallies. Her negative attitude and ultra-conservative views were eventually too much, causing her to part from her church, but not before she attracted a group of likeminded followers. They named themselves Council of Ethical Purity (CEP). With the birth of social networking, Floretta expanded CEP by attracting followers through her online writings. Today, the CEP is a sizeable group that targets liberal groups and leaders. Floretta uses her social network to call down protests on any person or organization that draws her attention.

Traits: *(PV) Leader, religious, zealot*

Aldo the Snitch 773

Hedonistic Informant

"I don't know anything about that, but I might remember something if Ben Franklin were to ask me. Is he available?"

Appearance: Aldo is an older man with wrinkled skin. He's painfully thin, with his skin hanging loosely from his bones. He keeps his wispy gray hair tucked beneath a flat cap. Aldo wears a rumpled jacket and well-worn pants. His nose is bulbous and red. He usually smokes a pipe unless he is drinking.

Roleplaying: He is a bit stuck in the past, using slang words and phrases popular three or four decades ago. He name-drops as if everyone of importance on the street is a good friend, even if he only knows them by reputation.

Personality: As long as the money is flowing, Aldo is fun to be around. He is eager to please and enjoys when his information brings a smile to his acquaintance's lips. Unfortunately, all of Aldo's good friends are dead, many of them because of Aldo's admissions.

Motivation: He enjoys selling information for cash to continue living his carefree lifestyle.

Background: Aldo used to be a low-level mob thief before he turned in his boss for a wad of cash. Aldo's biggest issue is that he is neutral in every sense of the word. As long as you pay him, he'll give out information. Thus, characters need to approach Aldo with care and never give him anything that they don't mind him spreading.

Traits: *(WC) Criminal, stealthy*

America Dawn Jones 774

Quirky Wanderer

"Ignore my brother. He talked to the faeries a lot when he was younger."

Appearance: Her tattered hemp sandals, cut-off shorts, bohemian smock, and multiple piercings and tattoos are topped off by a magnificent set of dreadlocks.

Roleplaying: Dawn casually mentions things that are literally fantastic, and is very critical of modern consumer culture.

Personality: Raised well outside mainstream society, she rejects most of its norms.

Motivation: As long as it's fun, and she gets a chance to tweak some noses, she's in.

Background: Born to a pair of free-living hippies and raised during her mother's world travels, Dawn has always followed her own whims. She's a street performer and artist now, and is fluent in a number of languages and cultures. She has a huge pool of contacts around the world, and knows many of the back ways in and out of various countries. Her contacts cover the spectrum of humanity, from a wealthy heiress in England to opium growers in Afghanistan. Dawn enjoys messing with just about anyone, mainly by telling outrageous stories to see how they react. She is mischievous, but she's not cruel, and would not condone violence against anyone who didn't use it first.

Traits: *(KS) Adventurer, artist, eccentric, impoverished, outdoorsman, primal*

Lydia Kosovich 775

Failed Actor

"This dog food commercial is going to be my big break—I can feel it! My therapist's secretary's yoga teacher told me talent scouts watch these all the time..."

Appearance: Lydia is strikingly beautiful, with big, dark eyes and flowing black hair, but there's something…off about her that most people notice after a few minutes, but can't quite put their finger on.

Roleplaying: She's almost irritatingly upbeat about everything, and mentions her inevitable future stardom as often as possible.

Personality: As a consequence of a lifetime of false praise, Lydia lives in a bubble where nothing bad can happen and her success is just moments away. Most people realize that she's incredibly naïve as soon as they meet her, but she perceives herself as an optimist rather than borderline delusional.

Motivation: Lydia wants to be a big star—the greatest actor who ever lived.

Background: Born in a small town in "flyover country," Lydia has always dreamed of being a big Hollywood movie star. Raised on a steady diet of enthusiastic false praise for her talents—which are almost nonexistent—she believes she's destined to become a screen legend. She's not narcissistic, just naïve about her chances of success and wildly off-base about her skill as an actor. The only question is whether or not she'll realize she's a failure before someone takes advantage of her naïveté. Her life is approaching that tipping point, and she's completely oblivious to that fact.

Traits: *(MR) Artist, beautiful, entertainment*

Autumn Hanney 776

Luddite Hippie

"Oh, I know those boys. Nice boys. They stop by after three for a few burritos, before the after-parties. You want to leave a message for them?"

Appearance: A hippie in her late sixties, Autumn has long, thick gray hair that hangs to the middle of her back. She wears vintage hippie clothes, complete with a headband.

Roleplaying: She uses hippie phrases, including "man" and "groovy." She twirls around when she is happy.

Personality: Having lived on the fringes of society for some time, she has no concept of modern technology or culture. Cell phones are "far out," and social networks are "power to the people." Because of this, Autumn comes off a bit naïve.

Motivation: She lives for freedom without "the Man" and enjoys her simple life with no trappings.

Background: Autumn dropped out of Berkeley in 1967, shrugging off the shackles of the establishment. She spent years working on communes and following her favorite bands. Her distrust of "the Man" and her love of freedom kept her on the edge of society. She now lives in a campground, and drives into the city in her beat-up van to run a taco cart in the evenings. Her customers are the bar crowd, gang bangers, and police. She knows everyone on the streets at night, and is an excellent source of information and the occasional dime bag.

Traits: *(PV) Ancient, primal, laborer*

Neal "Cobra Fang" Chuki 777

Noble Wrestler

"Hey, kids! Yep, I'm really Cobra Fang. Want to see my Fang Strike?"

Appearance: Seven feet tall and incredibly hunky, Cobra Fang has deep brown skin, a wide smile, and biceps that are as large around as most people's waists. He often wears a shimmering golden suit with no shirt underneath.

Roleplaying: Expansive, expressive, and gregarious, Neal never does anything small—even when he's off-camera.

Personality: Neal is a genuinely nice guy, and despite his profession, size, and build, he wouldn't hurt a fly outside the ring. He makes friends easily, never forgets a name, and makes a lasting impression on everyone he meets.

Motivation: He's motivated by pure, unadulterated goodness, especially when it comes to sick kids. Professionally, he just wants to show people a good time and help them forget their troubles.

Background: Neal Chuki, better known by his stage name, "Cobra Fang," is a world-famous wrestler (of the "entertainment" variety) with a big heart. Having lost a brother to cancer when he was nine, Neal is passionate about kids, and when he's not in the ring he spends much of his free time visiting terminally ill children in hospitals around the world. He never tells them he's coming, he just shows up, spends the day with them, and leaves them with signed photos, gifts, and mementos. In the ring, he's a consummate showman, drawing every eye with his over-the-top antics.

Traits: *(MR) Artist, beautiful, entertainment, saintly*

Rhonda Brown 778

Blackmailed Housewife

"Please. You have to believe me. I never meant for it to be like this. You've got to help me!"

Appearance: Rhonda is a petite young woman with shoulder-length blond hair, long lashes, and a wistful smile. She wears a deep red pants suit, dark stockings, and conservative heels. She carries a small business attaché and wears a locket on a golden chain around her neck.

Roleplaying: In business, she is confident and demanding, but not unpleasant. She drives a hard bargain and seeks to find compromise. In private she's subservient and eager to please.

Personality: The duality of her life weighs on Rhonda, but she hides it well. For the public she smiles and poses with her husband, but privately she craves to be objectified and used, to her everlasting shame.

Motivation: She is terrified of her secret getting out and will acquiesce to nearly anything to protect it.

Background: A successful marketing director and mother, Rhonda is also married to a sitting senator. Their idyllic lifestyle had its share of minor problems until Rhonda had a lapse of judgment while on a business trip. An evening liaison—with someone of the same sex, no less—turned into another trip, then another, and finally a weekend "convention meeting." Rhonda took part in recorded sexual indiscretions that would end her—and her husband's—career. Trying to end the affair, she's being blackmailed by her lover and is desperate to keep her secret.

Traits: *(DM) Business, political, primal, white collar*

Sawyer Fandango 779

Rockin' Cuss

"When the day is long gone/And the beer's ice cold/It's time to holler, shout, dance, sing, and make love."

Appearance: Long, stringy hair that's going gray hangs out from beneath a distressed cowboy hat with a curled-up brim. He prefers dark gray western shirts and stonewashed jeans. His belt buckle has a silver guitar raised against a lacquered maroon background.

Roleplaying: At nearly all public appearances, he's accompanied by two stunning, leggy women (usually dancers from his concert tour show), also in western wear.

Personality: He's a hard-drinking cuss who wants things done his way. He's enjoying his newfound success and regrets nothing. He knows he's not a family man, nor will he ever be.

Motivation: Every stop is an opportunity to sing his heart out and then party late with his adoring fans, most especially those of the female persuasion.

Background: He toured for a long time as a relative unknown. Record companies wouldn't touch him because he was so hard to deal with, and his lifestyle seemed so destructive. After 20 years on the road, he finally had a succession of hits he produced himself. Since then, he's become a sensation, a throwback to concert country rock, a showman the audience identifies with because he's lived the same hard life.

Traits: *(TT) Artist, entertainment, notorious*

Gertrude Invadir 780

Sharp Researcher

"A better world is not hard to imagine. First, subtract out every man. Wasn't that easy?"

Appearance: Dowdy and severe, Gertrude dresses in dye-free gray and tan skirts. Her face is tanned and Latin, and she has black hair—though her roots have started to glimmer silver.

Roleplaying: She's fearless about publicly debating ideas, following unpleasant thoughts to their logical end. She's quick with a stinging quip, and often has statistics on the tip of her tongue.

Personality: Gertrude is relentless, pressing until you acknowledge her point. She's used to fighting for respect, and insists on wringing public corrections from detractors.

Motivation: She knows her hypotheses are unpopular, but they're right. Letting people avoid the conclusion is mere kindness, not adherence to truth.

Background: Gertrude has been an academic for much of her life, growing up the daughter of professors. Much of her reputation in academic circles is tied to her big projects: matriarchy and gerontocracy. She examines and documents the resulting societal differences—and brings those results up when it's impolitic. She has a dozen grad students who are helping her examine ethnographic data; casually and socially, they're slurred as man-haters.

Traits: *(SM) Abhorrent, academic, leader*

Hilda 781

Kooky Homeless Person

"What are you looking at?! You keep your eyes off my suitcase. You hear me?! No one touches that case but me."

Appearance: Hilda is a middle-aged woman just over five feet tall. Her hair is dirty blond, matted, and in a full-length ponytail. Her clothes are soiled and do not fit well. She always wears a rainbow-colored scarf and drags a rolling suitcase behind her.

Roleplaying: She does not like people looking at her or her stuff. Hilda feverishly scribbles on scraps of paper, which she puts into her suitcase.

Personality: Hilda is clearly mentally disturbed and without proper medication or therapy. Random thoughts rush into her head, with no logical connections. Her memory is poor, so she writes everything down.

Motivation: It is impossible to tell what motivates Hilda. It is clear that her memories are important to her.

Background: Hilda appeared on the streets a few years ago. She has managed to survive and hold onto her suitcase. No one knows what is in the suitcase, though she is seen putting scraps of paper into it. Late at night, Hilda has been heard reciting strings of numbers and equations in her sleep. She claims not to know what they mean. Once a month a black sedan is seen in the neighborhood, and the driver takes a single photo of Hilda and then drives away.

Traits: *(PV) Impoverished, mysterious, outdoorsman, primal*

Captain Maximilian Easton 782

Criminal Mastermind Cop

"You can't eliminate crime. You can only organize and contain crime. You find out what kinds of vices the public will tolerate and you prevent the rest. The secret is to keep the big fish out, and make sure that the little fish stay little. According to this badge, I'm the big fish in this pond."

Appearance: He has a steady and unflinching gaze. His hair has grayed, especially at the temples. He is a giant of a man, and in his perfectly starched police uniform he is an intimidating sight.

Roleplaying: He is all business, all the time. He has a short temper when doing police business, and a short and violent temper when doing criminal business.

Personality: He believes that he is untouchable not because he is special, but because he is smart. He never abuses his power with innocent civilians. He waits until he catches them indulging in a criminal act, and then he lets them know who is in charge.

Motivation: He is tired of having to fight the good fight. He wants to keep the public safe, and that's easier to do when playing dirty. So what if he gets a little something in his pocket for his troubles? He earns it.

Background: There are only so many years of being an honest cop that a man can take. Max found his limit years ago.

Traits: *(PB) Criminal, genius, notorious, police, power hungry*

Shelly Quan 783

Driven Photojournalist

"No, no, no! The action is over THERE!"

Appearance: Shelly is a small, fragile-looking Asian-American woman with a shock of white hair that hangs over her eyes. She is always wearing running shoes and carries a camera and a bag of photography equipment at all times.

Roleplaying: Intense, loud, and prone to getting carried away, Shelly is always in motion. She constantly surveys her surroundings for the best camera angles "just in case."

Personality: Shelly knows what she wants, and will go over, around, or through whoever stands between her and her goal. She is without shame and sometimes seems callous, as she views most tragedies as a chance to "make it big" and ignores the human suffering involved. Uncomfortable in social situations, Shelly uses her camera to insulate herself from unwanted interactions.

Motivation: Ready to throw herself into dangerous situations, Shelly will stop at nothing to get the "perfect shot" that will win her the Pulitzer and make her career.

Background: Shelly's traditionalist parents are slightly disapproving of her career as a freelance photojournalist, which only pushes her to be that much more ruthless in her pursuit of success. To those in her confidence, she claims to be haunted by a benevolent ancestor spirit who tips her off when something big is about to happen. Whether this is true or if Shelly is just a little imaginative or unbalanced is yet to be proven.

Traits: *(MN) Adventurer, aggressive, artist, entertainment, humorous*

Jeremy Crosby 784

Aspiring Occultist

"At that scale, your hand vibrates three or four marks—see? Set it down beside the micrometer and we'll see its true length."

Appearance: Jeremy is 44, with clear Scandinavian ancestry—a solid build, buzzed blond hair, and blue eyes. Chipper and smiling, he wears a professional vest or button-down shirt.

Roleplaying: Precision is all; Jeremy measures several times before acting, cuts as short a distance as he can, then measures the results and tries again.

Personality: Jeremy is expansive, making wide, friendly gestures with his arms and greeting everyone as "my friend."

Motivation: Jeremy wants a more organized universe than the one nature provided; the occult gave him a chance to see and measure behind the scenes.

Background: After losing his wife six years ago, Jeremy found a local organization that studied traditional folkways and religious rituals. He found some solace in the studies, but more in finding an accepting group that prized his eccentricities. Those friends explained that they used their classes to verify the cultural setting of their occult projects. That was immensely appealing to Jeremy; he threw himself in beside them, studying the secret, deeper levels of the world at their side. With his new friends, he's plumbing the structure of the universe behind the curtain—desperately trying to measure everything three times. While his precision and attention to detail have opened up new avenues for the group, hesitation and delays have cost them most of their new power.

Traits: *(SM) Crafter, focal, occult*

Terrance Holt 785

Self-Absorbed Dentist

"You know, if you stopped wriggling so much this wouldn't hurt."

Appearance: A broad-shouldered man and slightly overweight, he always sports comfortable hiking shoes, casual pants, and a white dress shirt. Over that he wears a lab coat that says "D.D.S" on it. His brown hair is parted to the side and crisply cut.

Roleplaying: Dr. Holt doesn't smile and peers seriously over his bifocals. He doesn't like to chat about his patients but will discuss his trade with an undercurrent of speaking down to the masses. His office is adorned with any number of framed plaques and recognition.

Personality: He's the most requested—and expensive—dentist in the area. He's confident to a fault; any mistakes that surface are a byproduct of the patient, his assistants, or defective tools.

Motivation: He's become bored with his self-proclamation of being the best, and now wonders if perhaps he should take on a partner. Defense of his name and achieving more recognition take up his time, as does perfecting his golf swing.

Background: A third generation dentist, Dr. Holt went in a different direction than his father, who ran a small and friendly family practice. Terrance focuses on the elite and consults with movie stars and their ilk on their dental health. On the side, it's rumored he's sleeping with one of his assistants and writes the occasional personal prescription.

Traits: *(DM) Medic, power hungry, white collar*

Dr. Daria Simmons 786

Unethical Chemist

"There is no way that we could have known that Retrinom would cause damage to healthy tissue. Absolutely no way. I'm not a flight risk. I have nothing to hide. My trip to Venezuela has nothing to do with this 'criminal charges' rumor that you, the media, keep gossiping about."

Appearance: She is a tall and thin woman with a very stylish haircut and expensive but simple jewelry. Slightly over 40, she wears classic suit jackets, pants, and an overcoat.

Roleplaying: She snaps her fingers when she wants something. The speed and number of snaps increase as her patience wanes.

Personality: Impatient and without charm, Daria is an elitist and proud of it; however, she is terrified of true power, such as law enforcement.

Motivation: She loves money and power.

Background: Dr. Simmons was a dedicated chemist for a pharmaceutical company, but had never made a major discovery. Her drugs never passed the clinical trials with animals. That is when she started faking her findings, making sure to pick projects dealing with elderly patients. After all, no one would find it strange if people in their seventies developed severe health problems. Now that people are living longer, the effects of her falsifications are being noticed, and investigations are focusing on her past work. She can't bear the idea of going to prison, but she's sure she can stay one step ahead of the authorities if she just keeps moving.

Traits: *(PB) Abhorrent, focal, medic, political, scientist*

Lynda Tran 787

Dedicated Book-Hunter

"The Tran Foundation is dedicated to the preservation of ancient literature. The Scroll of Xanthos was destroyed with the Library of Alexandria. So long as you swear to that, I can take you to our vault where the true scroll is stored."

Appearance: Lynda is a short woman who wears thick-soled heels to make herself taller. She dresses in conservative designer suits during the day and traditional Mandarin dresses at night. She uses colored contact lenses to change her eye color to suit her mood, although she prefers her icy blue and deep purple ones.

Roleplaying: She is excited when discussing the possibility of a literary find. She's shy in other situations, and a bit socially awkward. Lynda's demeanor turns defensive if she feels that the questioning is turning on her.

Personality: Lynda has a healthy respect for occult tomes. She believes that both her parents perished due to ancient curses (although a skeptic would call them coincidences). In the company of scholars Lynda is quite brash and outgoing; among others she is quiet and dispassionate.

Motivation: She wants to acquire and study all occult knowledge.

Background: Lynda's mother died when she was young, just after her father had uncovered a cursed tomb on the Korean peninsula. Her father died in a tsunami; Lynda believes he prevented something monstrous from manifesting in the South Pacific. Lynda has dedicated her life to finding occult tomes and keeping dangerous passages away from the public.

Traits: *(WC) Dilettante, occult, scholar*

Casey Hart 788

Drifter Musician

"I was totin' my pack along the long dusty Winnemucca road..."

Appearance: A small, muscular woman, Casey wears old, faded jeans and threadbare T-shirts sporting the logos of various bands or motorcycles, with the arms raggedly removed. Despite her rough and tumble appearance and the devil-may-care attitude she projects, the guitar she carries slung over her back is in impeccable condition and guarded fiercely.

Roleplaying: Casey has a thick Jersey accent, a mouthful of chaw tobacco, and a chip on her shoulder a mile wide. She's fiercely independent and protests the notion that she may need assistance from others.

Personality: Projecting a stereotypical "tough biker girl" exterior, Casey hides her passion for music, beauty, and art so that others don't see her as soft. She refuses to become attached to any one place or person, afraid that ties will slow her down and keep her from reaching her goals.

Motivation: Casey wants to live free on the open road, making her way by her music.

Background: Growing up in a rural New Jersey dairy farm, Casey is a dreamer. She excelled in art and music in school and upon graduation took her college fund, bought a Harley and a guitar, and has traveled the country making a living playing at bars ever since. Her family does not understand her wandering ways, and they're always imploring her to come home.

Traits: *(MN) Artist, entertainment, impoverished*

Gordon Hanning 789

Domineering Sheriff

"We'll show those sons of bitches not to mess around in our town. Get me two...no, four flash bangs, and after they go off, you get in there. Anyone still standing, you take 'em down."

Appearance: Gordon is a thick-set man in his early fifties with a white buzz cut and a white beard. He has several old tattoos on his arms. His uniform is always crisply pressed.

Roleplaying: Always either holding or smoking one, Gordon proudly displays his love of cigars. He talks with a booming voice, pointing with his cigar.

Personality: He is a man who has subscribed to the doctrine of shock and awe. His personality and the way he administers law in his town are both based on spectacular displays of force.

Motivation: Gordon believes that he is all that is standing between the decent people and the complete erosion of society.

Background: As a schoolchild, on the football field, and as a deputy sheriff, Gordon has always been aggressive. He spent his years a deputy always believing that the sheriff was too soft. When the sheriff stepped down, he ran for the position under a banner of being tough on crime, and won by a landslide. Now Gordon runs the town with a superficial understanding of shock and awe, using excessive force, tactical weapons, and too many flash bangs to keep things in line. He has no tolerance for those who come into his town to make trouble.

Traits: *(PV) Aggressive, leader, police*

Anthony Goldbris 790

Charming Magician

"It's a strange study, but who wants to admit that any field peaked in 1572?"

Appearance: Anthony is 5'11", with a paunch, well-trimmed mustache, and pince-nez glasses. His hair is black, complementing his camelhair jacket and bow tie.

Roleplaying: He's impossible to provoke, often turning the effort back with an obvious study of his tormentor's face and a casual, "What do you seek?"

Personality: He's calm and mild, secure in his knowledge—but fully aware that most consider "A History of Medieval and Renaissance Magic" an easy "A," not an important inquiry.

Motivation: Anthony has been relentlessly studying things—particularly the margins of old books—for his whole life. You might say he was born with an academic's demeanor and attitudes.

Background: The idea of magic has fascinated him ever since he realized that it was a real investigation, not just fairy tales. In his teens he studied John Dee and took Latin to better understand alchemy. His studies continued, and he now stands among the foremost researchers on American soil these days. He doesn't quite believe in magic himself, treating it as complex answers for a complicated era. Despite his doubts, he refuses to try effects rooted in anything but heavenly invocations—figuring that whether it's real or a placebo effect, he'd rather not mess with darkness.

Traits: *(SM) Academic, magical, saintly*



Ellen Crawford

Artist: Matt Morrow

Ellen Crawford 791

Bike Messenger Assassin

"I'm with the delivery service 'Psychos on Cycles.' I have a package for Mr. James Randolph. No need to sign. "

Appearance: Tall and toned, with long dark hair and a mischievous smile, she wears spandex bike shorts and a black cycling jersey. She is never without three essential items: her carbon frame racing bicycle, her bike messenger bag with a silenced pistol inside, and her bike helmet. One of her calves is badly scarred from a gunshot wound.

Roleplaying: Ellen is quiet and tries not to draw any attention to herself. She tends to smile while shooting her pistol.

Personality: She has no room in her heart for forgiveness. Her life is all about revenge.

Motivation: She lives to kill as many of her enemies as possible before she dies.

Background: Ellen was destined to go to the Olympics as a cyclist. Her racing skills and speed were second to none. She met a wonderful young man, got married, and spent every day training to be the best. Then one night, she answered the door to two armed men who shot her in the chest and the leg. She watched in horror as the men killed her husband, and then she blacked out. She woke up in a hospital room and was introduced to her father-in-law, who happened to be the local Mafia boss, for the first time. With his help she not only recovered, but also entered a new profession.

Traits: *(PB) Abhorrent, criminal, stealthy, zealot*

Marilee Papadakis 792

Nosy Insurance Investigator

"You know, that reminds me, my husband does this fantastico thing with olives and this wine sauce. Now, he won't tell me what's in it, exactly, but it's got this tangy taste. A real kick."

Appearance: She has dark curly hair and an olive complexion. She wears flirty knee-length dresses with flowered prints.

Roleplaying: In the midst of the interview, she often segues into a topic close to her heart: cooking and eating Greek dishes.

Personality: She is friendly and approachable, and gives the impression that she is either distracted or not as clever as the person being investigated.

Motivation: She is diligent in tracking down scamps and insurance cheats because she wants to be the best at what she does.

Background: She was a police officer for a while, but she was unable to make detective. It wasn't because she was unqualified, but because there just weren't openings in the ranks at the department she was at. She got her investigator's license and got hired by a reputable insurance agency. Her husband, who is the cook in the family, thinks she has the most boring job in the world, because she works at giving him the impression that there is no danger or risk in anything she does. He calls her four times a day as a morale booster—and to find out what she wants for dinner, and then to provide updates as preparations for the meal progresses.

Traits: *(TT) Counselor, humorous, white collar*

Sister Magda 793

Bored Fortune Teller

"Whoa, that's the real deal. Tell me more; the spirits will do all we can to help."

Appearance: She's on the young side for a fortune teller, although she does have the requisite jewelry, scarves, and accent.

Roleplaying: Sister Magda uses "the spirits" to describe her own feelings, and her eastern European accent disappears when things get intense.

Personality: Ultimately, she's bored with her gig.

Motivation: She wants to find something more interesting than reassuring lonely women and nervous men.

Background: When Margaret found out she was adopted and began searching for her birth parents, she was mildly surprised to find that they were Romani on the run from the law. When she visited their homeland in Romania, she was shocked to be recognized as their daughter, and to find that she inherited her mother's "second sight." She was taken in by her relatives, took the name Sister Magda, and was trained in their ways. But years of using her abilities to help out the lonely and the weak have taken nearly all of the shine off of her discovery. Having had a taste of the exotic, she wants something more from life.

Traits: *(KS) Counselor, eccentric, magical, mysterious, occult*

Mikey Webbs 794

Child Prodigy Hacker

"My parents say I have to…I mean, I want to apologize to you! I'm sorry about what I did. It will never happen again! Pinky promise! So please don't press charges for hacking the Swiss banking system, okay Mr. Attorney General?"

Appearance: He looks like your typical eight-year-old kid with a couple of distinguishing features: He has red hair and freckles, and he carries several books on advanced programming in his backpack.

Roleplaying: He likes to hum the themes of his favorite cartoon shows while he types.

Personality: Mikey gets bored easily, and that is when he decides to hack systems. He isn't a bad kid, but he is a victim of his own intellect and curiosity.

Motivation: If anyone knew what actually motivates any eight-year-old to do the things they do, the world would be a much better place.

Background: From the time Mikey could speak, he was fascinated by computers. His parents finally got him one of his own when he entered kindergarten. Within six months, he was writing programs. Within a year, he was hacking banks in order to get money to buy toys. When the feds finally caught the hacker known as "SuperKid-e1337," his handle made perfect sense. Mikey is now working closely with the government in order to work off his sentence—so he can help catch serious threats, and so they can keep an eye on him.

Traits: *(PB) Academic, child, criminal, genius, scientist*

Adiva Jones 795

Hermit Mountaineer

"Everest is for pussies."

Appearance: Of Middle Eastern descent, Adiva has broad shoulders and a wide face with a delicate nose. She's ripped from years of mountain climbing.

Roleplaying: People make Adiva nervous, so she tends to be brusque to the point of rudeness.

Personality: Adiva likes open spaces, solitude, and danger, but doesn't particularly like being around other people. Living as a hermit has made her strong, self-reliant, and confident, though she's not cocky—especially on a dangerous climb.

Motivation: She wants to push herself, and is always probing for her limits so that she can move beyond them.

Background: Adiva prefers to live alone, as far from other people as possible, and she's lived like a hermit for the past decade. Her cabin is deep in the woods, far from the nearest community, and she hikes out every time she's ready to tackle another of the world's tallest peaks. Her skill and accomplishments are legendary in the mountaineering community, but she refuses to take the more lucrative track of leading expeditions, preferring to climb solo. Before she became a hermit, she fronted a one-hit wonder rock band called Panic Fury, and she still lives on the royalties from their single successful song.

Traits: *(MR) Adventurer, eccentric, outdoorsman, primal*

Ashton Stern 796

Emotional Forensic Scientist

"Dammit! I know that this guy is guilty but I can't find any evidence! I'm sorry, detective, but I have to get back out to the scene and search it again. I must have missed something. This scumbag can't be innocent!"

Appearance: An obese 20-something with a crew cut and horn-rimmed glasses, he always wears a freshly pressed shirt and tie to work.

Roleplaying: Although he is not a police officer, but rather a civilian employee of the police department, Ashton acts like a character from a cheesy cop action movie.

Personality: Ashton desperately wants to be recognized for playing an important role in convicting criminals. Many of his colleagues already feel this way about his work, but Ashton himself doesn't give his role enough credit.

Motivation: In Ashton's mind, his life plays like an episode from a television police drama, and he is always the hero who, at the last minute, discovers the vital evidence needed to convict a criminal. Often that is not how the situation actually unfolds, but to his credit, Ashton does things by the book and has never falsified evidence in order to convict someone.

Background: Ashton always wanted to be a police officer, but he could never pass the physical exam because of his weight. He discovered forensic science and decided that if he could not be a cop, he would work with them.

Traits: *(PB) Police, scientist, zealot*

Francine Tower 797

Cryptic Researcher

"I have lived among them for three years so that their elders could teach me their language. I used it to translate the 103rd page. Now I will pack up and move on. There are 58 more pages to go."

Appearance: Francine is an attractive woman in her late thirties with an athletic build and a simple haircut. She wears no makeup and usually dresses in outerwear.

Roleplaying: She makes a habit of stretching when idle. Francine always has a field notebook and pen, and is constantly jotting notes.

Personality: Francine is difficult to understand, partly because she is always trying to figure out her cryptic book, and partly because she is always afraid to say too much about what she has learned.

Motivation: Francine is driven to understand the book; it is the only goal she cares about anymore. It is no longer an interest, but an obsession.

Background: As an anthropologist doing research in central Africa, Francine discovered the book. The book was written in a number of ancient languages from around the world. She began the painstaking process of learning how to translate the book, which has taken her to numerous remote regions of the world. As she has discovered the meaning of its writings, she has become deeply disturbed and even more driven to continue its translation.

Traits: *(PV) Focal, mysterious, outdoorsman, primal, scientist*

Dorissa Hannigan 798

Reluctant Benefactress

"Rubbery chicken again. You might think they would have realized by now that a good meal loosens the change purse better than this fare."

Appearance: Dorissa is 82, thin and slight as a bird, walking confidently with a lightly held cane in her left hand. Her hair is white with silver accents, her clothing dated but high quality.

Roleplaying: Her voice is soft, requiring near perfect silence to be heard. She cuts off lengthy discussions or anecdotes by saying "That's nice dear, but wrap it up."

Personality: She expects total attention once she starts speaking—after all, she controls the purse strings. Attending fundraisers and dinners is an obligation to her, and she'll complain about the cold chicken instead of listening to the presentation.

Motivation: She donates to good causes because it's expected, but she doesn't enjoy it. She always talks about the sacrifices she and her husband Sean made to start the business as she writes the check.

Background: Dorissa was once an exceptional beauty; during college her focus was on landing an "MRS degree"—on getting married. There she met Sean; they married just after graduation. She was a dutiful housewife through the 1950s, as Sean mastered plastics and started his own business. After scrimping for years, the business took off—though an affair marred the period; the next 20 years involved Sean making larger efforts to buy her forgiveness. She has two children and seven grandchildren.

Traits: *(SM) Academic, ancient, dilettante, wealthy*

Jerry Driver 799

Autistic Driver

"Yeah, I'm the um, driver. I ah, drive. The car. Yeah, that's me, driver."

Appearance: When in a car, Jerry just looks sheepishly down at the steering wheel—until he starts the engine, and comes alive.

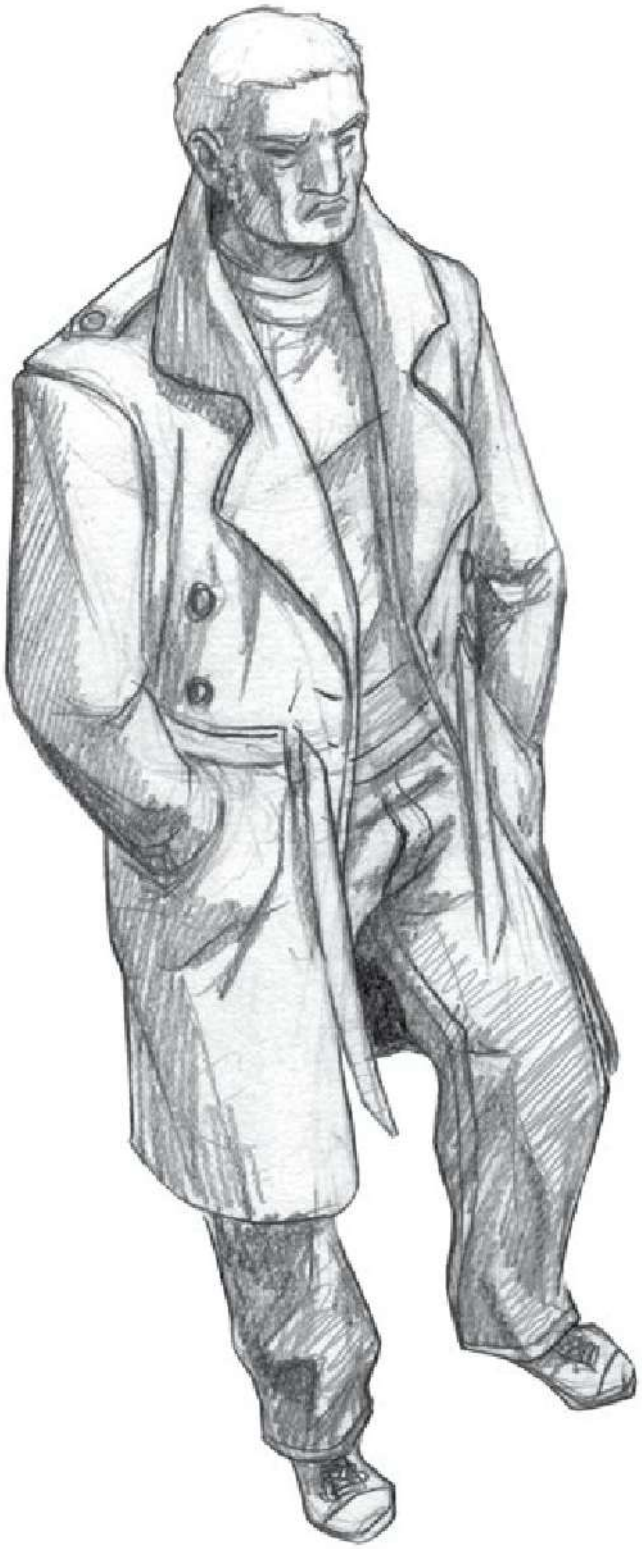
Roleplaying: His broken and stumbling language patterns are frustrating to follow. He doesn't look anyone in the eye, or handle confrontation well.

Personality: Living somewhere on the autism spectrum, he is poor at social interaction, but is fascinated by mechanical things.

Motivation: Driving is life.

Background: Jerry's brother and hero, Mark, was a small-time crook. He didn't want Jerry involved in his world, but after their parents abandoned them, he didn't feel like he had a choice. After Mark saw Jerry at the wheel, he really didn't have a choice. Jerry can do things with a car that should be impossible, and his brother relied heavily on that skill. The two brothers had a solid career of crime until recently, when Mark went to jail; Jerry was released because of his mental health status. Jerry keeps his nose clean, but is trying to find someone to help him break his brother out of jail.

Traits: *(KS) Eccentric, impoverished, criminal, pilot*



Dreizehn

Artist: Avery Liell-Kok

Dreizehn 800

Mysterious Walker

"I was born to bring trouble to wherever I'm at. It is not a choice; it's just how it is."

Appearance: His short brown hair surrounds his hard and stony face. Dreizehn wears a brown trench coat, pants, and a button-down shirt.

Roleplaying: Dreizehn is a mysterious wanderer who slips in and out of people's lives, leaving cryptic bits of info that often help them. Dreizehn seems to know much more than he lets on.

Personality: Dark, grim, quiet, and mysterious, he doesn't reveal any more than he wants to, and only ever betrays himself in brief flashes of emotion.

Motivation: He seeks to protect the people he singles out, likely from the fate that befell him.

Background: When Dreizehn is first encountered in some random place, he engages in a minute or so of small talk and then slips in some information relevant to the troubles of the person he is talking to, only to disappear the moment they turn their head. Something about what he said will stick and be critical to the person surviving some upcoming disaster. From then on, Dreizehn shows up right before some major trouble occurs, giving out mysterious advice that ends up helpful. He hints at some fate that he became bound to long ago, something that left him not quite human. He disappears so suddenly that some think he is a hallucination or a ghost, but he leaves few answers about himself.

Traits: *(JA) Counselor, magical, mysterious, stealthy*

Herold Fildstein 801

Neighborhood Elder

"Say little and do much, and receive all men with a cheerful face."

Appearance: An elderly Jewish gentleman, Herold always wears pressed slacks, a button-down shirt, and a tie. He wears a dusty apron over his clothes and has a friendly smile for everyone who walks in his door.

Roleplaying: Herold is quick to greet others and offer his assistance, but otherwise usually prefers to listen than talk. When he does speak it is with a strong voice that is at odds with his frail appearance.

Personality: The neighborhood grandfather, Herold knows all his customers and their problems and looks after their best interests as if they were family.

Motivation: Herold desires only to serve all the people of his neighborhood, both with good products and good advice.

Background: Having inherited his small corner store from his father, Herold has run it for over 40 years. In addition to coming to him for grocery items, the people of Herold's neighborhood also come to him whenever they have troubles or problems. He has a reputation as a man who will listen without judgment and give out advice that is full of wisdom and good sense. He knows every family in the area, and makes sure Mrs. Feldman's special order tea is delivered every Thursday, and that Jimmy Weninski never spends all his allowance on candy and soda.

Traits: *(MN) Business, counselor, merchant*

Ray Johnson 802

Retired Sailor

"Yeah, that ship is a beauty. It's got a hell of an engine, too. Did I ever tell you about the time I worked on ships like that?"

Appearance: Neat white hair surrounds Ray's kindly face and goofy smile. He has a slight layer of fat on him and is rarely without his navy hat.

Roleplaying: Ray has a love of all things nautical and will talk for ages with anyone who listens. He'll always lend a hand to a stranger in need, and he never takes credit for the many good deeds he has done.

Personality: Ray is a home-cooked-meal kind of guy, always friendly and happy.

Motivation: Since his wife died, Ray is looking for a sense of purpose. He is searching for something to fill the void, and helping someone with a stuck car makes him feel useful in his old age.

Background: As a boy, Ray had a hard life full of misfortune. He decided early on to try to make the world a better place than he found it. Full of traditional values, he joined the Navy as a mechanic. He married and raised a family, passing on his values and living a long and simple life. When his wife passed away, he moved to a port town. He will happily repair an engine or re-shingle a roof for anyone in need, and he only takes money for the job if it is forced on him.

Traits: *(JA) Charming, military, saintly*

Alec Nebbman 803

Nosy Neighbor

"Privacy is a myth. The satellites are always watching, so why shouldn't I watch, too?"

Appearance: Alec is an attractive man in his mid-forties, with a salt-and-pepper beard and a strong nose. His appearance is marred by terrible acne.

Roleplaying: He cringes at the thought of speaking to a woman, keeps his hands in his pockets at all times, and gets sweaty and excited when he talks about spy stuff.

Personality: Alec is a nerdy engineer's nerdy engineer: He plays roleplaying games, got beaten up a lot in high school, and has an obsessive personality. Always fascinated by the concept of privacy, his current obsession is spying on his neighbors—though, oddly enough, not for prurient reasons. If he sees anything sexual, he turns off the camera immediately; what interests him are secrets, not sex.

Motivation: Alec wishes he were cool enough to be a real spy, but since he isn't, he settles for being obsessed with spying on people.

Background: A mechanical engineer who works for a large corporation, Alec is just another faceless cog in the corporate machine—but he longs to be a superspy in the Hollywood mold. Lacking the gumption for that, he settles for building remote control airfoils, cars, and other vehicles, fitting them with cameras that can broadcast wirelessly, and spying on his neighbors. He has thousands of hours of boring footage of everyone within a one-block radius of his house.

Traits: *(MR) Crafter, eccentric, humorous, scientist*

Mother Superior Valerie Westin 804

Inquisitive Nun

"I know my appearance is dreadful, dear, but don't be alarmed. These boils are God's way of testing me. Now I couldn't help but notice that you were driving a vehicle identical to the one that the police scanner broadcast mentioned earlier this evening. Oh please, dear. Put the gun away. You won't shoot a deformed nun. You're wearing a crucifix because you are far too afraid of the eternal consequences for such a crime. No? Fine. Shoot… That is what I thought. Take a seat, dear. I'll call the authorities."

Appearance: An elderly nun, she wears her black robe and habit at all times. Her hands and face are pockmarked with scars and tiny boils, giving her a rather ghastly appearance.

Roleplaying: She constantly asks questions about things that she observes in other people.

Personality: She is genuinely happy and a gentle soul.

Motivation: She believes that God gave her a purpose, but she has yet to discover it.

Background: When she was a young nun working in one of the poorest regions on the globe, she contracted a horrible skin disease that disfigured her for life. She was ashamed of herself and refused to speak, and since she would not converse with people, she learned to observe them instead. Eventually she came to terms with her deformity, and is now making up for lost time questioning everyone she meets about every detail of their lives.

Traits: *(PB) Hideous, leader, religious*

Harry Brocious 805

Honest TV Installer

"I'm sorry, ma'am, but those are the rules. And I have no interest in breaking the rules. And deep down, I'm sure the same can be said for you."

Appearance: He wears the work coveralls and heavy boots consistent with his occupation, and a black cap with the company logo on the front. He wears thick-rimmed eyeglasses.

Roleplaying: When the job's done right, he flashes his co-worker an exaggerated "thumbs up."

Personality: He's honest to a fault, a straight arrow who always obeys the rules. He can quote chapter and verse from the cable TV installer's manual.

Motivation: Harry wants a day's work for a day's wages.

Background: As a teen, a white lie meant to cover for a friend cost him his job at a burger joint. He vowed that would never happen to him again. Doing the "right thing" meant being honest, he told himself, not just doing what other people asked of him. He refuses straight-up when bosses, customers, or anyone else ask him to cut corners. Since then, he's been fired from about a dozen jobs for refusing to break the rules for convenience's sake. But he has no regrets about his philosophy to obey the rules. So far, his current supervisor has been pleased that he can be trusted to keep to the rules.

Traits: *(TT) Laborer, zealot*

Karen Walsh, "d3v10us aNgl" 806

Adventurous Hacker

"The Pentagon? Really? I've been building a botnet that might just have enough power to break their encryption. Let's take that baby for a spin and see what we can turn up!"

Appearance: Karen looks like many of her male counterparts in the computer hacking world. She has more than her fair share of pimples and a pale complexion from getting out in the sun too little.

Roleplaying: When she talks to people online as d3v10us aNgl, Karen is quick and acerbic. She'll rip into people who don't know as much as she does and "pwn noobs" with ease, but in person her nervousness and timidity come to the fore.

Personality: Karen is nervous around people, not really understanding them all that well. She prefers the clean and orderly world of computers and likes her interactions with people to be through a screen.

Motivation: Karen enjoys breaking encryption and getting past barriers. She doesn't really care why she does it, just that she can.

Background: Karen got into hacking at an early age because of her brother's troubles at school. Hacking the school's system to prevent an academic suspension, Karen realized she was a natural with computers. Shy and timid, the online world offered her challenges for her intellect and the ability to be more confident. She can be a bit gullible, though, and if she gets much deeper in with some of her online friends, she might get into some real trouble.

Traits: *(JA) Criminal, focal, stealthy*

Jonathan Dough 807

Bumbling Police Officer

"Hey guys, who wants to go to Shenanigan's after the shift? Cheese sticks on me!"

Appearance: A question occurs to most people who see Jonathan: If this officer weren't so heavy, would his body have the surface area to carry all of the gear he's wearing?

Roleplaying: He acts tough and aggressive and throws his weight around, especially when it's inappropriate.

Personality: A natural-born hall monitor, John gravitates toward authority. Inside, he just wants some respect.

Motivation: He really wants people to like him, especially people in authority, but he tries too hard.

Background: After being rejected from every police force in the area, Jonathan pestered his uncle so much that some strings were pulled, and he was accepted by the state patrol. He's been running the ragged edge of dismissal ever since, from using profanity in front of a retired judge to insisting on pat-downs after pulling over a van full of college cheerleaders. But deep down, all of John's antics are aimed at earning the acceptance and respect of his fellow officers. He feels like he just needs one good break, like a major bust, and then he'll get the respect he deserves. He's not a bad officer, although he doesn't always display good judgment. He always carries the maximum legal amount of weapons, ammunition, tools, and accessories possible.

Traits: *(KS) Aggressive, dilettante, humorous, police, power hungry*

Dante "Inferno" Johnson 808

Football Washout

"The pain train is coming! Wooo! Wooo!"

Appearance: A massive, bald African-American man with cannons for arms, he dwarfs everyone around him. A giant black and gold football jersey is draped over him, with the number 92 and "Inferno" on the back. Gold chains are draped around his neck and large golden rings adorn his massive fingers. A personal entourage of three hangs behind him.

Roleplaying: Dante is soft-spoken but a burning intensity still lingers in his eyes. He tilts and shakes his head when he talks and on occasion will reference himself in the third person. He becomes most animated when discussing his short-lived football career.

Personality: Something of a gentle giant, a career-ending injury has left Dante bitter and nostalgic for the past. He feels the world is out to get him—to keep him down—and has blown through most of his savings.

Motivation: His bar, "Dante's Inferno," is his pride, as well as the loyalty of his friends.

Background: A huge football star in the '90s, Dante's stock was rising. He played in New Orleans, where he grew up, and had a short but memorable career before blowing out his knee. A comeback in Atlanta was short lived and afterward, Dante—nicknamed "The Inferno" by the press—retired and started up his own bar. It is full of sports memorabilia and Dante still hungers for the chance to make another comeback someday.

Traits: *(DM) Aggressive, business, entertainment*

Melissa Shepherd 809

Artistic Savant

"Do you think they keep a white girl on the rez for kicks?"

Appearance: Melissa is 5'2", her green eyes often staring into the middle distance; she shakes her curly hair with vigor when she focuses.

Roleplaying: She's a modern teen touched by something timeless. She's embarrassed about being a dropout, but is proud of her artwork and laps up the attention and recognition.

Personality: Melissa seems meekly enthusiastic as she introduces her art to the wealthy and powerful—she doesn't know how to interact with them. With those she's known a long time, she's direct and fiery; every third word is a curse.

Motivation: She taps into something pure and formless when she creates; it's a space she wants to inhabit all the time.

Background: It's hard to believe that drinking beer with Lalo led to this. When Lalo took Melissa on a tour of the old lands, they both expected that it would end in some heavy petting; they were both amazed when she took up the earth and started smearing clay in the same bright bands that his people always had. She experiments with local clays, creating new versions of traditional art—untrained but intense, and praised by critics. She has since been popular with the elders who feared their art lost forever. She's bringing positive attention and garnering donations that they're putting towards improvements.

Traits: *(SM) Artist, genius, primal*

Corwin Deluca, "coolHuntr" 810

Narcissistic Blogger

"I was almost at that concert. It wasn't very good, though. Their live show in Berlin last year, which I missed because I almost died in a plane crash, was so much better. God, do you know anything?"

Appearance: From his trendy clothes and glasses to his hipster snakeskin boots and comic book tattoos, Corwin looks like a smug little prick.

Roleplaying: He's arrogant, insufferable, and convinced his crap doesn't stink. Everything—absolutely everything—is about him.

Personality: Everything about Corwin makes people want to kick him in the balls, from his attitude to his clothes to his approach to life. He's completely oblivious to all of that, and genuinely believes that he's the greatest thing since sliced bread.

Motivation: He wants to continue being the greatest blogger who ever lived, eventually parlaying this into a fleet of yachts crewed by hot chicks.

Background: Corwin goes by "coolHuntr" online, and he thinks he's God's gift to the blogosphere—which he isn't. What he is, though, is lucky: He's always in just the right place to break a big story, pull back the curtains on something amazing, or otherwise draw attention to himself and his blog, "coolHuntr's AwesomeSauce Pavilion." Corwin blogs about a wide variety of topics, but mainly about music…although he rarely attends actual concerts.

Traits: *(MR) Dilettante, entertainment, humorous*

Jezebel Jenkins 811

Observant Table Dancer

"He was, like, wearing this knock-off Rolex, but I mean, it's a good fake, y'know? And he was all looking around, and like said to the guy with the scar, 'Vur habin octzayn rocketin guhcowfin.' I think it's like German or something."

Appearance: Barely dressed in a form-fitting short dress, Jezebel approaches potential customers by sashaying up and asking if they'd "like a friend."

Roleplaying: Jezebel chews gum, twirls her hair, and uses the word "like" frequently.

Personality: She's shallow as a west Texas rain puddle, and nearly as intelligent.

Motivation: Her Hollywood-level addiction to cocaine and Vicodin takes a lot of cash to support.

Background: When you've got a full run of psychological issues, a killer body, and no parents worthy of the name, there's always table dancing. Were it not for her uncanny talent to perfectly take in and remember absolutely everything that's happened in the last couple of hours, Jezebel would be just another pretty face. She's frankly not intelligent or motivated enough to do much with her ability, but she'll use it for her friends, or for anyone willing to pay her. She has learned—painfully—that betraying a client is not a good idea, and won't do it without some serious incentive.

Traits: *(KS) Beautiful, charming, entertainment, humorous*

Kendra Mendoza 812

Distressed Paramedic

"Oh my God. Look at all that blood! Shouldn't we wait until more help arrives?"

Appearance: Wearing the crisp, white duty uniform of a paramedic, she carries an emergency duffel bag in one hand. The radio attached to her vest is set on the emergency channel. Her dark hair is pulled up tight.

Roleplaying: She's prone to hysterics when confronted with pressure, particularly with life-and-death matters. Kendra may freeze or come up with a quick excuse to cover herself. She breaks out in a cold sweat when an emergency call comes in.

Personality: Kendra does not respond well to pressure anymore, buckling when placed in danger. She tries to cope as best she can—sometimes pharmaceutically—but is frightened that she'll be discovered and fired. She was able to make it through her latest psych evaluation because her anxiety was mistaken for survivor's guilt.

Motivation: She tries to cover up her ineptitude even though it may cost people's lives.

Background: Kendra was a very good paramedic until her ambulance was sideswiped by an 18-wheeler several months ago. Trapped inside the burning ambulance, she pulled herself out but was too scared to render aid to her trapped partner. She watched as the ambulance exploded, killing him and the truck driver. Kendra was absolved of any wrongdoing, but is terrified and ashamed of her failure. She tries to cover it up and has her new partner run point as often as possible.

Traits: *(DM) Medic, stealthy, white collar*

Rian Frederickson 813

Struggling Ex-Con

"Sometimes I wish I was still inside. If I don't get this job, I'm going back to jacking cars."

Appearance: Rian has spiked-out hair and a devil-may-care look about her. She's covered in tattoos, and she wears a leather biker jacket that looks like it's been around the block.

Roleplaying: She obsessively avoids confrontation, backing away from any situation that looks like trouble—but it's not hard to see that she finds trouble tempting, either.

Personality: Rian is a rebellious hardass whose troubles with the law started back in high school, when she first discovered how much fun stealing cars could be. After doing six years in jail, she emerged a changed woman—for now. She's trying her damndest to walk the straight and narrow, but it's not in her nature; she misses the thrills. At the same time, jail hardened her, and she doesn't want to go back.

Motivation: Rian wants to stay out of jail, but she also needs some adrenaline in her life.

Background: A car thief who thrives on adrenaline and taking risks, Rian is trying to become a completely different person after getting out of jail. It's not working. No one will hire her, and her only real job skill is stealing cars; she's running out of options. She's managing to keep it together somehow, though, avoiding trouble like the plague—for now.

Traits: *(MR) Aggressive, criminal, pilot*



Vanessa Kendall

Artist: Christopher Reach

Vanessa Kendall 814

Detached Artist

"Hmm. I don't think I know enough about you to capture the essence of the piece yet."

Appearance: Vanessa dresses in blouses and skirts when she leaves her apartment, but can be seen wearing T-shirts and jeans when she paints her pieces. Her long black hair is often pulled back in a sloppy ponytail.

Roleplaying: Vanessa hangs her head a lot, avoiding eye contact with people. She sits demurely and quietly wherever she goes, trying to be noticed as little as possible. She often whispers to herself.

Personality: She's very detached from life, a side effect of her view on making art. She doesn't express much emotion, but her feelings and curiosity come through in furtive glances full of questions.

Motivation: Vanessa wants to capture the inner essence of things she paints, and to do that she feels she has to be involved as little as possible.

Background: Vanessa sees herself as an outside observer to life. She believes that the art needs to be separate from the artist, and when she picks a subject, she tries to interact with it as little as possible. This often means that when she paints people, they rarely know they are being painted. She often sets up in crowded places, picking someone out of the crowd to observe and sketch. She tries to glean as much information about the subject as possible, but finds it hard to truly know them without getting closer.

Traits: *(JA) Artist, entertainment, mysterious*

Eva Del Cruz 815

Tragic Celebrity

"After the fire, I was under constant medical supervision. Aside from the pain killers, it was the first time in a long time that I experienced some form of sobriety. I realized then that I needed to make some good come out of all of my mistakes."

Appearance: Scarred from head to toe from third-degree burns, Eva is missing fingers on each of her hands and has no hair on her scalp.

Roleplaying: Some might confuse Eva's impatience with egotism, but the truth is that she's in constant pain from her injuries. She tries to go for as long as possible without taking her prescription pain killers, and even then she takes the smallest dose possible so she can keep her mind clear.

Personality: Eva is a very open and honest person. She'll answer any question about her personal life as best she can.

Motivation: She a wants to use herself as an example of what can happen to a person when they do not find treatment for drug and alcohol addiction.

Background: Eva had it all: She was a pop star with a television series and a film career. Like so many in her position, she got swept away by a decadent life of parties, drugs, and alcohol abuse. One night she got wasted and fell asleep in bed with a lit cigarette, only barely surviving the devastating fire. Now she uses her tragedy as a lesson for others to learn from.

Traits: *(PB) Entertainment, famous, hideous*

Kellie Edwards 816

Motivated Police Captain

"Listen, you can scrap this crazy talk about pointy-fanged monsters. I want to know what really happened out there, and I want to know now!"

Appearance: Attractive for her age, with brown hair and civilian clothes that accentuate her toughness and sense of style, Kellie seems like she might have just walked off the set of a prime-time cop show. She detests this stereotype, but uses it to her advantage when she needs to.

Roleplaying: Kellie Edwards hates traditional gender stereotypes and wants to show the world how capable she is. She'll do anything she can, short of becoming corrupt, to advance through the ranks and prove herself. She rarely backs down from a challenge or a fist fight.

Personality: Kellie was raised tough and strong by her father, but her mother always pushed her to accentuate her intelligence. Kellie is able to strike a nice balance between the two, proving she is capable time and again.

Motivation: Captain Edwards wants to keep rising in the ranks to become the first female police commissioner for the city.

Background: Kellie joined the Army in order to pay for her college tuition, graduating and becoming an officer. She left as soon as she could in order to pursue a career in the police force. She's become a valuable asset to the city police force, closing cases that few dare to tackle. She won't quit until she's made her mark, something her husband supports wholeheartedly.

Traits: *(JA) Focal, police, political, warrior*

Richard Williams 817

Impassioned Lawyer

"Damn it! I need those papers and I need them now! Get them to me before the end of the day, or don't bother coming into work tomorrow!"

Appearance: Richard is a tall, thin man with a narrow, somber face and graying hair that is beginning to recede.

Roleplaying: Very serious and no-nonsense, Richard obsesses over every detail of everything. He is brusque and constantly checks the time, but the word "no" never passes his lips.

Personality: Richard is incredibly intense and driven. He is a workaholic and is never, ever really "off the clock." He is willing to sacrifice his own time and well being to win a case.

Motivation: Atoning for the lives he feels were lost due to his negligence pushes Richard to superhuman feats of stamina.

Background: Richard is a successful district attorney with an excellent record that includes prosecuting some of the most violent and dangerous criminals his state has known. Unfortunately, during one of his cases, he lost several key pieces of evidence and the accused was found not guilty and released. Less than two weeks later, the suspect went on a killing spree, murdering five people before dying in a police shootout. Richard blames himself for those deaths and toils endlessly to try and atone. He has sacrificed his relationship with friends and family and everything that once meant anything to him to make sure he never lets another criminal walk free.

Traits: *(MN) Famous, focal, genius, police, white collar, zealot*

Penelope Swann 818

Dedicated Activist

"Funny, I don't remember you asking Mother Nature before you raped her."

Appearance: Penelope is tall and skinny, with dirty jeans and worn hiking boots. She wears a torn khaki jacket and a faded green T-shirt that says "Love Earth." A floppy-brimmed fedora covers her twisted and unkempt black hair. A pair of sunglasses dangles from a chain around her neck. She often rummages through a rucksack.

Roleplaying: Her in-your-face attitude rarely wins her any friends. She points accusingly when talking, and disagreements turn into shouting matches. She's passionate about what she believes in and won't back down.

Personality: An idealist, Penelope has always yearned for a cause of her own. She values the role of the underdog and lives her ideals. Over the years her frustration has morphed into more questionable actions, which she rationalizes to be the only way to gain a disenchanted society's attention.

Motivation: She's driven by her conviction to try and save the planet. Her methods range from civil disobedience, to sabotage, to trying to muster political action.

Background: A biology major in college, Penelope interned on a work abroad program and saw deforestation and pollution up close and personal; her experience left a lasting impression. Traditional methods were having no effect, so she quit school and joined an environmental "terrorist" organization to raise awareness. She argues with her comrades over the need for more decisive and headline-grabbing actions.

Traits: *(DM) Aggressive, outdoorsman, political, primal*

Malcolm Green 819

Dishonest Fixer

"If you need it, I can get it. Anything's available, so long as you have the ducats."

Appearance: Malcolm wears trendy urban street clothes, enabling him to easily blend into crowds. He always wears a vintage T-shirt that proudly displays something from the 1970s or 1980s, like a movie or popular breakfast cereal. He also wears a cap and jacket with one of his favorite sports teams' logos emblazoned on it. Malcolm always has an expensive watch, sunglasses, and phone on his person as well.

Roleplaying: He laces his sentences with popular slang and he's amused when his non-street clients can't follow him. He likes to get straight to the point of the conversation, as he's fond of saying that "time is money."

Personality: Malcolm is a sports fanatic. He enjoys playing in pick-up games but is hilariously bad at them. Malcolm is a hard negotiator, often overselling the value of his merchandise.

Motivation: He is obsessed with sports memorabilia. He'll often trade goods for sports items in lieu of cash.

Background: Malcolm is a fixer. If you need it, he can get it. Unfortunately, Malcolm is rarely an honest broker. He's smart enough not to stiff clients with the means to harm him. He has a large network of sources that can get questionable goods or services at a moment's notice. Malcolm is a sports fanatic and can often be found at arenas when a game is playing.

Traits: *(WC) Business, criminal, merchant*

Agnes Frank 820

Bored Curator

"New in the art world: third wave impressionists, quasi-updated cubism? It's a tired bunch."

Appearance: Agnes is in her early fifties, and often wears exotic hats from her travels. She's lean, wears heavy concealer, and draws on her cigarette distractedly.

Roleplaying: Agnes is well-known and sharply opinionated about art; she prowls the backwoods and jungles, seeking art that hasn't been smothered by generations of study.

Personality: There is little Agnes hasn't seen; she's been to far corners of the globe, looking for the next sensation to promote to the art world's stage. She spent two years in the Kalahari, learning their language and studying their art, before dismissing it as "standard primitive."

Motivation: She's had the experiences of a dozen people—it's hard to impress her anymore. She still seeks the thrill of discovery—but art rarely delivers these days.

Background: Agnes was among the first flowering of women as powerful gallery owners and art promoters, making a substantial name for herself in her youth. Since then, it's been hard to find new art that excites and revolutionizes the way it did when she was younger; rural Mexico and tenement Asia are on the radar now. She spends much of her year seeking something revolutionary, art that will upend the existing order or inspire a new movement—but she's not finding it.

Traits: *(SM) Adventurer, artist, power hungry*

Sally Berger 821

Innocent Hippie

"I'm kinda hard to define."

Appearance: Sally dresses in a neo-hippie style. She keeps her hair long and favors floral print skirts and crop tops. She always has a religious symbol hanging from her neck. Sally is also naturally beautiful, although she does little to enhance it.

Roleplaying: She is quiet and pleasant. She gets along with everyone. In spite of her numerous passions Sally is not judgmental, which is appropriate since she doesn't exactly fit in anywhere. She is genuinely interested in hearing and challenging others' opinions.

Personality: Sally's sheltered but caring upbringing makes her see the world with an almost childlike innocence. She believes in the best in people and is genuinely hurt when she's disappointed by them.

Motivation: She wants to help make the world a better place.

Background: In a nation increasingly divided between right and left, Sally holds to the extremes of both. She's an environmentalist, civil rights activist, capitalist, devoutly religious, and a vegan. Her diverse interests enable her to join social groups on both sides, so long as she voices enough similarities in thought. Sally is a bit oblivious to all of this, as she doesn't find her beliefs to be contradictory at all. Currently, Sally is an active member in her community theater when she isn't helping in the local soup kitchen. Her quirkiness has made her less than successful in the dating scene.

Traits: *(WC) Artist, beautiful, charming, eccentric, entertainment*

Alison Beldoir 822

Cutthroat Dancer

"Charlene has food poisoning and will miss the show tonight, the poor dear!"

Appearance: A professional dancer, Alison is svelte and wiry. Her thick blond hair is arranged to perfectly frame her wide green eyes.

Roleplaying: Alison is graceful, melodious, poised, and bright. Supportive and cheerful, she encourages those around her.

Personality: Her public front is just a ruse to garner leverage. Alison sets goals for herself and then pursues them with an almost brutal determination. Her schemes for self-promotion are downright Machiavellian.

Motivation: Alison's long-term goal is to build a resume so impressive that starting her own production company when she retires from dancing will be a foregone conclusion.

Background: A born performer, dancing, singing, and entertaining were all Allison ever wanted to do. She cut her competitive teeth in junior beauty pageants, already developing her stage persona and underhanded tactics. After graduation from a prominent dance school she has been dancing in theater productions in large cities around the country. She is aware that the viable years for a dancer to make a living dancing are short, and she is doing everything in her power to make a name for herself now while she can. Once she retires, she hopes to have enough notoriety in the community to open her own dance studio, or become a producer of shows.

Traits: *(MN) Aggressive, artist, entertainment, power hungry*

Detective Frederick Titov 823

Scary Policeman

"I watch the watchman. Carefully."

Appearance: Frederick is frankly ugly; cancerous lesions on his face and arms have left him a mass of scars. His hair has gone white, but he still has broad shoulders and piercing brown eyes.

Roleplaying: His Russian accent remains strong and he swallows the ends of words in his bass register. He's frustrated when people don't understand him—making broad pantomimes and repeating the words with intense concentration.

Personality: Frederick likes the way people squirm when he bears down on them; their nightmares of Russian strongmen and assassins make for shorter interrogations.

Motivation: He's very loyal to the police chief, who helped him defect and find a job in the department. Corruption is all too familiar—he hates it because it reminds him of home.

Background: Detective Titov defected from the Soviet Union in the 1980s, on a police exchange/goodwill tour of the U.S. He was amazed to watch his country fall apart and transform itself into Russia—always from a distance, from TV. In the meantime, loyalty to the Chief led him to Internal Affairs, where he roots out corruption. The other officers call him "Commissar Boris" behind his back, but dread confrontations with him.

Traits: *(SM) Counselor, hideous, police*

James Pierce 824

Devoted Priest

"Quiet, my child. I know the beast that chases you, and I've hidden us in God's light. It can still hear us, so silently pray and we might just get out alive."

Appearance: James is of average height and build. He dresses in his cassock or black shirt and pants when performing his duties. When he isn't dressed in the uniform of the church, he still wears the collar with whatever clothing he has on.

Roleplaying: He is never without a smile, even when facing down some supernatural horror. He often has a Bible quote or encouraging word for those who do not share his undaunted faith.

Personality: James is forever confident in the power of God, and there is little room for doubt. Though he knows the world to be full of dark things, he has seen that God's power is stronger.

Motivation: James seeks to use the ways of his faith to help those who have been touched by the supernatural.

Background: While performing an exorcism, James encountered a demon of horrible power, but was filled with holy light and overcame the beast. His crumbling faith reaffirmed, James devoted himself to helping those who encountered the supernatural. Calling upon holy powers he has seen in action, James has saved many who would have otherwise fallen to the horrors of the night. In fact, a bounty has been placed on his head by those who commune with dark powers.

Traits: *(JA) Focal, leader, religious*

Mama Lola 825

Unscrupulous Fence

"Yeah, she could sell that, but she might also burn you. Be careful with that old lady, and you didn't hear it from me."

Appearance: A heavyset woman who sits casually in her stall in the flea market while a half-dozen relatives around her frantically work. Her teeth are dyed from betel nuts and cigarettes.

Roleplaying: She constantly fans herself, chain-smokes unfiltered cigarettes, and has a young girl translate for her.

Personality: Mama Lola is greedy, blunt, and drives a hard bargain.

Motivation: She needs to make money, whether directly in profit or indirectly in favors and contacts.

Background: Like the change of the seasons, Mama Lola emerged so slowly as a fence that she was established before anyone noticed. Her storefront is a stall in an Asian flea market, and her network is vast. Some say that the entire flea market is hers, others say that she's just a front for a larger organization. What is known is that she's the matriarch of a large family with contacts and influence around the world, and the ability to move anything. She can spot opportunity a mile away, and can quickly turn on a client or cut them a deal in return for a future favor. She uses a young girl as a translator, whose ears she occasionally covers, but she speaks and understands perfect English and many common languages.

Traits: *(KS) Ancient, criminal, hideous, leader, merchant, mysterious, notorious, wealthy*

Jimbo Duggins 826

Daredevil Forest Ranger

"I would never want to work in the city. Having to live in a place where you're a poor slob looking out your window, and instead of seeing the mountains you just see another window with another poor slob looking back at you. No thanks! Ready to go hang gliding?"

Appearance: He has a wiry, muscular build, and often wears high-end sports clothing under his park ranger uniform for those spontaneous opportunities to try something extreme.

Roleplaying: Jimbo likes to give people fist bumps and high fives.

Personality: He is a high-energy person who tries his best to psych up the people around him to try new and daring outdoor activities.

Motivation: He is a free soul who wants to live life on his own terms. He loves the outdoors, and he chose his job so that he could spend all day outside.

Background: Jimbo never wanted to go to college; he barely graduated high school. He is highly intelligent, but cares little for traditional goals (getting married, buying a house, planning for retirement, etc.). He just wants to be out under a blue sky surrounded by nature. He figured that by becoming a park ranger he would have access to everything that he wanted out of life, and more. It was the best decision he ever made.

Traits: *(PB) Eccentric, outdoorsman, police*

Muffie Rochester 827

Clueless Sorority Sister

"Don't tell me. Let me guess. He asked you out? That's so awesome. It'll be so great watching you twist him around your little pinky!"

Appearance: She has big blond hair, blinding white teeth, large, bright eyes, and perfectly applied makeup. She wears tasteful white dresses, ones with frills for special occasions. Her taste in jewelry is always understated. She stands with poise.

Roleplaying: She minces and giggles when something strikes her as funny—which happens a lot.

Personality: If she finds you worthwhile, she can be a loyal and dependable friend. Other people—including a lot of college instructors—are just beneath her notice.

Motivation: Her goals are to go to school, get good grades, find a rich husband (or one with earning potential), and make lasting friendships with sisters. Oh, and go to a lot of parties.

Background: An upper middle class blue blood (her family has money, but not enough connections or pedigree to get her into an elite private academy), she leads a sorority at a small liberal arts university. She is actually very smart, but because her focus is on the marriage track, she's quite clueless about the world at large. If it doesn't touch her world, it's meaningless. She'll help raise funds for good causes, of course, but she makes no distinction between upheaval in Asia, mudslides in Latin America, or an outbreak in Africa. Others' misfortune or hardship is kept distant in her mind.

Traits: *(TT) Beautiful, dilettante, wealthy*

Randy Gale 828

Crafty Spy

"Welcome to the corporate center. How may I be of service to you?"

Appearance: Randy is a luscious blonde with a winning smile. She always wears a tight-fitting top that's a size too small and matching blazer and skirt. Randy prefers bold lipstick and accessories. She appears to be in her late twenties.

Roleplaying: She acts a bit ditzy. She seems to barely be in control of her senses, often making odd remarks about her horoscope or latest tarot reading. When obviously confused she just smiles and shrugs.

Personality: Beneath the glitter and cosmetics lies a crafty agent. She's cool and calculating, able to turn her fake personality on and off at will. She is completely dedicated to her mission.

Motivation: She wants to be a perfect agent with a spotless record.

Background: Randy works for a covert organization and is currently infiltrating a local telecommunications corporation. Her "ditzy blonde" act is just that, as she's carefully taking the measure of everyone that works within the corporate offices. This is not her first mission and Randy has lots of information on many powerful figures, companies, and organizations. Depending on her mission, she could be an opponent or ally of the PCs. Characters who go against her the first time they meet may be surprised when she is helpful the second time around. Randy never takes anything personally; it's all part of "the great game."

Traits: *(WC) Beautiful, charming, stealthy, white collar*

Dr. Milton Nestor 829

Fretful Historian

"Please don't touch that, or that. This one belongs here, facing to the east, where the sun rises. Careful with that as well—it is over a thousand years old. Oh, my… Now, what can I do for you?"

Appearance: Milton has white hair that is perfectly combed, his suits are perfectly pressed, and his tie is adorned with the perfect knot. He is a very tall, thin man in his mid-fifties.

Roleplaying: When he is uncomfortable, Milton wrings his hands and speaks in quick, short sentences. When relaxed, he speaks even more quickly.

Personality: He is very high-strung and worries about matters great and small. He is most calm when things are a certain way, and he becomes agitated when things are out of place.

Motivation: Milton enjoys his regimented life and his pursuits of historical knowledge.

Background: A nerdy child in school, Milton was picked on for his strong love of all things Babylonian. High school and college were not much better for him, but he excelled in most academics. He obtained a Ph.D. in antiquities, and went on to make several important discoveries, which led to several books and numerous speaking engagements. He now works for a major university where he teaches part-time, and he spends the rest of his time engaged in research. He is well known as an expert on relics of lost cultures, and is often sought after by explorers for his insight.

Traits: *(PV) Academic, genius, scholar*

Mama Danvers 830

Expert Fence

"Let Mama help you, honey. We'll go in Mama's back room and see what turns up. Well, would you just look at that: six kilos of primo cocaine."

Appearance: Mama Danvers is a short, fat woman in her early fifties, with graying brown hair, sharp eyes, and a face that seems kindly—at first.

Roleplaying: Mama acts like a doddering old grandma, but she's really a no-nonsense criminal who's as shady as the day is long.

Personality: Coming from a long line of criminals, Mama is a cagey operator who knows how to get what she wants, connects well with people, and covers up her business expertly. "Mama Danvers" is almost entirely an act—she's neither as honest nor as nice as she seems to be at first. She doesn't like to get her hands dirty.

Motivation: Mama wants to continue being the spider at the center of a web of criminal activity that spans the country.

Background: Operating out of a junk-filled rural antique store in the middle of nowhere, Mama Danvers is somehow able to move just about anything illegal. She does a brisk business buying and selling illicit goods, from drugs to weapons to stolen artifacts; the only thing she won't sell is people. Her network of contacts, sources, and buyers is extensive, and for those with something illegal to offload, or who need something from the black market, her place is well worth the long drive.

Traits: *(MR) Business, charming, criminal*

Gordon Clairborne 831

Raunchy Sensei

"The mount's one of my favorite positions to work from, next to a Gordo sandwich. Never heard of it? That's me, naked, grappling with my two hottest students."

Appearance: People expect a martial arts instructor to wear a white gi, but they don't expect him to leer at them while spouting a string of dirty jokes and innuendos.

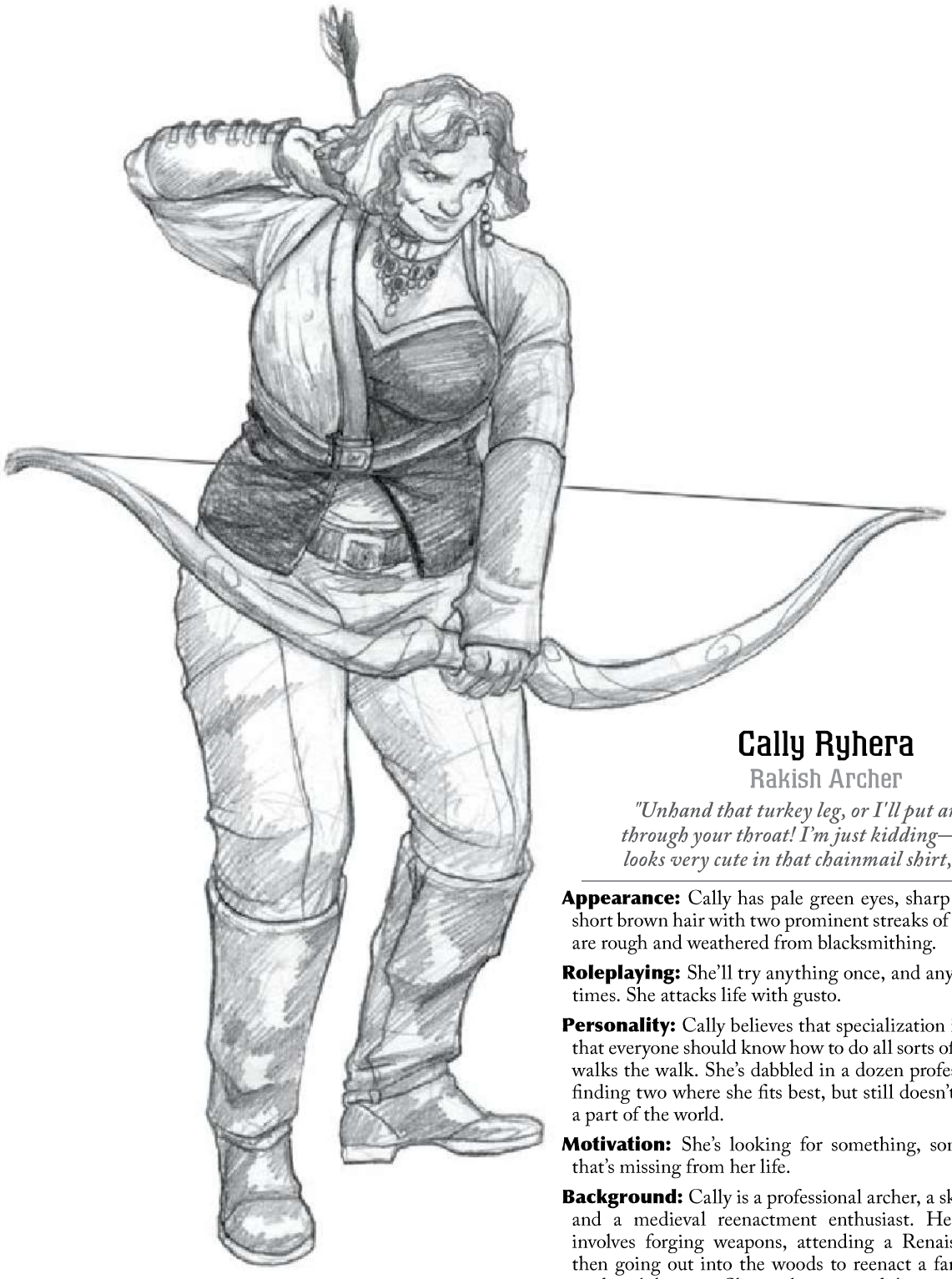
Roleplaying: Everything can be a sexual reference.

Personality: He's very into himself, his conquests, and little else.

Motivation: He's looking for wealthy clients to bring in money, or attractive clients to train privately.

Background: Hours of training turned Gordo from a chubby and awkward high school kid into a sculpted and confident martial arts instructor. It also turned him from the lonely kid at home to the popular guy on campus. His dedication and skill are obvious, but his raunchy attitude and licentious behavior have kept him from being as successful as his more respectable colleagues. Throw in a few explosive break-ups, some bad business decisions, and a bit of child support, and Gordo is always looking for new students of any skill level. Students who can handle his incessant comments (and come-ons for the women) get access to an excellent instructor for a good price, but it's definitely not for everyone.

Traits: *(KS) Abhorrent, aggressive, business, humorous, warrior*



Cally Ryhera

Artist: Avery Liell-Kok

Cally Ryhera

832

Rakish Archer

"Unhand that turkey leg, or I'll put an arrow through your throat! I'm just kidding—your son looks very cute in that chainmail shirt, milady."

Appearance: Cally has pale green eyes, sharp cheekbones, and short brown hair with two prominent streaks of white. Her hands are rough and weathered from blacksmithing.

Roleplaying: She'll try anything once, and anything fun several times. She attacks life with gusto.

Personality: Cally believes that specialization is for insects, and that everyone should know how to do all sorts of things—and she walks the walk. She's dabbled in a dozen professions, eventually finding two where she fits best, but still doesn't feel entirely like a part of the world.

Motivation: She's looking for something, some special sauce, that's missing from her life.

Background: Cally is a professional archer, a skilled blacksmith, and a medieval reenactment enthusiast. Her ideal weekend involves forging weapons, attending a Renaissance faire, and then going out into the woods to reenact a famous battle from medieval history. She makes a good living as a blacksmith, forging high-end items for special customers and solid-but-basic items for everyone else. Cally is also a competitive archer, earning prize money in several tournaments throughout the year. Her fondest wish is that someone would transport her back in time to the Middle Ages, where she would fit right in.

Traits: *(MR) Crafter, dilettante, outdoorsman, warrior*

Dan Archuleta 833

Fraudulent Newscaster

"Live on the scene, this is Dan Archuleta, Channel Five News."

Appearance: Broad-shouldered, with immaculately manicured hair, he wears a suit and tie along with heavy makeup. He's usually busily speaking into a cell phone while holding a large microphone, and a camera crew nearby is setting up and checking the light.

Roleplaying: His voice is like honey, and he rarely appears flustered. His movements are precise and measured and he nods thoughtfully while others speak. Dan avoids using contractions and enunciates clearly.

Personality: In the competitive news market, he's carved out a reputation as a hard-nosed reporter willing to get the story at any cost. Dan is highly motivated and flashes a trademark smile while praying for some new disaster for him to cover. He's ambitious to a fault.

Motivation: He hopes to be around to cover the next big thing; anything to make the leap to prime time anchor.

Background: Dan received a degree in journalism from a small Midwestern school. He has worked hard to climb up the ranks, but was never quite able to make the push into the big time. Now, Dan has decided to give himself an edge by helping make the news. He pays his sources well for exclusive coverage and has even gone so far as staging incidents. Recently, Dan was at the scene of a recent fire minutes after it started—a half hour before any other station.

Traits: *(DM) Entertainment, famous, power hungry*

Samuel Archerson 834

Ambitious Politician

"Schedule lunch with Judge Henderson at 1:00, make sure I have time to make it to my 3:00 tee time with the Stillman Group V.P., and send a thank you letter to Mrs. Whitebrook for the lovely dinner party last night."

Appearance: Tall and muscular, Samuel has neatly trimmed auburn hair, deep blue-gray eyes, and a dazzling smile that never leaves his face. He is never seen without his handheld organizer and his personal assistant.

Roleplaying: Samuel has a booming voice and a hearty, infectious laugh. His speech and body language project reassuring confidence and he moves with energy and purpose. Even when no one is around, Samuel always seems to be posing for a camera.

Personality: The consummate politician, Samuel is all smiles and inspiring speeches. He never misses an opportunity for good press or a photo-op. Always on the go, Samuel's schedule is filled to overflowing.

Motivation: Samuel works hard to gain political power and influence.

Background: After starting his political career in small posts in municipal government Samuel quickly moved up to mayor of his small town and now covets bigger and better positions in city and state government, with an eye to an eventual run for congress. Politics is a game of money and influence, and Samuel plays like a master. He has contacts all over the city and uses whatever tools are at his disposal to get what he wants.

Traits: *(MN) Beautiful, famous, focal, leader, political, power hungry, wealthy*

Jared Chandler 835

Compassionate Mercenary

"My fee is a thousand a day, 10-day minimum. I'm expensive because I'm good... Wait, they got your kid? Scratch that. Pay me what you can."

Appearance: Jared looks like a stereotypical dockside blue-collar worker—physically fit with scruffy hair and three days' beard, wearing well-worn street clothes under a pea coat and a watch cap.

Roleplaying: When dealing with clients, he is professional and courteous. When dealing with the public, he's coarse and brusque.

Personality: A former elite soldier, Jared is direct, intelligent, and aggressive.

Motivation: He can't save adults from each other or themselves, but he can damned well save the kids.

Background: The son of a dock worker, Jared grew up on the wharf. He joined the Navy after high school and worked his way onto an elite team of Navy commandos. After eight years, an injury led to his early retirement. He has since rehabilitated his injury, but found himself uninterested in working a normal job after his military career. When a girl from his neighborhood went missing, he hunted down the kidnapper, returned her to her parents, and collected the reward. It was the most satisfying thing he'd ever done. He now works as a bodyguard and mercenary, but takes kidnapping and missing children cases at a steep discount, sometimes for free.

Traits: *(KS) Adventurer, aggressive, laborer, military, warrior*

Costello "The Ram" Artund 836

Basketball Lothario

"I don't love 'em and leave 'em. I always come back next season to check in on them."

Appearance: He is tall, nearly seven feet, broad-shouldered but lean, muscular and cut. He has enormous hands and incredibly long legs. He wears the latest style of tailored suit. He has a tattoo of a stylized ram on both his left and right arms, visible beneath his basketball jersey.

Roleplaying: He always gives his lovers a gift, usually jewelry with some association to his nickname.

Personality: He has a lustful heart, and a knack for wooing women without regard to their other attachments. He is fiercely competitive.

Motivation: He likes the personal challenge of winning on-court and off-court "duels" with the best players in the league. He likes to steal the hearts of the women of his on-court rivals, engage in verbal sparring "trash talk," and then beat them one-on-one in the big games before adoring fans.

Background: He was a hoops sensation before he ever stepped on a college court. He jumped to the pro basketball association after two seasons of college ball. Now he's a star player, with endorsements and a multi-million dollar contract. He got his nickname for the way he just explodes down the court and makes a powerful dunk. He loves the pro lifestyle, the nightlife, and the company of the women he meets in every city.

Traits: *(TT) Aggressive, famous, primal, warrior*

Meg Bacchus 837

Opinionated Confidant

"Girlfriend. Crazy is as crazy does. You did not just say that!"

Appearance: Her short dreadlocks tucked under a ball cap, she wears a faded gray sweater over a T-shirt and dirty tennis shoes. A baggy coat with a multitude of pockets full of pens, paper, and trash is bundled around her.

Roleplaying: She cracks her neck from sitting in her taxi too long and often turns to lecture her passengers—much to their dismay—while she's in the midst of bustling traffic. She multitasks and carries on a conversation while leaning on her horn and yelling obscenities at other drivers. She refers to her passengers as "baby" when talking to them.

Personality: Meg has a kind of street wisdom about her. She tells it like she sees it, offering a raw honesty that is rarely heard. There's nothing she hasn't heard of nor anything that shocks her. Her simplified life gives her a unique perspective into other people's problems. She's nosy to the extreme.

Motivation: Her life is on autopilot but she enjoys listening to and helping other people, especially if they don't think they need it.

Background: Her background is unremarkable, and she fell into a job as a taxi driver with a fake license some years ago. She's good at it, and can navigate the streets with ease. Her love of interacting with people makes her poke her nose in their business and give raw, unsolicited advice.

Traits: *(DM) Counselor, humorous, laborer, pilot*

Tomoko Yates 838

Uncompromised Athlete

"The only way to win is the honest way!"

Appearance: Long and lanky, Tomoko's body was made for running. Her hair is cut short to reduce wind resistance and her body seems built only of lean, taut muscle.

Roleplaying: Tomoko is very shy and respectful of others' boundaries. She will pause until others have finished speaking and made it clear it is her turn. When she runs, she becomes a completely different person, the look of determination on her face showing her inner strength.

Personality: She's honest to a fault, a trait picked up from her businessman father. Though she comes across as a bit naïve, Tomoko is smart enough to realize that not all others are as honest as she is.

Motivation: She revels in running, and she desires to become the best athlete in the world.

Background: Though many have attempted to influence her with large bribes or threats to her family, Tomoko refuses to throw any races and pushes herself through only natural means. She discovered her talent for running when she joined her school's track team. Tomoko has gotten to the top through skill and perseverance alone, and she is constantly pointed to as a great role model. Her posters are on walls across the world. She just recently achieved one of her lifelong dreams: being on a cereal box. Tomoko is hard in training for the next Olympic Games, the second she will have been in.

Traits: *(JA) Beautiful, entertainment, famous*

Tiffany LaSalle 839

Passionate Artist

"A little to the left dear, now lean over and hold it...hold it...perfect!"

Appearance: A tall, striking brunette, Tiffany is beautiful and knows it. She has large brown eyes and always has a small smile playing on the corners of her mouth. As an artist, she is aware of her body and always dresses and poses to show off whatever will make the best impression on whomever she is dealing with.

Roleplaying: Flirting with men and flattering women, Tiffany has a low, dulcet voice and a slight French accent from growing up in New Orleans. She is warm, and inspects others carefully for subject material.

Personality: Tiffany is a true artist, seeing the world as an inspiration for her work. She is very passionate and can become almost manic over whatever new person, place, or thing has sparked her latest creative streak. Once in the throes of an artistic inspiration, Tiffany has been known to lock herself in her studio for days, often forgetting to eat, until her piece is complete.

Motivation: The two stages of Tiffany's drive are to find an inspiring vision and then to express that vision in a work of art.

Background: Tiffany has always been an artist. Skipping formal schooling, she now runs a small gallery downtown. She and several other artists display their works in the first floor gallery and share an apartment upstairs.

Traits: *(MN) Artist, beautiful, entertainment*

Aria van Hel 840

Obsessed Hunter

"I've seen this all before. Mysterious murders, exsanguinated corpses, confused cops. And I hate it."

Appearance: The nasty scar running from her temple to her jaw line is nothing compared to the scars that can be seen deep in her eyes.

Roleplaying: She's curt and humorless, and does not suffer fools lightly.

Personality: Obsessed by her self-appointed mission, Aria has little time for anything else. If it doesn't make her a better hunter, she has no time for it.

Motivation: She exists to rid the world of supernatural evil.

Background: A Dutch aristocrat by birth, Aria traveled the world with her parents on both diplomatic and philanthropic missions. A gifted child, she excelled at anything she attempted, from fencing to foreign languages. One night in Bosnia, while she was sneaking out to go to an underground club in Sarajevo, her parents and their entire entourage were viciously murdered. The Bosnians blamed it on the Serbs, but she saw the bodies and knew it was no military operation. A priest spoke to her about the murders, explaining that it was a pack of werewolves, but that there was a way to fight back against such things. She trained for and joined the Order of the Temple (Templars), which went underground centuries ago to fight supernatural evil. Obsessive in her pursuit, she is now one of its lead agents.

Traits: *(KS) Adventurer, aggressive, mysterious, warrior, zealot*



Molly Wick

Artist: Avery Liell-Kok

Mark Cohen 841

Vigilant Computer Engineer

"Look, I can't really talk right now. I've got to get this honey pot running so I can get some real data."

Appearance: Middle-aged with slightly graying hair, Mark wears glasses and dresses in khaki pants, striped button-down shirts, and ugly ties.

Roleplaying: Raised not to bow to bullies, Mark weighs his options before choosing a path. He often carries around a clipboard and notepad where he scrawls down plans and ideas in small, neat penmanship.

Personality: Mark gives off an air of determination and focus. He seems mild mannered and never raises his voice or gets angry.

Motivation: Mark put himself in danger when he refused a bribe to compromise his company's security systems. Since then, he has been trying to figure out exactly what those criminals wanted.

Background: When the man at the bar started talking to Mark that fateful night, it was apparent to him that something was a bit off. When the man finally got around to offering the bribe to compromise his company's security, Mark was shocked. He flatly refused and walked out. The very next day, Mark upgraded the firewalls and installed "honey pot" computers on the network. Since then, he's noticed many probes against the system and has been collecting data. Mark has mentioned the odd activity, but not the bribe. He knows things aren't always what they seem, and his time in the Air Force taught him the value of covering his own ass.

Traits: *(JA) Business, saintly, white collar*

Molly Wick 842

Political Anarchist

"I want no new faces at the next meeting. If I don't know them, they don't get in. I'm not going to risk our plans because some unsuspecting idiot brought a narc into the room. Power to the people!"

Appearance: She is a tall, curvaceous young woman with long reddish hair. She wears large tinted glasses with round lenses, and always wears casual clothing, like blue jeans.

Roleplaying: She refuses to speak to a person until someone that she trusts vouches for them.

Personality: Molly is paranoid, but with good reason: She is wanted by several different law enforcement agencies.

Motivation: She wants to see all forms of government disappear.

Background: Molly saw her parents lose their home and their business to an eminent domain project. Eventually her parents divorced, and she had to go live with her aunt as neither her mother nor father could afford to raise her on their own. In college, Molly learned of several anarchist organizations and joined them all. Eventually she pulled them together as the People's Liberation Party. She's been arrested several times on charges of arson related to fires on government property, but there has never been enough evidence to convict her.

Traits: *(PB) Abhorrent, focal, mysterious, political, stealthy*

Malcolm Dibble 843

Crooked Technician

"<mumble, mumble>"

Appearance: A short man in his early twenties, Malcolm has dirty blond hair and hazel eyes. His clothes are wrinkled and he smells faintly of body odor.

Roleplaying: Malcolm mumbles and looks at the floor whenever anyone speaks directly to him. If forced into communication, he stutters badly.

Personality: A painfully shy introvert, Malcolm avoids any situation where he would be put into contact with groups of people. He is of average intelligence, but tries to play into the "computer geek" stereotype, and in his mind he is the next great computer genius.

Motivation: Malcolm is desperate to reassure himself of his own cleverness and self-worth, and takes every opportunity to upstage others even if no one knows about it but him.

Background: Malcolm was an average student through high school and college. He views himself as a genius, and explained away his mediocre scholastic achievements as sabotage by envious classmates or jealous teachers. He currently works for a cab company as an IT tech. He works nights and it is his job to erase the security camera footage on all the cab cameras. Before he destroys the footage, however, Malcolm saves the most interesting and incriminating clips for his personal collection. He has a huge archive of drunk co-eds, chatty businessmen, and overheard cell phone conversations which could all be damaging or legally troublesome if Malcolm ever did anything with them other than archive them and feel smug.

Traits: *(MN) Business, white collar*

Wendy Somers 844

Tactless Waitress

"Are you sure you want the pancakes? You look like you've put on a lot of weight. Oh, you're pregnant? My bad. Pancakes for the tubby mom-to-be it is."

Appearance: A handsome 40-something waitress, Wendy is usually wearing a diner uniform covered with grease. She keeps a pencil behind her ear and a pad handy. Loose silverware and tips jingle in her apron pockets.

Roleplaying: She is friendly but gruff. She's harsh in her assessments of patrons, to the point that other patrons reflexively wince when she zings someone. That said, she remembers everyone whom she's ever waited on and can recall conversations word for word.

Personality: Beneath her gruff exterior is a vulnerable person. Wendy's had a tough life and her zingers help her cope. Unfortunately, she doesn't realize how biting she can be, and she occasionally reduces a new patron to tears.

Motivation: She has no high expectations for her life; she merely wants to live through it.

Background: Wendy has a photographic memory but was never able to take advantage of it. Born into poverty in a broken home, she left high school to make ends meet by getting a job as a waitress. Thirty years later she is still a waitress. Wendy's memory is a major source of her zingers as she remembers everything in great detail. Many patrons come to the diner just to hear her zing patrons, and the diner sells T-shirts celebrating her gruffness.

Traits: *(WC) Eccentric, humorous, laborer*

Eugene Lemon 845

Enthusiastic Royal Physician

"Take this with a sugarplum and two fairies. You'll be right as rain in no time, little miss!"

Appearance: Eugene has big ears and a bigger grin; wisps of white hair escape his brightly tailored hat. His face is creased with laugh lines and rounded out by warm brown eyes and a few age spots.

Roleplaying: He's quick to laugh, often exaggerating a formal accent and waggling his eyebrows.

Personality: Laughter is the best medicine; he jokes with patients and tries to coax a smile from youngsters. With adults, he keeps a positive spin on his diagnosis—their hope is an essential part of the cure.

Motivation: He is grateful for the good life he's living; not many get to travel the world at their sovereign's side, with a long enough leash to treat local children and bring hope.

Background: Eugene grew up a distant friend of the royal family; he was very surprised to be nominated as the Royal Physician when their old doctor retired. His arrangement allows him to tour facilities when he accompanies the royal family around the world; he's been able to monitor the cutting edge of medicine. For the last 20 years he's walked the fine line of celebrity, treating children and promoting healthy lives—and reminding people that health is a mindset.

Traits: *(SM) Charming, medic, royalty*

Marquise Chanelle Kegg 846

Prattling Noblewoman

"See the duchess? Loves fast food. The general? Cannot drive to save his life. None of them can take a joke, so stuffy. What about you? Want to hear a funny story?"

Appearance: A thin, middle-aged woman with ear-length auburn hair, Chanelle's makeup is incredible and her skin is flawless. She wears expensive outfits and is adorned with jewelry.

Roleplaying: Chanelle never stops talking. Silence is her enemy. She will let someone else speak for a moment, but will then batter them with more senseless questions.

Personality: She loves conversation, or more specifically, loves to tell stories. Chanelle has a dry sense of humor and a wonderful delivery. She will talk to anyone who wishes to listen.

Motivation: Chanelle is looking for a friend who is not caught up in the politics and social trappings of her peers.

Background: Married as a young woman, Chanelle was always a bit of an outcast in the Marquis' family. She has done well to represent the crown and her husband, but she regards it as a job. In truth, she is quite lonely. She is privy to a great deal of information, as she is often in the presence of important discussions between her husband and his powerful friends. She is a potential font of information for the person who takes the time to listen to her and is skilled enough to get a word in edgewise.

Traits: *(PV) Charming, humorous, royalty, wealthy*

Luke "Cobber" Carne 847

Optimistic Stuntman

"What a fantastic day to jump out of a helicopter into a volcano! God, I love being alive on days like this!"

Appearance: Luke is a big, husky guy in his thirties whose hair and beard reflect whatever role he's playing at the moment. He smiles widely and often.

Roleplaying: His favorite phrase is "Well, the silver lining is…" He expects the best from everyone and everything, but without being naïve about it.

Personality: Luke is an eternal optimist, his spirit resolutely unbroken despite numerous injuries and a handful of near-death experiences. Luke looks on the bright side of everything, and he can be counted on to lighten the mood wherever he goes. Unsurprisingly, he's an adrenaline junkie—but he's also as safety-conscious as he can be, given his profession.

Motivation: He likes to have fun, live life to the fullest, and do crazy stunts.

Background: No one knows why he goes by "Cobber," and Luke tells a different story every time someone asks. He's a pretty uncomplicated guy, and everything about him is right on the surface. He's a skilled stuntman who's worked in some major movies, and he's widely respected by his peers. If he suspected that "real-life adventurer, like in the movies" was an actual job, he'd be asking for an application in a heartbeat. He loves his wife, Monique, his two daughters, Francine and Eloise, and his dog, Squib.

Traits: *(MR) Charming, entertainment*

Professor Andrea Karrin 848

Environmental Activist

"That developer wants the government to revoke the protected status of this area so that he can develop a resort and drive up the real estate values of the homes that he built. If that is what the people of this area want, then fine. I can't stop you from voting the way that you feel. I just want you to know what the truth is."

Appearance: She is a woman in her fifties who dresses in jeans, flannel shirts, and hiking boots. She wears glasses and a large, floppy sun hat.

Roleplaying: Andrea cleans her glasses often and tends to squint when she reads, muttering, "Damn these old eyes of mine" to herself.

Personality: She is one of the smartest and nicest people that one could hope to meet. Her logic is like a steel trap during an argument, but she prefers to use her personality to win people over to her side.

Motivation: Andrea believes that even with a growing population, people can have happy, productive lives without having to sprawl into untouched wilderness.

Background: Professor Karrin has been doing field research on ecosystems for over 30 years. She spends so much time outdoors living in tents that she sometimes forgets that she has living quarters at her university. Her passion for understanding the complexity of the natural world has made her a legend in her field, and the nemesis of several lobbyists.

Traits: *(PB) Academic, charming, outdoorsman, primal, scholar*

Kevon Mire 849

Corrupt Ex-Cop

"You don't think I do this job for the pay, do you? It's the fringe benefits, man."

Appearance: He wears a wrinkled suit with stained tie. He's pudgy and carries himself as if he's the cock of the walk. His shoes are scuffed and worn.

Roleplaying: When he's close to "making a deal," he rubs his hands together in anticipation.

Personality: He's evasive and hard to pin down. He's greedy and is always angling to improve his bargaining position.

Motivation: He always wants a taste of the action. He'll help out folks with genuine needs, if he thinks he'll be rewarded in the end. But most of his dealings are under the table.

Background: He's a former police officer who left before Internal Affairs to could pin him down for accepting bribes. Now he runs a private security firm, which gives him all sorts of access and information he's willing to sell—for the right price. He prefers his cut to come as cold, hard, untraceable cash, but he also accepts trade, if the goods or services appeal to his greedy nature. He doesn't play favorites—and all his clients know it. He'll sell information to any side. He can protect himself well enough and he has no family ties to be used against him.

Traits: *(TT) Criminal, police*

Harold Banks 850

Possessed Actor

"Here, beneath this stage, I shall play my greatest role. I will achieve heights that no mortal before me has ever dreamed of—nor dared to reach for!"

Appearance: Tall and stately, Harold's silver hair and neat mustache are set off by the deep burgundy suits he wears and the silver-headed cane he carries.

Roleplaying: Harold is one of the old-school actors, favoring grace and sophistication over crass parties and cheap drugs. He has played everything, and he will often break into minor melodramatics at a moment's notice.

Personality: Harold looks down on others, seeing their lack of sophistication and grandeur as the biggest abomination possible. His ego outstretches him by far.

Motivation: Harold has been feeling his age lately, and feels he could reach greater heights if only he had more time. He has turned to the occult and dark magic for answers, reveling in the old-school ambiance it lends his character.

Background: Harold did not believe anything would happen when he pulled the old book from the shelf of his family's manor. Though there were rumors that his family dabbled in the dark arts, he thought them the superstitious talk of those jealous of wealth. When the demon offered him a deal, Harold found himself saying yes despite the fear. Though he looks the same, Harold is young and strong on the inside. Since the deal, he has begun to get strange cravings for violence which he cannot control.

Traits: *(JA) Famous, occult, power hungry*

Isaac Elliott 851

Thrill-Seeking Biologist

"That was EXTREME!"

Appearance: Isaac is a stocky man in his mid-thirties with short, sandy blond hair. He wears a shark-tooth pendant around his neck, visible over his tan pullover shirt. He wears knee-length shorts and hiking shoes without socks. Several handmade bracelets are on each wrist. A scar on his right arm and left thigh are lighter than the rest of his tan skin.

Roleplaying: Isaac speaks in a surfer-dude tone, punctuating every other sentence with "awesome" and "outrageous." In moments of delight he'll cross his arms to form an "X" and yell, "EXTREME!"

Personality: Isaac doesn't know the meaning of the word "fear" and tackles life with gusto. He loves feeling alive and shares that joy with others. He's hyperconscious of how others perceive him and strives to come off as a confident exhibitionist.

Motivation: An adrenaline junkie, Isaac is always on the lookout for his next fix or dare. He isn't reckless or casual with his life, but is more apt to take risks than most people. He assists his lesser-skilled friends as they need him.

Background: By day Isaac is a marine biologist with an impressive resume and portfolio of accomplishments. In his down time, Isaac is an extreme sports junkie. He will take friends on trips with him to climb peaks, base-jump, skydive, or do anything else that gives a rush. His passport is well-used and he's up for anything if there's adventure to be had.

Traits: *(DM) Academic, adventurer, humorous, outdoorsman*

Shayna Keehan 852

Passionate Firefighter

"Wow—that is a big fire. If I don't come out in five minutes, tell my Ma I love her. See you in a sec!"

Appearance: Shayna is whipcord-thin, but much stronger than she looks. She has a boxer's squashed nose, small eyes, and an unruly forelock of pink hair.

Roleplaying: Shayna is the first one into every fire, and the last one out, but she's not a glory hound—she's just intensely dedicated.

Personality: If she didn't love saving peoples' lives, Shayna would be a base jumper or an extreme skier—danger is her drug of choice, and the likes to live as close to the edge as she can. She's stayed single so she won't leave anyone behind if she dies, but she's a fan of one-night stands enjoyed to their fullest. There's nothing she wouldn't do for the ones she loves—or for complete strangers, for that matter.

Motivation: Shayna lives for two things: saving lives, and the thrill of danger.

Background: A former boxer, Shayna stumbled into her current profession when she saved a dozen children from a burning orphanage. On that day, she felt alive like never before, and she started firefighter training just a few days later. Shayna is passionate about her calling and the people she meets, and saves, every day. When, very occasionally, she gets guff for being a female firefighter, she beats the snot out of whoever made fun of her, and that's that.

Traits: *(MR) Charming, medic, police, saintly*

Maxine Jackson 853

Thrill-Seeking Mercenary

"Hold my beer and watch this, you bunch'a yankee-loving mother scratchers!"

Appearance: Random scars, an ever-present grin, and wild eyes frame a nose that's been broken too many times.

Roleplaying: She talks quickly, with a strong Southern accent and wild hand movements. Most of her stories are wildly exaggerated.

Personality: Instead of growing old gracefully, Maxine wants to do everything she can while still young.

Motivation: A lifelong adrenaline junky, she's always looking for another risk to take, whether it's solo backpacking around the world or hitting on the sheriff's son.

Background: The tomboy daughter of a NASCAR driver, Maxine inherited many of the risk-taking traits that made him famous. Instead of race cars, she took different paths, from extreme sports to underground cage fights to mercenary work. She will almost always take a dare, and occasionally challenge someone else to one. She keeps her word, but rarely gives it, and rarely stays in one place long enough for it to matter. She spends money as quickly as she makes it, and regularly has to take odd jobs for a quick buck, as long as they keep her thirst for adventure quenched.

Traits: *(KS) Adventurer, aggressive, impoverished, primal, outdoorsman, warrior*

Boris Kerensky 854

Enormous Bouncer

"I told you half an hour ago to stop harassing the ladies. You have two choices. You can either leave on your feet or on your ass."

Appearance: Boris is a bear of a man. He's almost 6'5" and solid muscle. He keeps his head shaved but sports either a goatee or a soul patch depending on his mood. He usually wears a T-shirt so he can show off his heavily tattooed arms. He keeps a knuckle duster in his back pocket for unruly patrons.

Roleplaying: He is a man of few words unless he's angry, in which case he spews an endless stream of expletives. When speaking to someone, Boris still glances around, looking for potential trouble. Unless the conversation involves club security, Boris only pays cursory attention.

Personality: In spite of his intimidating demeanor Boris is a gentle soul and actually a fun date. If you get on his bad side, Boris is your worst nightmare. He fights like a frenzied animal.

Motivation: He enjoys protecting people.

Background: Boris was never the brightest student and garnered the nickname "Frankenstein" due to his large size and Eastern European name. Unwavering in his loyalty to his friends, Boris got expelled from school for fighting. He did a stint in the military and saw action overseas before becoming a bouncer at a local club. Boris' military training has proved invaluable, as he can anticipate and defuse situations before they get out of control.

Traits: *(WC) Business, military, warrior*

Samantha "Sam" Orzabal 855

Blind DJ

"Who here is ready to dance?"

Appearance: A petite young woman with curly blond hair, she wears faded jeans and a camisole under a "Tears for Fears" T-shirt with some holes in it. A large backpack is slung over her shoulder, covered in band promotion stickers. A white cane is in her other hand and she wears dark sunglasses, even inside. Headphones rest around her neck.

Roleplaying: Her bubbly personality and smile make talking with Sam a pleasure, and people quickly forget that she is blind. On occasion, she'll stare off and not face the person she is speaking with. Sam takes any missteps with regard to her sight in stride.

Personality: While she may have every excuse to be down, Sam's personality is positive, as is her outlook on life. She's grown accustomed to her loss of sight and doesn't even think twice about it anymore.

Motivation: Music is her passion, and it keeps her going. It's her creative outlet and her disability actually works to her advantage.

Background: Sam's loss of vision is genetic; she was legally blind by the age of 13. She's spent most of her life since then learning to overcome and move on. Now in college, she studies music technology and acoustical engineering and DJs in her spare time. She has a rabid following. Her hearing is so keen she's able to discern subtle variations in sounds, and she has consulted with the police and FBI.

Traits: *(DM) Academic, artist, charming, entertainment*

Lisa Grey 856

Organized Archivist

"Ah yes, form 42f, that one is kept in the fifth filing cabinet in the red aisle. It's an organization system of my own invention. I hope to write my thesis on it and get it in use by all of academia."

Appearance: In her late twenties, Lisa Grey has never been seen with her black hair out of its tight bun. All of her clothes are form fitting and neatly pressed, as if they don't dare step an inch out of their proper place.

Roleplaying: Lisa Grey is precise and organized in everything she does. Even her movements are crisp and clean, with not an iota of muscle wasted. When she talks, she rarely deviates from the point at hand.

Personality: Lisa is curt, but kind. She only ever wastes effort on a small, polite smile. She believes in "the perfect amount for the situation."

Motivation: Lisa believes that an organized and clean space is essential for mental health. She realizes she does not have control over others' lives, but hopes that her strict adherence to order will prove a shining example.

Background: It isn't entirely known when Lisa became a devotee on the path of organization, but you can bet she has the exact date written on an index card in a filing box somewhere. Though her adherence to organization has made her a valuable asset in her graduate archival program, it has caused no end of issues in other parts of her life.

Traits: *(JA) Eccentric, scholar*

Henry Solomon 857

Treasure Hunter

"We're dealing with royalty here, so just let me do the talking. I learned from their daughter last night where the map is in the royal archives. Don't mention that bit about the daughter… Your Royal Highness, we are honored that you agreed to meet with us!"

Appearance: Henry is dashingly handsome, and he wears tailored suits with a freshly cut red carnation on the lapel of the jacket. When out searching for treasure, though, he wears whatever best ensures his success.

Roleplaying: He never shows any sign of anger, and he tries to listen more than he talks. He observes his surroundings intensely, and will ask questions about items or people that attract his curiosity.

Personality: He is a pleasant person and has an aura of command about him. He is courageous, but never foolish.

Motivation: For Henry, the only thing better than treasure is the hunt to find it!

Background: While growing up near the coast as a boy, Henry went swimming and discovered a shipwreck in a nearby cove. Terrified but curious, he swam into the cavernous wreckage. Inside the skeletal remains of the ship was a small locked box. Henry retrieved the box and found a handful of precious jewels inside of it. Henry was hooked. Right then and there he knew what he wanted to do for the rest of his life. Two decades later, he leads a team of treasure hunters around the globe.

Traits: *(PB) Adventurer, beautiful, charming, leader*

Lauren Singleton 858

Optimistic Environmentalist

"Doom and gloom? Not me. Look at all the good we've accomplished. I'm confident we'll find ways to improve life on earth."

Appearance: She's in her late fifties, with graying hair pulled back into a ponytail. She favors a large straw hat. Big-boned, she wears oversized tie-dye shirts and loose beige slacks.

Roleplaying: She has a way of pushing back on the brim of her straw hat so that it bends back but doesn't fall off her head. In fact, it seems her hat never comes off, even in the fiercest wind.

Personality: She's happy and forward-looking. She makes friends easily. She's not judgmental of others' lifestyles.

Motivation: She's eager to show by example and instruction how others can live greener lives, but she doesn't think being demanding or haughty makes people change their lives.

Background: She used to be a militant activist in the environmental movement, organizing public boycott campaigns and large-scale protests. She came to understand those tactics turned people away from their cause, so she dropped them. After living the life of a suburban mom, she's comfortable now being a quieter advocate for change, influencing neighbors, using social media to provide green tips, and reminding the cause of the gains they've made.

Traits: *(TT) Charming, outdoorsman, political*

Iara Carvalho 859

Stern Ambassador

"We could contentedly trade for just beads and baubles, even today—the land provides plenty for those who walk gently. But the press of your roads and people pens us away from good lands, inflicting waste and famine."

Appearance: Iara is short, with straight black hair, red-brown skin, and tattoos in a band across her cheeks and around her lips.

Roleplaying: She's quick to bristle; her people have been treated as lesser and manipulated at arm's length for centuries. Her Portuguese is excellent, but she conceals her knowledge of it as long as she can, to eavesdrop and gain better information.

Personality: Iara is engaging, drawing people into discussing trade and barter. If they mention force she's swiftly contemptuous—that's the behavior she expects.

Motivation: She's an ambassador from her people; the best at outsiders' languages, the best educated in their schools. She reads between the lines—she knows that fair dealings are historically unusual.

Background: The daughter of a cast-out woman, Iara learned mainstream culture in a way that her brethren can never understand. She grew up on cartoons and pop-culture that dismissed her people, and after graduation she tracked her people down and rejoined them. After a few years, she left to shame the government and secure their rights. She doesn't expect much of the government, but even little is better than nothing.

Traits: *(SM) Impoverished, merchant, primal*



Eugene Kennedy

Artist: Christopher Reach

Eugene Kennedy 860

Unbalanced Soldier

"I hate blood. You see it and you can't help but imagine it running through someone's body, warm and life-giving. And then, there it is lying on the ground in front of you, the gun still warm in your hand."

Appearance: Dressed in the dirty military uniform he was issued on day one of the war, Eugene's prematurely aged face shows the horrors he's seen on the battlefield.

Roleplaying: Eugene still believes that what he is doing is right, and he won't give up on his squad mates, but every day it gets a little bit harder and things seem a little bit bleaker.

Personality: He's disturbed by the things he's seen, but he keeps reaching inside himself and pushing forward. He isn't sure where the motivation comes from at this point, but if it leaves him, he might fall apart.

Motivation: Eugene believes that this will all end if the war ends, and that's why he keeps fighting; peace is just one victory away.

Background: Eugene was older than most of his squad mates when he joined the military, but not by a lot. He was just a few years older—enough time to give him a perspective and maturity the others didn't possess. He started in the mechanics corps, but when things got bad he got moved to active duty. While his squad mates rationalize with their youthful bravado, Eugene sees only the blood on his hands.

Traits: *(JA) Laborer, military, warrior*

Tony Waller 861

Covetous Fence

"I'm sorry, this is a machine shop, I am not sure what you are asking about. Oh, that is a large sapphire. Perhaps you want to come in the back and talk in private?"

Appearance: Tony is overweight and balding, with an anemic comb-over and a full beard. He is in his late thirties. He often wears dirty coveralls and has grease under his nails.

Roleplaying: Tony speaks in a deep gravelly voice born from his passion for smoking. He smells of oil and metal.

Personality: Tony wants many things. When he desires something, he obsesses over it until he possesses it.

Motivation: He is a black hole of wants; his motivation is based solely on his most current desire.

Background: Tony grew up in a blue collar neighborhood watching the mobsters in the town living like playboys. While he could never be one, he did what he could to help them out. Along the way, he entered the family business, running a modest machine shop, but always desired more. He began to do small favors for some of the mobsters, and in return they helped to set him up as a fence to move their stolen goods. Tony turned the back of the machine shop into a store, selling the mob's stolen goods. Tony's store is a well-kept secret, but those in the know on the streets are aware of its existence.

Traits: *(PV) Business, criminal, focal, laborer*

Greta Volpe ("Foxxhound") 862

Activist Blogger

"Breaking news! The mayor allegedly plans to take the Fund for Restoring Park Green Pond and use it to throw a celebrity golf tournament to fundraise for next year's re-election campaign!"

Appearance: A short, plump woman with ginger hair and green eyes, Greta dresses professionally and carries herself with determination and self-importance.

Roleplaying: Greta is most easily contacted via her blog, where she is loud, caustic, and obnoxious, and has an opinion about everything and anything. In person she is enthusiastic but much more cautious.

Personality: Despite her intense demeanor, Greta is calculating and careful, picking her fights carefully and choosing accusations that are difficult to refute.

Motivation: Greta crusades to expose the truth, and failing that, to expose what she believes to be the truth.

Background: The author of a successful anti-establishment blog, nothing is off-limits to Greta's scrutiny. Whatever she feels needs to be exposed, fixed, or protested against is detailed on her blog. Whenever she plans a story, Greta will spend days researching and even doing a bit of private investigating. She feels she has a "nose" for news, and if a story is hot enough she will fill her blog with what she suspects may be the truth even if she lacks the hard evidence. She has occasionally failed to mention she doesn't have proof of her allegations, but the anonymity of the Internet has so far protected her from a lawsuit.

Traits: *(MN) Aggressive, humorous, notorious, scholar*

Tupa Tatupu 863

Enormous Bouncer

"No more talk. Speak with your fists."

Appearance: It's difficult to say which is most intimidating about this Samoan bouncer: his huge size and build, his tribal tattoos, or the look in his eyes.

Roleplaying: Tupa doesn't talk much, but he communicates well enough through grunts, facial expressions, and body language.

Personality: A warrior born, he is fiercely aggressive and fiercely loyal.

Motivation: He will use his intimidation and fighting skill to serve his clients, until he's saved enough money to move back to Samoa, buy some land, and retire.

Background: When your family has nothing but pride and tales of ancestral warriors, you become a proud warrior. Tupa can't remember his first fight, but he probably won it. Growing up, he fought anyone—his brothers, rivals, friends, strangers. After winning an amateur boxing title, he moved to California, where he fought in a number of underground cage fights. After a fellow fighter was permanently maimed in a match, Tupa wisely chose the less dangerous career of club bouncer and bodyguard. He is an intimidating figure, over 6' and 330 lbs. of solid muscle, covered in tattoos. His aggression and fighting ability are only matched by his loyalty to his clients and friends.

Traits: *(KS) Aggressive, primal, warrior*

Ginger Prescott 864

Enthusiastic Antiquities Curator

"History is a puzzle. Let's dive in and solve part of it!"

Appearance: Her red-brown hair is cut into a bob. She is petite and round-faced, offering a sweet smile to nearly everyone she meets.

Roleplaying: She is fond of puzzles. Her desk is cluttered with various "blacksmith" puzzles and other three-dimensional brain teasers.

Personality: She is enthusiastic about her job and relishes every opportunity to share what she knows with visitors. She is helpful, cheerful, and dedicated.

Motivation: She believes that the past speaks to the present in a very real, often misunderstood way. Unlocking that puzzle, by cataloging and studying artifacts, is the first step. Teaching others comes next.

Background: She wasn't motivated by any particular field of study until she left Great Britain for the United States and wandered into an archeology lecture by mistake. That captured her interest and she became an enthusiastic student of history. It was also during this time her cheerful personality surfaced, because she found something worthwhile to do. Her personality has won her many friends in the field, including several experts who she keeps in contact with. No one on staff can match her love of the subject matter, which is why she is the "go-to" person for tours and demonstrations.

Traits: *(TT) Academic, charming, scholar*

Gary Alderel 865

Pessimistic Balloonist

"No, I'm sure lightning will hit the balloon sometime tonight. Oh, I'll still go up, but I'll make sure my will is in order first."

Appearance: Gary is a short, bald man who wears huge sunglasses, walks with a slight limp from a ballooning accident, and always looks tired. He carries 12 "lucky" rabbits' feet at all times.

Roleplaying: He can't help himself from commenting about things that will go wrong, and whenever he's around they usually do.

Personality: Gary assumes the worst about everything, but especially the weather—and he's almost always right, like a living incarnation of Murphy's Law. He assumes the universe has it in for him, viewing it as his responsibility to soldier on nonetheless. He balloons because it relaxes him—he likes the peace, silence, and solitude of being up in his balloon (at least until a hurricane blows in, of course).

Motivation: Gary wants to lead a peaceful, uneventful life.

Background: Because of his terrible attitude and the misfortunes that always befall him, Gary hops from job to job every few months—sometimes getting fired, sometimes leaving a smoldering ruin behind (through no fault of his own). He laughs at the idea of any occult significance to his extraordinarily bad luck. He's never married, partly because it's unlikely anyone could stand him and partly because he worries what might happen to his wife. He'll try just about any "remedy" for ill fortune, no matter how hokey.

Traits: *(MR) Humorous, pilot*

Robert Mercado 866

Talkative Politician

"I come before you today to tell you that there is a better way. With the help and support of your neighbors, you can pull yourselves up, and pull them up as well. Together we can complete journeys that none of us alone could take the first step of."

Appearance: Stout, but with a layer of flab, Robert's black hair and dark brown skin stand out against his light beige suits.

Roleplaying: Robert is usually the one to have the last word in a conversation, as well as the first. The sheer amount of words he uses might seem to obfuscate the message, but Robert has been honing his speaking skills for years and knows how to keep an audience hooked.

Personality: Robert is kind, honest, and friendly—an oddity among most politicians. He will always make time to talk with his constituents about their troubles.

Motivation: Robert grew up in the slums, but scholarships and high grades gave him a good life. Having returned to the slums, he seeks to make life better for everyone there.

Background: Though Robert's incredible intelligence and charisma have gained him great wealth, he realizes that there is more to life than money. His latest campaigns have been about revitalizing the poorest parts of the city and actually cleaning up crime, not just talking about it. His inspiring speeches have brought hope to many, and real results that few politicians can match.

Traits: *(JA) Leader, political, white collar*

Kendra Clark 867

Inquisitive Geek

"I'd love to discuss ancient Babylonian religious rituals with you. I wrote a supplement on Babylon for the "Dangerous Dungeons" line. Why don't you come to my office around 6:00? It's game night, but I can spare an hour."

Appearance: A tall woman of average height and weight, Kendra is in her mid-thirties and keeps her brown hair cut just above the shoulders. When teaching she wears business suits and dresses, but outside of class she prefers T-shirts with science fiction or fantasy motifs.

Roleplaying: She is very open and inquisitive. She has a wealth of knowledge on many academic subjects and freely shares it. She's thrilled when she meets someone who is as into science fiction and fantasy as she is.

Personality: Kendra's a geek. She loves science fiction and fantasy and enjoys creating fantastic worlds. For her, a perfect night is sitting around a table playing roleplaying games, either tabletop or computer. She attends conventions regularly and dresses in costume.

Motivation: She enjoys being a professor but wants to publish the ultimate RPG game world.

Background: Kendra has always been bookish. She fell into science fiction and fantasy novels at an early age; her eagerness to learn about the settings fueled her passion for academics. As she grew older, she built a circle of friends with similar interests. Due to her faculty position and her hobbies Kendra has a rather diverse network of contacts.

Traits: *(WC) Academic, eccentric, scholar*

Dani Hewitt 868

Empowered Crime-Fighter

"What? No, sorry. I was just thinking about what you were saying about that robbery the other night and that vigilante's involvement."

Appearance: She has long brunette hair falling past her shoulders, and ivory skin. She wears long-sleeved business suits and evening gowns, always of the latest fashion. A distinctive beauty mark on her upper lip stands out with her brilliant smile. Her personal assistant is never far away.

Roleplaying: She's terse when talking about science or business but in social circles can hold her own and be charming. Often she seems distracted or like her attention is elsewhere.

Personality: Dani is a workaholic and an inventor who's driven to uncover how things work. She can become single-minded and attack things with a laser-like focus. Her dual role as a vigilante doesn't faze her, since she can compartmentalize. She'd admit to a bit of a thrill when she goes out under the cover of darkness.

Motivation: She's driven to use her knowledge and gifts for the betterment of society.

Background: Bred at a young age for success, Dani never took her upbringing for granted, using it as motivation to do better than the rest. This work ethic catapulted her to great success, but her inventions and wealth could only do so much to improve society. Empowered by the thought of having a direct hand in doling out justice, she concocted a vigilante alter ego to more directly effect change.

Traits: *(DM) Adventurer, genius, mysterious, wealthy*

District Attorney Miranda Stevens 869

Uncompromising Prosecutor

"This plea bargain is a joke. Wasting my time is not going to help your client. I don't care that he can afford a dream team of defense attorneys. His money and his celebrity don't exclude him from the law. See you in court."

Appearance: A petite woman in her late fifties, she wears her gray hair in a bob cut, and dresses in simple suits. She has a brilliant smile, but hardly anyone has seen it.

Roleplaying: She has a habit of putting her elbows on her desk and pressing her palms together in front of her when listening to others. When she hears something that she finds displeasing, she taps her index fingers together.

Personality: While at work she keeps her nose to the grindstone and expects others to do the same. In private, she is an adoring wife and grandmother, but few people get to know her privately.

Motivation: She is passionate about serving the public trust and enforcing the law.

Background: Both of Miranda's parents were police officers, and her mother died in the line of duty. Miranda joined the force herself and became a detective, but she realized that it did not matter how good a job she did if the prosecutors didn't get the convictions. She entered law school, and after passing the bar, she joined the district attorney's office. From that point on, her career has progressed steadily forward.

Traits: *(PB) Counselor, focal, mysterious, political*

Tabatha Claypool 870

Distinguished Sniper

"Anyone can spray a burst into the air and randomly kill someone. But to have your target in your sights and to see his face the moment before you extinguish his life, that is being a true warrior. Respect the craft and the work you do."

Appearance: In her mid-thirties, Tabatha is a woman with a strong build, with wide hips and toned legs. She has light brown hair, which she wears pulled back.

Roleplaying: Tabatha is very perceptive of her surroundings. She is relaxed and speaks with a faint Southern accent.

Personality: She is an honest and dependable person who is well-respected by her peers. She acts to maintain that respect at all times.

Motivation: Tabatha strongly believes in duty to her country, to the family business, and to the students she trains.

Background: The daughter of a highly decorated sniper and gunsmith, Tabatha grew up in the South and was raised to shoot from an early age. She served in the Marine Corps, where she trained with snipers but was unable to be classified as one. She left the Marines after eight years and returned to family business. Today, Tabatha helps to design some of the best custom sniper rifles in the world, and she is an excellent competitive sharpshooter. She is frequently hired by private security firms to train sharpshooters. She has performed covert operations for private security firms against high profile targets on several occasions.

Traits: *(PV) Crafter, focal, military, warrior*

Nadia Benares 871

Unlucky Reporter

"This is Nadia Benares reporting live from the Jersey shore. If you look down at these cracked shells you can see…I just split my skirt, didn't I?"

Appearance: Nadia is a young, slim woman who's very photogenic. She usually wears tight, impractical clothes that look good but rarely survive a broadcast or interview.

Roleplaying: On camera, Nadia is overly friendly and responsive. Off camera, she's short-tempered and prone to snapping, largely due to her frustration over whatever bad luck she's having today.

Personality: She is a cheery but cynical person. Her family brought her up to be optimistic, but Nadia's luck has seriously challenged that upbringing. She walks into every situation expecting the worst and is rarely disappointed.

Motivation: She would just like her bad luck to end. Failing that, she wants to be the best journalist she can.

Background: Brought up in a culture of isolation, Nadia was initially very shy. She purged her shyness by becoming a news reporter. She was soon a regular fixture on evening telecasts. Unfortunately, she also quickly became an Internet sensation as many of her reports went hilariously wrong. She's been blasted by the blown snow of a passing plow, lost a heel while on the boardwalk, and took a baseball to the side of the head while reporting on a little league controversy. So far, Nadia's antics have not jeopardized her job, but she worries that it's only a matter of time.

Traits: *(WC) Beautiful, entertainment, humorous, white collar*



Tabatha Claypool

Artist: Avery Liell-Kok

David Fox 872

Generous Pathfinder

"You're right; the dollar goes far in Vietnam. If you instead visit Xianglieb in Laos, you get much the same experience—but less overrun by tourists, and with great hosts."

Appearance: David is still healthy and fit at 38; brown hair and green eyes top a rugby player's build. He tends toward shorts and pants with lots of pockets, filled with maps, power bars, and lots of keys.

Roleplaying: David speaks clearly and avoids slang—a lifetime of confused looks has whittled his English down to an economical core. He supplements this with gestures and a lot of smiling.

Personality: The world needs saving, one well and farming technique at a time. David has been all over the globe, trading wells, filters, and knowledge for local handicrafts, laying the groundwork for tourism and a leg up for the locals.

Motivation: As first contact he gets to stay outdoors, where he's happy. He loves meeting new people, learning new lifestyles—and making the world a better place.

Background: David was hired by a backpacking/tourism company out of college. His path finding has added dozens of new destinations to the route-map, keeping the company ahead of the competition—and giving him a chance to meet new people and spread knowledge. Children fascinate him; they're the one thing that he wants that doesn't fit his current lifestyle. For now, he's content to be a favorite uncle in dozens of villages.

Traits: *(SM) Adventurer, merchant, saintly*

Caleb Greenwood 873

Narcissistic "Actor"

"I've been kidnapped, seduced by my wife's twin sister, abducted by aliens, and shot—twice—and that was only in the last month!"

Appearance: Shockingly handsome, he wears an open dress shirt, revealing his hairy chest, with a sports coat and slacks. His brilliant blue eyes are hidden behind designer sunglasses and his sun-kissed blond hair is neatly trimmed and parted to the side. His lips curl into a small kiss that he tosses to his adoring fans.

Roleplaying: Caleb is suave and handles his fame with practiced ease. His answers seem practiced and artificial—much like his smile.

Personality: Used to everything being tightly controlled and structured, Caleb doesn't handle surprises well. In fact, if caught off guard, he melts down and throws the equivalent of a five-year-old's tantrum. When the cameras are off, Caleb is a narcissistic and backstabbing person.

Motivation: He claims he just wants to perfect his craft and "open the window to the emotions of his character's pain." In fact, Caleb revels in his fame and fortune and seeks to obtain even more.

Background: A college dropout, Caleb quite accidentally fell into modeling and low-budget commercials. This was enough to get his good looks noticed and win him a reoccurring role on the TV soap "As My Children's Hospital Turns." He was so popular that his character, Todd Valentine, attended medical school and became chief surgeon…in just one week.

Traits: *(DM) Artist, beautiful, famous, entertainment*

Dr. Kelli O'Leary 874

Philosophical Fortune-Writer

"'Stay alert for new opportunities in the future' …in bed. Yep, that's vague enough."

Appearance: Dr. O'Leary is fascinated by the notion of "self," so she challenges herself to look as different as possible from day to day. Sometimes, even her own parents don't recognize her.

Roleplaying: Kelli gets lost in thought at the slightest provocation, wanders into things, and thinks "football" is a medical condition.

Personality: She views the real world as a fascinating theory, and rarely inhabits it. She's quite intelligent, but almost entirely lacking in common sense or a grasp on how normal people behave. It's not surprising, given her parents raised her as part of a cult that worships aardvarks and only eats cucumber slices.

Motivation: Dr. O'Leary wants to change people's lives through fortune cookies.

Background: Kelli writes fortune cookie fortunes for a living. She's not paid particularly well, but she prides herself on her ability to create fortunes so vague that they can apply to anyone—and that work well when you add "…in bed" to the end of them. She has a Ph.D. in philosophy but no inclination towards teaching or serious scholarship, and she loves what she does. If she ever loses her job, she could have a bright future in costuming or special effects: her ever-shifting appearance is much like wearing a new disguise every day.

Traits: *(MR) Counselor, crafter, humorous, white collar*

Garvin Massing 875

Anti-Government Survivalist

"Bad times are coming. You'd better be ready, pal. That's all I'm gonna say. You'd better be ready."

Appearance: A broad-shouldered middle-aged man with a bit of a paunch, he wears an army-green or beige T-shirt, matching cap, camouflage pants, and sturdy military-issue boots. The only weapon he wears openly is a hunting knife kept in plain sheath at his belt, but he keeps a sidearm locked in a case in the glove box in his truck, which also features an elaborate gun rack.

Roleplaying: When making a point, he'll hook his meaty thumbs inside the belt at his waist and stand with shoulders back, chest and gut forward and elbows pointed out.

Personality: He's dour, but protective of his few like-minded friends and his family.

Motivation: He believes he's the last of the true patriots. He'll bleed red, white, and blue, but he thinks the government is corrupt, overreaching, and undermined by a massive conspiracy whose ultimate goal is the enslavement of American citizens. He stockpiles supplies and heavy arms for the day that actually happens.

Background: He is an Army combat veteran who saw "some crazy stuff" while serving in military engagements in Panama and Kuwait. He's convinced that some of the contradicting orders his unit received during those engagements are evidence of the wider and growing conspiracy that threatens to overthrow his country. Ever since, he's made preparations for that eventuality.

Traits: *(TT) Military, outdoorsman, zealot*

Mitchell Swanne 876

Heartless Nurse

"It's your own fault you're in here; I mean, everyone knows smoking will kill you eventually."

Appearance: Of average height, with long black hair, Mitchell dresses in scrubs most of the time, even when not at work.

Roleplaying: Mitchell has little patience for questions or dramatics of any kind, greeting either with impatience. He speaks quickly and factually with no concern for the impact of his words.

Personality: In love with the theory and science behind medicine, Mitchell has a hard time with the personal interactions required by his profession. He has no concept of tact, and often flusters or upsets patients and their families with his blunt manner.

Motivation: Mitchell just wants to do his job and eventually move to a research position where he can get back to the pure science of medicine and have fewer interactions with patients.

Background: Mitchell has always loved science, especially the science of the human body. He went into nursing school early in life and loved it. Once he got out into practice, however, he found that the perfect science and ideal situations presented in the classroom were destroyed by the human element. He tries not to let his frustrations with patients affect his work, but even in ideal situations he is blunt and speaks his mind without regard to other's feelings. If he were not such a superb nurse, his lack of bedside manner would have gotten him in trouble long before now.

Traits: *(MN) Humorous, medic*

Michael Russel 877

Greedy Professor

"Ahh yes, that trinket is of little real value, but I could purchase it from you for my own collection. I like the little oddities you see. Shall we say $50?"

Appearance: Wispy white hair covers most of Professor Russel's head, and he has a bristly mustache. He is portly from enjoying the finer things in life.

Roleplaying: Professor Russel often plows into a room, looking around to enjoy the shocked looks on the faces of others. When he holds pieces of archaeological interest, he quickly turns them over and over again, setting them back down after a lightning-quick appraisal of their value.

Personality: Professor Russel is a networker, and he will cozy up to anyone he thinks can help him gain status or wealth. A bit of a toady, Russel can be commanding when he needs to be.

Motivation: He sees archaeology only as a means of quickly acquiring great wealth. He targets expeditions where he can use his experience to sweep in and steal the glory, as well as a few choice pieces that can be removed from the logs.

Background: Coming across an incredible find when he was a young student, Michael Russel gained more money than he had ever seen. This sparked a hunger in him that lead to his pursuit of the shadier side of archaeology. He doesn't hesitate to cross moral or legal lines, if he thinks he can get away with it.

Traits: *(JA) Abhorrent, academic, power hungry, scholar, wealthy*

Magnus Skoll 878

Unflappable Caver

"If I stay out here any longer, I'm going to smoke myself to death. Let's get into that cave—I bet we can make it further than anyone has before."

Appearance: Magnus looks like a cartoon Viking, with stark blond hair, a bushy beard, and a barrel-like physique. He's surprisingly flexible.

Roleplaying: Aboveground, Magnus is quiet and reserved; below ground, he's utterly relaxed and always in control.

Personality: Even among other cavers, Magnus is regarded as extreme. He regularly takes risks that other risk-takers balk at, and he's poised and unflappable even in the most awful situations. He has crippling agoraphobia, so he retreats deep into the earth—the only place where he truly feels like himself. When he's forced to spend time "up there," he smokes and drinks like a madman to keep from going nuts.

Motivation: Magnus wants to see the furthest reaches of one of Earth's final frontiers, no matter how deep he has to go.

Background: A veteran caver and expert SCUBA diver, Magnus explores the world's deepest caves, charting them for various agencies that have an interest in knowing what's under their feet. He also specializes in recovering the bodies of other extreme cavers, and in exploring caves where large portions of the cavern system are underwater. His record distance traveled in a cavern system is seven miles from entrance to terminus, and he's nearly died on more occasions than he can count.

Traits: *(MR) Adventurer, outdoorsman, primal*

Betty Wood 879

Aging Rock Star

"I've seen and done everything—and everyone—there is to see and do."

Appearance: Betty's face and body are a battleground between hard living and excellent plastic surgeons. It's probably a good thing that she wears sunglasses nearly all the time.

Roleplaying: At least every other word is a profanity, and nothing seems to faze her.

Personality: After the drugs, booze, and abuse have taken their toll, there's not much left inside.

Motivation: She secretly wants to really feel something again, whether it's love, hate, passion—whatever.

Background: Everyone knows Betty Wood, the singer who never faded gently into obscurity. She's been offending people since the late '60s, and has somehow managed to stay on the pop culture radar since then. Her music was never more than mediocre, but her ability to stay in the news is remarkable. Whether it's yet another drug bust, an assault on the paparazzi, or a profanity-filled spot on a reality TV show, she gets press on a fairly regular basis. But this showboating is just a façade; she's empty inside, and needs to feel something. It doesn't matter if it's a cause she can finally believe in, or something truly magical or occult, she needs something more in her life. And she has the money and influence to get it.

Traits: *(KS) Ancient, artist, eccentric, entertainment, famous, notorious, wealthy*

David "Rez" Reznor

880

Eccentric Hacker

"I most certainly can access the corporation's secure files for you, but first I must fulfill my daily obligation to Burger Khan."

Appearance: Rez is a short, rail-thin man in his early twenties. He's already going prematurely bald and wears a beret to conceal this. He has thick sideburns to compensate. He has an eclectic dress sense and wears odd combinations of jeans, sweaters, scarves, and blazers.

Roleplaying: He is uncomfortable speaking face to face, but is very prolific and prosaic when speaking online. When asked a question, Rez takes off his beret and scratches his head before responding with a quick one-word answer. In longer conversations, Rez speaks in very formal English.

Personality: Rez is most comfortable living in his virtual worlds. In real life he's a throwback, preferring to eat fine foods and drink fine wines. Unfortunately he lacks the money for those things, so he's become an amateur chef to compensate.

Motivation: He has short-term motivations. Currently, he's trying to convert his computer workstation to a "steampunk" motif.

Background: Rez is an odd duck, a Luddite misanthrope who's also a skilled hacker. His quirky mannerisms make it difficult for Rez to maintain a regular job and he has an extremely long resume of short-term jobs. Rez also has an antiquated demeanor; he treats his (few) dates with Edwardian respect and dresses in neo-Victorian style. He keeps a stock of absinthe and cigars at home.

Traits: *(WC) Criminal, eccentric, humorous*

Marcus Randweiler

881

Grim Mafia Bravo

"Knees or elbows? I'd go for the knees, less expensive to fix."

Appearance: Built like a stone wall, Marcus is all bulk and brawn. He covers his hefty frame with tailor-made deep-brown suits and keeps his blond hair cut short. He keeps his goatee clean and neat.

Roleplaying: Marcus doesn't mess around when it comes to carrying out assignments. There is little that can stand in his way, and he knows it. Whether he is hunting down someone from a rival gang or threatening someone who didn't pay up on time, Marcus plows through obstacles like a bulldozer.

Personality: He is precise and to-the-point in all things. He doesn't have time for humor or smiles, except for the disturbing sneer he sometimes puts on.

Motivation: Marcus enjoys what he does, and really just wants to keep doing it. There is little that pleases him more than breaking someone's head in.

Background: Marcus Randweiler spent years working in a Detroit car factory. The work was good and he was happy. When the factory boss decided to stop paying the local mafia's extortion fee, a stray car bomb killed Marcus' family and left him gravely injured. After recovery, his only thought was revenge. He tracked down and joined a rival family, becoming one of their best enforcers.

Traits: *(JA) Criminal, laborer, notorious, warrior*

Nalani Pemberton, "NextBerlin 9210"

882

Philosophical Social Networker

"We are craftsmen of a new age... Our gadgets are as beloved and meaningful to us as the hammer and anvil were to a blacksmith of old."

Appearance: Her avatar is a picture of a dark swirling vortex of clouds lit by a bolt of electric-blue lightning. In real life, she's a slim, dark-haired woman in her thirties who prefers light, sensible clothes. Either a hip pack or a bag slung over her shoulder holds the latest technological gear.

Roleplaying: In online discussions, she agrees or disagrees by making her own point-by-point responses, beginning with "Gdpt" or "Bdpt." In person, she has a tendency to multitask using her gadgets while having a conversation, which some people find distracting or annoying.

Personality: She is more confrontational and assertive as her online alter ego. She has trouble relating to people who are not plugged in.

Motivation: She believes this new age of personal technology will be the next "great divide" that separates haves and have-nots. She encourages everyone to embrace and use these tools to increase their quality of life.

Background: She is a career "social networker." Since she established her reputation on her own blog, she has been hired by various organizations and businesses over the years as an adviser, online community builder, online counselor, customer guide, and troubleshooter. She has yet to find a real life relationship as fulfilling as the thousands she's cultivated online.

Traits: *(TT) Counselor, notorious, scholar*

Ned Ashton

883

Insolvent Accountant

"Come on. The odds are in my favor on this one. The math doesn't lie!"

Appearance: A scruffy man of slight stature with graying hair and a wrinkled shirt, his breath smells of alcohol and his bloodshot eyes droop downward. His odor suggests he needs a bath.

Roleplaying: He hunches over and rubs his hands together, knowing this next try will be the one. Ned rubs his fingers and bounces his heels in anticipation. He's excitable when discussing the odds.

Personality: Having flushed most of his life down the toilet, Ned is getting desperate. This desperation shows as he tries to convince people to front his stakes, or when dreaming about the next big score that's sure to come any minute now.

Motivation: He will do anything to satisfy his addictions.

Background: Ned was a successful financial analyst until the lure of big-stakes gambling parlors got hold of him. Thinking he could outsmart the odds, Ned would spend his free time calculating probabilities and how he could beat the system. He kept trying, and with each failure would re-run his numbers. Eventually his wife left him, once it became clear that Ned's obsession was overcoming his reason. Drinking, in conjunction with his gambling, cost him his job, and now Ned barely scrapes by. He does have a strong grasp of probabilities and could use a hand getting back on his feet.

Traits: *(DM) Eccentric, impoverished*

Sam Watts 884

Selfish Actor

"Ladies, is it going to be a problem if you all share me tonight? I assure you there's enough of me to go around. Okay! Let's hit the town."

Appearance: Sam has classic Hollywood good looks, with a square jaw and angular nose. He wears his hair short and always looks a tad unshaven. He is tan, his teeth are perfect, and all signs of being in his late thirties are well concealed.

Roleplaying: Lounging whenever he can, Sam always has a drink in hand. He always finds the most comfortable place to sit.

Personality: Sam is a man who enjoys pleasure in every form: fine food and drink, luxurious clothes, and attractive women. He sees no need for any type of moderation.

Motivation: He serves only his unchecked ego, feeling the need to reward the smallest achievements with anything he desires.

Background: Sam came from a simple Midwestern town, attended college, and studied acting. He spent years working his way into the business, until he was discovered and cast in a popular action movie, which launched him into stardom. He has left a trail of starlets behind him, women he dated and then cheated on. His excessive drinking and recreational drug use are poorly kept secrets, but for now, Sam has all of it in check. It's only a matter of time before the trail of exes, drinking, and drugs catch up to him.

Traits: *(PV) Artist, beautiful, entertainment, wealthy*

Luisa Rodriguez 885

Hard-Boiled Meter Maid

"Sir, you have two choices: You can move and let me put this ticket on your car, or you can pay your fine from a hospital bed."

Appearance: A pretty, petite Hispanic woman just over 5' tall, with dark hair and eyes, Luisa looks like a living doll. Her body language, however, indicates that she is no one to mess with.

Roleplaying: Though always happy to assist others, Luisa is professional and insists on following through with her duties. When pressed or intimidated, she is fearless and hits like a truck.

Personality: Though she understands that people do not like the job she does, Luisa is unwilling to take crap for it from anyone. Her fiery temper and a sharp tongue allow her to stand up to and even cow much larger and more imposing figures.

Motivation: Luisa strives to perform her job with excellence and to return someday to fulfill her dream of becoming a deputy.

Background: Forced out of the police academy due to an unfortunate last-minute accidental injury, and unable to re-up due to cost, Luisa took a job as a meter maid. She still dreams of returning to the academy some day and earning her badge, but for now she takes every opportunity she finds to heed the call of her true passion of law enforcement: tipping off the police to suspected problems along her route, and even occasionally taking matters into her own hands.

Traits: *(MN) Aggressive, beautiful, humorous, police*

Shaman Bajam Unem 886

New Age Healer

"Feel the life-giving energies flow through the earth and into your feet, through your legs, up your spine. From there it goes into your arms and you raise them like branches! You are like a tree! You are a mighty oak! Let your buds blossom into wonderful maple leaves! What? Oak, maple, it is all the same as far as the universe goes!"

Appearance: A slightly overweight and pale man with thinning blond hair and green eyes, he dresses in loose-fitting pants, sandals, and a traditional Indian kurta shirt.

Roleplaying: He bows forward with his hands pressed together in front of him whenever he speaks.

Personality: He is annoyingly polite and happy. He just rambles on and on about "the universe" this, and "the universe" that.

Motivation: According to him, he wants to "reach the apex of the mountain of the inner sanctuary," but no one knows what that actually means.

Background: Benjamin Unger was a postal carrier for many years. He read every new age mysticism book that he could find. One day, at a new age convention, he got trapped in an elevator with a woman who went into labor. Scared out of his mind, he began coaching her through the birth by quoting the many books he had read. Ben Unger felt like he was ushering in a miracle. A healthy baby boy was born that day, and so was Shaman Bajam Unem!

Traits: *(PB) Focal, medic, occult, religious*

Elspeth Eckhart 887

Eccentric Professor

"I am the reincarnation of Amelia Earhart, and I don't like your tone, young lady."

Appearance: She looks almost exactly like Amelia Earhart: slender and casually beautiful, with striking, yet soft, features. She often wears an aviator's cap and a fleece-lined bomber jacket.

Roleplaying: Elspeth feels tremendous pride about her past life's accomplishments, and never misses an opportunity to talk about "her" exploits.

Personality: Elspeth believes that she's the reincarnation of the famous aviator Amelia Earhart, so she's used to not being taken seriously. She's proud of her "true nature," so she unwisely tells anyone who will listen all about her exploits in the Bermuda Triangle. She tries to be as intrepid and dashing as her previous incarnation, and sometimes succeeds.

Motivation: She wants to live up to the glorious legacy her previous incarnation left behind.

Background: Elspeth is a biology professor at a small college, a profession she regards as strictly temporary (a sentiment her employer doesn't entirely disagree with). She's certain that within the next few months—a year, at most—her talents as an aviator and explorer will manifest themselves. She tried taking flying lessons a few years ago, and that proved to be a disaster. It clearly wasn't "the right time for her abilities to flower." Her students love to tease her, and she takes this in stride—just like Amelia would have.

Traits: *(MR) Academic, beautiful, eccentric, humorous, scientist*



Andy

Artist: Avery Liell-Kok

Saunders

888

Old-Fashioned Butler

"Sir will take his coffee in the west drawing room, as always? Very good, sir."

Appearance: At 72, Saunders looks like a man of 55, with a slight paunch, a hawk's beak of a nose, and an honest-to-God monocle on a chain.

Roleplaying: He embodies every stereotype of the classical English butler, never letting down his hair for even a moment.

Personality: Saunders believes being a butler is a proud tradition that must be upheld to the highest standard, but also that a butler's employer must meet a similarly high standard. With no living relatives, his work is his life. He regards "butler" as a synonym for "valued member of this family, without whom our entire world would collapse like a house of cards."

Motivation: He wants an employer who meets his standards, for whom his services will be indispensable.

Background: Saunders (whose first name is Reginald) is a butler in the grand tradition, a relic from a former time. There is still a call for butlers even in the modern world, though, and Saunders remains ever able to answer that call. He would prefer to attach himself to a single employer for the rest of his days, but he has yet to find a worthy master or mistress. As a result, he's worked for a handful of famous billionaires, royals, and other wealthy individuals over the years, always leaving their service because of some imperceptible gaffe on their part.

Traits: *(MR) Business, laborer, white collar*

Andy

889

Hallucinating Addict

"Would you like to come back to my place, look at my woodcarvings, and maybe create a little meaning?"

Appearance: Andy's scrawny frame is squeezed into jeans and a pink T-shirt that reads, "Ask me about existentialism, it's Fabulous!" (both two sizes too small), accessorized with a hot pink ascot, a mostly empty cocktail glass, and a peeling name tag from some long-forgotten event. He stinks slightly of alcohol and sweat and his eyes wander aimlessly.

Roleplaying: Most of the time Andy is stoned out of his gourd. Colors fascinate him, minor hallucinations distract him on a regular basis, and he's convinced that he's actually an anthropomorphic giraffe. When he can be made to focus for any length of time, he's mostly interested in discussing sloppy philosophical concepts about the meaning of life.

Personality: Whatever personality Andy may have once had is lost in a confused haze of drug and alcohol addiction. These days, he's more of a sideshow freak than anything else.

Motivation: Finding a refill for his glass is enough of a challenge to keep Andy busy.

Background: A once-trendy hipster with severe addiction problems, Andy is now a mere shell of a person stumbling from one fix to another. Though he's too baked to know it, he has a boyfriend who keeps tabs on him through his cell phone's GPS function and keeps him fed, dressed, and supplied with drugs for his own amusement.

Traits: *(MN) Dilettante, eccentric, humorous*

Virginia Carter

890

Jilted Barfly

"Oooh. I'm sorry; I can't believe I spilled that drink all over you. How horrible, guess I'm going to have to clean it up…"

Appearance: Virginia is in her mid-thirties, and her attractiveness is hard to deny. Her curly red hair and naturally slender frame draw the looks of strangers wherever she goes. She is often found in a two-piece bikini and sarong with a drink in her hand.

Roleplaying: She will likely be encountered in the midst of a drunken dance, dropping into the arms of anyone she thinks is cute. Only the next morning's hangover finds her sober and regretful.

Personality: Virginia's mood fluctuates between being wildly carefree to excessively worried about what she is doing to herself. She can often remember the exact moment each night when she decides she doesn't care and smashes through the barriers of caution.

Motivation: She has never really dealt with the grief of her husband's affair in a proper way. She has gotten it stuck in her head that this party lifestyle will fill the gap inside.

Background: When she caught her husband cheating with his secretary, housewife Virginia became hedonist Virginia. Divorcing him and taking his small fortune, Virginia booked herself on the next cruise and never came back. Now she tours around on cruises, hangs out in beachside hotels, and desperately looks for the meaning she thought she had found when she married for love unrequited.

Traits: *(JA) Aggressive, beautiful, dilettante, wealthy*

Marcus "Mudflaps" Towne

891

Rascally Trucker

"The job comes first."

Appearance: Dressed in a plaid button-down shirt and jeans, he looks like a typical long-haul truckers. He's of medium build with a flat face. He keeps his hair cut short and wears a baseball-styled work cap.

Roleplaying: He'll scratch his chin and sniff before starting a conversation.

Personality: He's not sentimental and keeps calm even when everyone else around his losing their head. Some say he's got a cold and calculating gaze.

Motivation: He gets a quiet thrill out of engaging in illicit activities, whether it's smuggling or playing his role in a heist. The thrill has replaced the initial allure of such jobs, which was the extra cash.

Background: His skill as a commercial truck driver came in handy the first time some seedy characters approached him to haul something away fast. He did the job, and proved that he wouldn't be taken advantage of come payment time. Only once since then has someone tried to double-cross him; they ended up dead not long afterward. Through contacts made online and in the black market, he developed a reputation as a "steady hand" capable of keeping his mouth shut and disappearing after doing a job. In fact, traveling cross country means he rarely has to show his face in the same place twice in a short time. Though many side jobs are criminal in nature, he's reliable doing legitimate work as well.

Traits: *(TT) Adventurer, criminal, laborer*

Suzette Berkeley

892

Kinky Doctor

"I must remember to tip the doorman—you're exactly what I ordered."

Appearance: Suzette wears her hair layered in various tints, with a pearly smile, modest bosom, and emerald eyes.

Roleplaying: She plays up a ditzy side, particularly on TV, but her medical degree was earned. She's smart, but plays eccentric enough that no one trusts it.

Personality: In her jobs she's professional and self-deprecating, but she lives for after hours. If you come home with her, you'll find antique bloodletting equipment that makes its way into adult play.

Motivation: She works hard, she plays hard. She earned her idiosyncrasies.

Background: She's been an "A" student on course to be a doctor since she was six. In college she learned that she needed more than vanilla sex to rev her engine. One boyfriend introduced her to needles, which led to bloodletting, and a very happy place. She wasn't able to indulge much in med school, but as a TV personality she gets invitations all the time. Her kink would be scandalous if revealed, but no one expects her to be a saint—except when she's preaching the benefits of exercise to children.

Traits: *(SM) Eccentric, entertainment, medic*

Archibald Algernon Wilkinson, Ph.D.

893

Verbose Historian

"The lost pyramid? Why yes, I do know something of it. My great-grandfather did seek it for most of a decade. Of course, he never found it, otherwise we wouldn't be calling it 'lost' now would we?"

Appearance: An aged professor with a waxed mustache and a gin-blossomed nose, Archibald cleans his glasses on his cheap tweed suit.

Roleplaying: He drones on forever in his upper-crust British accent about his ancestors.

Personality: Dr. Wilkinson is fascinated by history and the roles his family has played in it, and believes that everyone else should enjoy his tales.

Motivation: He loves to share his vast reserves of historic information, and wants to see some of his ancestors' works finally finished.

Background: Of a long line of archaeologists and historians, Archibald is the current keeper of his family's notes and journals. His family has been on just about every major dig in the last hundred years, and has sought first-hand accounts of events dating back to the Renaissance. The information contained in those notes is incredibly valuable to the right people. Archibald himself has been on a number of expeditions, although he is a bit old to be gallivanting around the countryside. Because he started his family late, his daughters are only starting college, although one has already been on expeditions to the wilds of South America.

Traits: *(KS) Academic, counselor, scholar, wealthy*

Heerkani Koneru

894

Perfectionist Mechanic

"I'll call you when it's ready. You can't rush perfection."

Appearance: She wears a grease monkey's bib and overalls. She keeps her dark ponytail tucked in her hat, and she's sometimes mistaken for a teenage boy.

Roleplaying: There is always an endearing streak of black grease somewhere on her face.

Personality: She's quick to accept a job, but because she's a perfectionist, she won't be rushed. She's proud of her reputation, and she won't do anything to jeopardize it. She holds 15-minute oil change shops in disdain.

Motivation: She wants to be known as the maestro of the repair shop.

Background: She was born to affluent parents, but rebelled against their insistence that she get a university education. She's always been happiest mucking around in the garage. She now considers her repairs the work of an artist. She always strives to improve the performance of any vehicle she's working on. She won't be pushed or intimidated into working under a deadline. If pressed, she'll flatly refuse the job, telling the customer to take their vehicle elsewhere. She now charges top dollar for her repairs and has acquired an A-list clientele.

Traits: *(TT) Business, crafter*

Wilma Bekenhoff 895

Jinxed Gambler

"Blackjack!"

Appearance: In her mid-thirties, Wilma is plump with frizzy red hair and freckles. She dresses casually, in jeans, neon T-shirts, and comically large hats and sunglasses.

Roleplaying: Wilma is a gambling woman. If she can make a bet on it, she will. She is loud and boisterous when she's winning, and sullen and withdrawn when she is not.

Personality: A serious gambling addict, Wilma finds it difficult to resist even foolhardy bets. She loves the excitement of games of chance and the thrill of victory far too much to worry about the effect her hobby has on her future.

Motivation: Wilma is out to finally hit the one "Big Score."

Background: Though she loves to gamble, Wilma is unfortunately hounded by persistent bad luck. A millionaire several times over due to savvy investments made during the dot-com boom, she is able to support her habit without financial difficulty for now. Wilma tours gambling hot spots spending a few weeks or a month at a casino before moving on. Not only is she unlucky at gambling, but her nearly supernatural bad luck extends to other areas of her life, as well. She has buried several husbands, and lost two homes to acts of God. Her reputation as "bad luck" has gotten her shunned by the highly superstitious gambling community, and even her close friends are starting to get nervous in her company.

Traits: *(MN) Dilettante, eccentric, notorious, wealthy, zealot*

Armand "Swede" Wilson 896

Gregarious Gunsmith

"What we got here, laddie? Hmm... The trigger's crap, the action's loose, and how the hell you see anything with these sights?"

Appearance: This burly blond man behind the counter towers over his customers; his missing leg doesn't seem to slow him down at all.

Roleplaying: His cheerful attitude and strong Swedish accent let him get away with teasing just about everyone, himself included.

Personality: Swede's positive attitude balances his blunt honesty.

Motivation: Even after losing a leg, he still supports the warriors in and out of uniform. He's also very proud of his work.

Background: Swede was born to an American soldier and a Swedish mother, and raised mostly in Sweden. Naturally, he excelled in the biathlon, which involves cross-country skiing and rifle shooting. He joined the U.S. military, expecting to be on their shooting team and make money for college, but found himself volunteering for hazardous duty. College was put off indefinitely as he discovered his place in the world—on the front lines. After eight years, an IED took his leg and sent him back to college, where he studied metallurgy, mechanical engineering, and gunsmithing. If he couldn't be on the front lines, he can damned well support those who are. Swede's skill at reworking rifles and especially pistols is legendary among soldiers and ex-soldiers.

Traits: *(KS) Aggressive, business, crafter, genius, military, warrior*

Steve Kapoor 897

Sagely Hot Dog Vendor

"The Chinese say give a man a fish and you feed him for a day, teach him to fish and you feed him for a lifetime. But I say to you, what if the man doesn't like fish? Now, do you want mustard and kraut on your dog today?"

Appearance: A short, stocky middle-aged man with a thick mustache and curly hair, Steve usually wears comfortable clothes as he is constantly sweating inside his food truck. Even outside the truck, he smells like hot dogs and sauerkraut.

Roleplaying: He is always happy to see his customers and never has an angry word. He has a thick accent but, with the occasional grammatical error excepted, speaks well. Steve usually offers a quote, often a proverb, and gives it a personal touch. His proverbs have the uncanny ability to be relevant to whatever problem with which a character is currently struggling with.

Personality: Steve actually is cheery behind his smile, as well. He takes great joy in making other people happy, even if only for a few minutes.

Motivation: He simply wants to work hard and turn a profit.

Background: Steve had a very poor life growing up in his native country and is thrilled to be running his own business, even if it is out of a lunch cart. He keeps to himself and doesn't want to get involved in trouble, but has no problem doling out proverbial advice.

Traits: *(WC) Charming, merchant, mysterious*

Dianne Nelson 898

Healing Witch

"Oh, a bit of root in this poultice will make those hot flashes disappear right away!"

Appearance: An older woman wearing a thick, faded robe of dyed wool, she plods around in worn sandals. Her graying hair is unkempt and grows out wildly, and there is a large wart on one side of her face. She smiles behind a low pair of glasses perched on her nose, and several crooked teeth can be seen as she talks.

Roleplaying: Dianne talks quite energetically, despite her apparent age. She will often start to mention a subject and then abruptly pull back, censoring herself. She shuffles about her store, doing odd chores as she talks, rarely pausing to rest.

Personality: A kindly woman, she's eager to share her knowledge but is suspicious of strangers. A lifetime of being belittled has made her cautious in dealing with others. Dianne understands that many don't share her beliefs and tries to keep an open mind without "scaring the normals."

Motivation: Dianne wants to practice her hermetic arts and healing magic.

Background: She likens herself to a witch—her garb and warts play to the stereotype—but Dianne isn't the cackling, broom-riding kind of witch that the public is familiar with. Her healing magic is comprised of concoctions and potions that she sells in her shop. Many people, eager for a natural remedy, find themselves in her store. There are many who attribute their healing to her remedies.

Traits: *(DM) Eccentric, magical, medic, merchant, occult, outdoorsman*



Connor Ryan

Artist: Avery Liell-Kok

Connor Ryan 900

Outgoing Brit

"C'mon, I'm not gonna leave you behind."

Appearance: Medium-sized and bulky, Connor wears a kilt when playing rugby and whenever the weather is nice. He has a broad smile and deep laugh.

Roleplaying: Connor has few grand motivations in life. He tends to grab onto whatever is in front of him and give it all his energy. He'll always approach the person who seems left out of the group and try to bring them in.

Personality: He's friendly and outgoing, but rarely considers that there might be negative consequences to his actions.

Motivation: Connor values friendship over everything else. Once he considers you a friend, he won't abandon you.

Background: He was a semi-professional Rugby player before a knee injury benched him. Connor left Britain and finally settled down in a remote town in America, hiking the surrounding woods and working on a construction site. Whenever Connor takes on a task, he doesn't quit until it is done. Though Connor doesn't have much to his name, he is always willing to share with friends who are in a worse off place than himself. Whenever a friend needs help moving or someone to talk to, Connor is the first one there. He is the type of person that reflects the best in humanity, even in unnatural situations. This makes him an excellent addition to a zombie or horror campaign.

Traits: *(JA) Humorous, laborer, outdoorsman*

Aleta Overall 899

Level-Headed Bounty Hunter

"End of the line, scumbag. You shouldn't have run, but you idiots always do."

Appearance: An olive-complexioned woman in her mid-twenties, Aleta is powerfully built. She wears baggy cargo pants, jump boots, and an ammo vest with a tank top underneath, revealing two buff arms. Her short black hair is spiked up. Her eyes are hidden behind a pair of shooting goggles. An earpiece is connected to a radio on her vest.

Roleplaying: Her laid-back attitude and deference is off-putting. Aleta shrugs her shoulders at questions and isn't riled easily. She's not a conversationalist.

Personality: She approaches her job with a very serious but casual approach, understanding that most criminals are stupid and will mess up. As a bounty hunter, she pursues the element of surprise and approaches her work coolly and dispassionately. Aleta doesn't care how or why a person is wanted; that's someone else's business. The more she has to work to catch someone the fouler her mood.

Motivation: She wants to catch her man (or woman) and collect her bounty.

Background: A brief stint in the military ran counter to her feelings on authority, but the discipline appealed to her. She briefly worked as a private investigator until she was taken in as a part-time bounty hunter. Hunting down criminals and methodically bringing them in suited her style just fine. She prefers to work alone, as she doesn't get along well with people.

Traits: *(DM) Military, police, warrior*

Natalee (Nate) DuVall 901

Drag Queen Detective

"Girl, hand me my purse and my walking heels! That man isn't going to follow himself!"

Appearance: Nate wears rumpled brown suits, never matches his belt to his shoes, and cycles through pairs of half-broken glasses on a daily basis. As Natalee, she favors bubblegum pink gowns, sequined gloves, and blouses that show off her artfully airbrushed cleavage.

Roleplaying: Nate is a shy and retiring wallflower, while Natalee is a brassy extrovert. She's incredibly perceptive.

Personality: As Nate, he's shy, cautious, and quiet; as Natalee, she's boisterous, bold, and talkative. Natalee doesn't mind her time as Nate, but she has a lot more fun as Natalee—and more fun still when her two worlds cross, and she's forced to go out on business as Natalee. She's still deeply hurt by her family's rejection of her, but the stares and barbs from strangers just roll off her—most of the time.

Motivation: Natalee wants to make enough money as Nate that she can merge her two lives and live as Natalee full-time, turning away any clients who disapprove of her lifestyle.

Background: Natalee leads a dual life as a private detective, Nate DuVall, by day and the star of a drag revue, the Divine Madame Natalee, by night. Few people who know Nate also know Natalee, but all of her true friends know both sides of her life. She's a competent, creative detective, equally capable with her fists and her revolver.

Traits: *(MR) Entertainment, police, scientist, warrior*

Delaney Johnson 902

Angry Machinist

"Look, you little wimp, let's take this outside. I don't like people looking at me like that and I think I got to teach you a lesson."

Appearance: Large and out of shape, Delaney Johnson is a greasy man with a permanent five o'clock shadow. His jumpsuit is often dirty and he rarely pays close attention to personal hygiene.

Roleplaying: He will take the most innocuous comment as an insult and escalate the situation until he can start a fight. If he gets beaten, he always has an excuse for why the odds were stacked against him.

Personality: Yelling and fighting is Delaney's way of bolstering his waning confidence, but he always rationalizes it so that he's in the right. To him, life is constantly against him and nothing is his fault.

Motivation: Delaney is always looking for a target for his aggression, thinking that putting others down will bolster himself up.

Background: A childhood spent in and out of foster homes and the abuse that came with them turned Delaney mean at a young age. He never tried hard enough to excel at anything, and always felt others were holding him back. His poor attitude has gotten him fired from most of his past jobs. He lives a half-existence of work and booze. When he isn't yelling at someone, he is often found sulking at a bar looking for his next target. Few people like hanging out with Delaney.

Traits: *(JA) Aggressive, humorous, laborer*

Victor Robinson 903

Brash District Attorney

"Object all you want. Hold me in contempt. But, your honor, you know and I know that this garbage—sorry, defendant—is dangerous. Now just give me the restraining order."

Appearance: Victor is an obese man with messy black hair. His suits are poorly fitted and his tie is always crooked.

Roleplaying: He is loud when he speaks to people, and grumbles under his breath when he is talking to himself. Victor cannot resist eating if others are eating around him.

Personality: A passionate man, Victor is prone to emotional outbursts, but he is a good attorney and knowledgeable in the law. He has no tolerance for criminals.

Motivation: He has political aspirations, which he believes can be achieved by being hard on crime, as well as by being a bit outlandish in the courtroom.

Background: Victor entered the DA's office as young man, believing in the justice system. In a few short years, he came to learn the truth of the legal system and lost all patience with it. His courtroom outbursts in a high profile trial got him some notoriety and introduced him to powerful political players in the city. Now seeking political office, he continues to attack crime while making a bit of a show of the process. So far, the courts have tolerated his antics. He is now looking for the case that will put him into the political spotlight.

Traits: *(PV) Aggressive, counselor, political, power hungry*

Tina Hannessen 904

Charismatic Drifter

"What do you mean I screamed at you and told you to never talk to me again? You know I was just kidding! We're BFFs forever!"

Appearance: A tall, broad woman with short dark hair that sticks out in every direction, Tina's blue eyes are usually surrounded by too much makeup.

Roleplaying: Tina swings between extreme moods over the course of several weeks. During her more normal times, she is outgoing and charismatic. The longer she has been without a mood swing, the more nervous anticipation takes over her personality.

Personality: Suffering from rapidly cycling bipolar disorder, Tina has enormous and rapid swings in her mood, cycling from euphoric happiness to severe depression and anger within a very short time span.

Motivation: Tina is willing to try anything to overcome her problems, but feels like she has tried every solution available.

Background: Diagnosed with bipolar disorder in her late teens, Tina has seen a multitude of doctors and tried several dozen pharmaceutical regimens, but has seen no improvement in her symptoms. She spends a lot of her time in a haze of various illegal substances, trying to self-medicate. When not depressed or on drugs, Tina is a very charismatic woman. She makes friends quickly and is perpetually a rotating house guest. Though she easily gets jobs and holds them for a few weeks, her disorder inevitably sends her into a downward spiral, forcing her to start all over again.

Traits: *(MN) Charming, criminal, eccentric, impoverished*

Jasper Vanderschorn 905

Quaint Appraiser

"Oh my, this is an excellent piece, my dear. Would you care to guess how much you could likely sell this for? Would you be surprised if I said it's worth at least twice that much? You might even get two-and-a-half times that amount."

Appearance: He's graying but still fit, close-shaven, and still favors three-piece suits when everyone else wears jogging suits and golf shirts. He has a gold cap on a front tooth.

Roleplaying: He dons a pair of pince-nez spectacles before making a close inspection and appraisal of an antique.

Personality: He's engaging and has a trustworthy manner, making him good at putting regular folks at ease before they go on camera or on stage. He enjoys spending time in the company of people of his generation, swapping stories and memories.

Motivation: He likes the travel that goes with belonging to the antiques road show. He also lights up and shares a person's joy when they find out that something they've held as a keepsake is extremely valuable.

Background: Over the years, he's worked in furniture shops and for jewelers, sold cars, and was even the purchasing agent for a museum. His hodge-podge employment history has given him a sharp eye for antiques, but he's done his homework, as well, schooling himself on manufacturing lines and the work of certain craftsmen that make some antiques more valuable than others.

Traits: *(TT) Business, charming, counselor*

Esteban Hinjosa 906

Passionate Gunsmith

"I can put you on the list, but if you want me to handle it personally, there's a two-year wait."

Appearance: Esteban usually wears camouflage business wear; the patches of black and gray compliment his black hair and refined Spanish features.

Roleplaying: A strong Spanish accent shows through in any of the seven languages he speaks. He greets customers in their own language, listens intently to their feedback, and insists on perfection.

Personality: He's used to attentive praise, even from standoffish royalty. He's an acknowledged expert, and expects to be instantly familiar to everyone in gun enthusiast circles. Women are his vice; overlong looks ensure that his wife keeps a careful eye on him.

Motivation: Esteban is the very best, and loves praise for his craftsmanship. He loves his wife, but he savors the unique beauty of women—soft to the hard of his firearms.

Background: Esteban's mania for guns and weapons began in his teens, and it hasn't cooled since. He set out to master weapons of all kinds, comparing brands and balance, carefully shaving and molding them into perfection. At 22 he made his big break, getting invited to join an arms dealer's operation. While the taint still mars his reputation, he's grateful for the introductions—royalty and Hollywood actors have their very best firearms personalized by Esteban. While pricy, he guarantees—and delivers—perfection.

Traits: *(SM) Crafter, notorious*

Tricia Castellano 907

Energetic Athlete

"I know I shouldn't eat it, but English chocolate is the best! I'll just run an extra four miles tomorrow morning!"

Appearance: Tricia is in incredible shape, although her body is usually hidden beneath loose track suits. She keeps her hair long, but usually pulled back in a ponytail. She is usually sweating and constantly keeps moving to burn any calories she may gain from her "indiscretions" with chocolate.

Roleplaying: She is full of energy and tends to speak quickly. She touts the importance of proper eating and exercise. All of this goes right out the window if she spots chocolate, which she consumes like a dehydrated person drinking water.

Personality: Tricia believes in living an active lifestyle and enjoys activities that promote it. She'd rather be hiking than lying on the beach or participate in a volleyball tournament in lieu of going to the theater. She actively avoids seeing chocolate as she knows that she can't control herself.

Motivation: She wants her body to be in perfect shape for the rest of her life.

Background: Tricia works at the local health club. She teaches exercise, swimming, fencing, kickboxing, and Tai Chi. She uses herself as a model, recalling that as a shy teenager she was overweight and depressed. Tricia is now in overdrive on exercise. Her only weakness is chocolate, as she could never deny her sweet tooth. She is particularly fond of European chocolate.

Traits: *(WC) Primal, warrior*

Doug Schevenit 908

Insurance Vigilante

"No, no, Mrs. Swenson, it is not a miracle, you must have forgotten about the additional policy you and your husband took out. It looks like all of the medical bills WILL be covered."

Appearance: An older man with a receding and graying hairline, Doug is about 40 lbs. overweight. He usually dresses in slacks and a button-down shirt and tie.

Roleplaying: Doug is quiet and an excellent listener. He bends over backward to help those truly in need, but is disgusted by those who abuse their positions or power.

Personality: A typical mild-mannered insurance agent, Doug secretly views himself as a silent vigilante against the unfairness of life's circumstances.

Motivation: Doug manipulates the system to balance out the inequality and injustice he sees every day.

Background: Working for the nation's largest insurance company, Doug has seen far too many "little people" who have lost everything due to tragedy and were not paid enough to rebuild their lives over the years. He also sees the wealthy and powerful get away with obvious insurance fraud, but with no proof. These days Doug fights back, altering computer records, payment schedules, and reimbursement figures to benefit those he feels are worthy. Luckily, everything is scanned and computerized these days, making the alteration of documents surprisingly easy. Doug even cancels policies on people in the news, such as unscrupulous businessmen and politicians, and silently funnels their premiums into his own bank accounts.

Traits: *(MN) Business, criminal, white collar*

Anthony Hughes 909

Gigolo Hustler

"Darling, you are radiant tonight! No one else can compare to you. I don't want to distract us from this special evening, but if you want to invest in my business I'll need that check soon. No pressure, I just thought that I'd mention it. Shall we go to dinner now?"

Appearance: He has a muscular build, nice tan, perfectly styled hair, and the face of an angel. He wears only the hottest designer clothing, and orders custom-made shoes.

Roleplaying: Anthony changes his mannerisms to suit the situation. He is a social chameleon and a master manipulator.

Personality: To the target of his moneymaking schemes, he is exactly what that person needs him to be. To everyone else, he is a demanding and arrogant fool.

Motivation: He wants to avoid having to get an actual job.

Background: Anthony's story is a boring one. He flunked out of high school because he refused to attend classes. He was fired from every job he ever had because he didn't work. He was always lucky with the ladies, though, and one evening he landed in the bed of a wealthy woman who gave him $200 for "cab fare." The morning after, he decided to become a male escort. Eventually, even being an escort became too much effort, but when he scams a woman out of her entire fortune, he can go for months before having to find another mark.

Traits: *(PB) Abhorrent, beautiful, charming, criminal, mysterious*

Christine "Auntie C" Deverson

910

Quiet Caddy

"A full bag? Really? Oh honey, I hope you don't expect me to haul around a stick you obviously don't know how to use."

Appearance: She's got an athletic build, more sinewy and tough than muscular. She's in her early forties, and will wear a shorts set under the caddy jumpsuit or sling as each course requires. Her light brown hair is cut short early in the year, then pulled back into a pony tail as the season progresses.

Roleplaying: She hangs a watch on the second belt loop on her left side, for good luck.

Personality: She's quiet, as much a mental coach as she is a knowledgeable caddy.

Motivation: Like most caddies, it's the lifestyle she enjoys most—part vagabond, part guru, part exercise instructor, and part counselor.

Background: Unlike many caddies, she was a pro golfer herself for a few seasons. She loved the tour life, but couldn't make the cut. To become a caddy, she went back to the caddy shack and began her apprenticeship. She actually got a late start, because most caddies begin training in their teens. Her tour experience was invaluable, and gave her insights into the trade. She's now one of the few female caddies on the men's tour. Because she was older (yet inexperienced) as a caddy when she hit the pro ranks, she initially got picked up by the younger, aspiring players, who dubbed her "Auntie C."

Traits: *(TT) Counselor, outdoorsman*

Lucile Drumm

911

Modest Doctor

"I see the rebels are active tonight. The chest wound first, then the leg wound. Leave the head wound; there is nothing we can do for him other than pray."

Appearance: Lucile is a woman of average height in her mid-forties. She is athletic and has a simple, short haircut. She wears a plain engagement ring on a chain around her neck.

Roleplaying: There is nothing fancy about Lucile. She avoids ornate things. She speaks with the authority of a doctor but with a soft voice.

Personality: She is a simple and decent woman with strong moral values. She is polite, and she will help anyone who is in medical distress.

Motivation: Lucile takes her oath as a doctor very seriously. She believes that a life of service is the true path to happiness.

Background: The top of her class in medical school, Lucile graduated with a position at a prestigious hospital. She was engaged to a fellow doctor who was on his way to practice in the third world. A few months later, she received word that he had been killed while trying to give aid to refugees. She resigned her position and took up his cause to honor him. Years later, she continues to run the clinic he started. She does not miss what she gave up, and has discovered what her fiancée had learned years before about helping those who need help the most.

Traits: *(PV) Academic, medic, saintly*

Penelope Persephone Wilkinson

912

Arrogant Archaeologist

"Of course I know where we're going; I'm a Wilkinson. Now stop your whining."

Appearance: A young woman decked out in the best outdoors clothing available, Penelope smoothly cuts a path through the jungle.

Roleplaying: She's good at what she does, and reminds everyone of it.

Personality: Filled with an over-inflated sense of self, Penelope doesn't have much room for anyone else's opinion.

Motivation: Her destiny is to be an archaeologist and historian; her decision is to be the best one ever.

Background: Born into the Wilkinson family of archaeologists, Penelope didn't have much choice in her career, but she did choose to be the best she could be. She has largely succeeded, and as a graduate student has already done more than many archaeologists do in their entire career. Her success and upbringing have made her arrogant and scornful of others. Because of this, many of the people working with Penelope have quit, and some have considered turning against her. Despite her excellent skills at archaeology and adventuring, she's in a tight spot. Because of her arrogance, she's unaware of her precarious situation, and may not have the skills to get out of it.

Traits: *(KS) Academic, adventurer, outdoorsman, scholar, wealthy*

Daniel Terrell

913

Psychic Investigator

"Is this your card? How about this one? I'm pretty sure it's in here somewhere…"

Appearance: Daniel is in his early thirties, with sandy brown hair, blue eyes, and a broad grin. He wears a green-and-yellow striped polo shirt and casual slacks. He absently chews on a stirring straw and kneels to use his magnifying glass.

Roleplaying: Daniel is flirtatious and goes about peeking into things that he shouldn't. He's quick to tell a joke but uses his "serious voice" when the matter calls for it. He mumbles his own internal monologue under his breath.

Personality: He's a card and doesn't take much seriously—even the odd murder—when he's called in to investigate. He's trying very hard to make others like him at the expense of his credibility. When others question his abilities, Daniel is quick to point out his many successes, although sometimes even he can't explain them. He doesn't like confrontation and shrieks when assaulted.

Motivation: He helps solve crimes by using the power of his mind!

Background: A self-proclaimed psychic, Daniel has an uncanny knack for revealing clues for the local authorities. Daniel's "powers" include psychometry (object reading) as well as vivid dreams that offer mysterious insights. Whatever this means, Daniel provides results—often to the consternation of the local police chief, who tolerates the sideshow, but only just barely.

Traits: *(DM) Charming, humorous, magical*

Octavia MacGowan 914

Energetic Meddler

"That's quite a stumble, I agree. Let's ask the angels to put your feet back on the right course."

Appearance: Brown hair highlighted with blond streaks tops gray eyes, a prominent nose, and bright pink lips.

Roleplaying: She affects a Boston Irish accent, but drops it when distracted. She makes eye contact and invokes the angels, asking them to aid or witness.

Personality: Nothing gets her down or throws her off—she's an unstoppable engine. She dances until dawn, exuberant—with a man or without.

Motivation: Ever since learning enough to invoke the angels, her life has been strange but filled with good. She likes both halves of that.

Background: After a challenging childhood, including being abandoned by her dad at nine, she turned to God. A nun took an interest in her, nudging her into exploring angels. While Octavia couldn't commit to a nun's lifestyle, the comfort of angels got her through tough times—and later helped her friends deal with heartbreak and suicidal depression. She has gone through a series of McJobs, dropping them when someone in need calls. Her circle of friends helps her intervene; fixing lives, and backstopping her when things get dangerous.

Traits: *(SM) Dilettante, occult, saintly*

Zachariah ("Zach") 915

Righteous Mystic

"I am giving you this potion because you have been wronged. Drink it the night you are going to carry out your revenge. It will protect you from all harm."

Appearance: Zach has long, thick salt-and-pepper hair that hangs below his shoulders. He wears clothes of an Asian style, with several talismans around his neck and wrists.

Roleplaying: He is a great listener who sits with his hands folded over his chest when in conversation. When he moves, it's with slow grace.

Personality: Believing in universal balance and harmony, Zach tries to remain impartial, never passing judgment on people or situations.

Motivation: He believes that the universe seeks balance, but it often needs a helping hand to get there. To that point, Zach believes he is an instrument to return balance.

Background: Zachariah comes to people who have been wronged in some way. He listens to their story, and then leaves. Days later, Zachariah returns. He comes with a potion or a talisman created to aid the person to right the wrong that was done to them. These gifts are beneficial and have aided those who have used them. Because of his beliefs, Zachariah is just as likely to give one of his gifts to a factory worker who was unjustly fired from his job as he is to a gang member who was injured by an overzealous police officer.

Traits: *(PV) Magical, mysterious, occult*

Becky Britton 916

Flaky Ex-Child Star

"Oh, yeah...I'm her. I was Kandy on 'Belden High.' Yes, the same one who beat her sports car with a bat, and who lost all her money on a miniature Rottweiler venture. Did you want the fries or the salad?"

Appearance: Becky is a pretty woman in her late twenties. She wears her black hair in two large pigtails, and has a skull-and-hearts tattoo on one arm. There's something a little desperate about her smile.

Roleplaying: She is defensive when talking about her past, and often denies her past to customers and strangers.

Personality: Never thinking ahead or of long-term consequences of any of her actions, Becky often lands in ridiculous situations.

Motivation: She wants back in the spotlight and is always working on some plan to return to fame and all its trappings.

Background: Becky knew she was not very smart, but she was pretty, and she had some minor acting talent. She pushed her looks to the limit and landed herself a role on one of the hottest TV shows around, "Belden High." She became a star overnight, and it all went to her head. She fired manager after manager, threw diva tantrums, and squandered all her money. In the end she was fired from the show and blacklisted, fading into obscurity. Today, she works low-end jobs, as she still gets fired frequently, all the while dreaming of her return to stardom.

Traits: *(PV) Artist, entertainment, impoverished*

Rena Yost 917

Nerdy Scholar

"Sounds to me like a classic case of lycanthropy. I believe there was a case or three back in the 1930s. Thankfully, we've transferred the microfiche to digital; just give me a sec. Okay, ready for me to send?"

Appearance: A strikingly beautiful woman who plays up the "naughty librarian" look, Rena prefers conservative clothes and would rather wear glasses than fuss with contacts. An auto accident has confined her to a wheelchair.

Roleplaying: Rena has a friendly, playful demeanor. Her words carry enormous weight, carefully considered but still conversational. She is a font of information on many topics, no matter how esoteric.

Personality: She has a fun personality and describes herself as "a bit nerdy." She hasn't let the accident dim her cheerful outlook, although she runs interference if she anticipates that her disability is going to affect a relationship.

Motivation: Rena likes to be helpful and share her knowledge, especially when it will be used for good.

Background: Rena was always a bright student, and planned to be a college professor once she graduated. Her plans were set back a year when a poor choice of boyfriends led to her getting into a car accident. She broke up with him soon afterward, as she knew it was only guilt keeping him by her bedside. She currently works in the library at a local college and teaches philosophy as an adjunct.

Traits: *(WC) Academic, beautiful, occult, scholar*



Becky Britton

Artist: Christopher Reach

ALLIES

This section features allies from all walks of life, encompassing a wide range of parties, game styles, and possible allegiances. If the PCs need money, you can bring in a shrewd investment banker as their patron; if they need information, you can link them up with a fetish singer who knows everyone who comes into her club. From focal NPCs who can drive an entire campaign to background characters with surprising depth, you'll find a myriad of options in the following pages.

Sarah Dorthian 918

Mob Therapist

"You're feeling guilty because your morality came into conflict with your loyalty. That's a good sign."

Appearance: Brown hair with red highlights frame an aquiline nose, blue eyes, and a tight smile. She tends to wear workaday business clothes, but throws on dark skirts for partying after work.

Roleplaying: She nods, feigning interest, at random moments during conversation. She has a great fake smile, and gracefully delivers compliments. When she hears something that she morally disapproves of, her lips twist as if she's biting into something sour.

Personality: Sarah is trained to help and understand how people tick. Her strong moral grounding conflicts with the relative morality common in the underworld.

Motivation: She has always wanted to help people get on the right track, help them break destructive addictions and find their footing.

Background: Sarah never expected to become therapist to the mob. It began soon after she married her third husband, Jimmy. He came home bloody and bruised one night; initially he brushed her off when she asked how it had happened, but she persisted and finally learned the truth. Mr. Greenstone was waiting in her living room when she got off work the next day. She promised her silence and soon had a few new clients. She recently won the city's therapeutic contract for abused and neglected children, and had to hire new assistants and expand her practice into the space next door.

Traits: *(SM) Charming, counselor, criminal, notorious*

Agent Cal Berman 919

Enthusiastic G-Man

"Finally, a field assignment! I've been itching for this ever since I graduated the Academy!"

Appearance: Cal is tall, with stylish hair and perpetual shades. He usually dresses in a dark business suit and carries a shoulder holster. He always has a smile on his face.

Roleplaying: An overeager agent who tries to frame conversations based on academy lectures, Cal comes off a little too pushy and believes that his badge commands immediate respect.

Personality: Cal is very optimistic. He's actually quite friendly and perceptive when he's not worried about doing things "by the book." Cal enjoys being in the field and believes that he can solve any case. This latter trait annoys more cynical and senior agents, who believe it is only a matter of time before Cal thinks like them.

Motivation: He genuinely wants to serve his country.

Background: Cal has always wanted to be an agent. He planned on joining the FBI or the CIA until "the Agency" came calling. Cal still got his training and his badge, but he discovered that America, and the world at large, was threatened by dark secrets that he could help fight. Cal eagerly threw himself into his studies and graduated with honors. He is now eager to defend his country against these threats, believing that the Agency will win the day if they just keep trying.

Traits: *(WC) Police, political*

Allister Marvin 920

Isolated Savant

"Interestingly enough, the common lolcat dates back to 1870, when Harry Pointer first..."

Appearance: A disheveled man in his early thirties, Allister wears enormous glasses, wrinkled khakis and faded T-shirts. He sits in front of a bank of monitors and half-finished computers.

Roleplaying: Allister never meets anyone's eyes, flinching if they get too close. He is very self-assured when discussing technology, often inserting odd trivia. He is wary of other people and keeps them as distant as possible.

Personality: Refusing to leave his apartment, Allister has everything delivered. He loves computers and information, the more obscure the better. He will sometimes spend days searching down a stray bit of knowledge, and once he finds something, never forgets it.

Motivation: Allister wants solitude to plumb and absorb the secrets of the Internet.

Background: More nervous around people than computers, Allister got an online degree in programming and does freelance work. Over the years, he has isolated himself further and further from the rest of the world and the lack of human contact has increased his instability. His immersion in the online world, along with his unique mental conditions, makes him a living Internet archive, able to recall the most obscure facts from the shortest-lived websites. If his curiosity is piqued he can almost certainly exhume even the best-hidden secrets of the net.

Traits: *(MN) Business, eccentric, genius, humorous, white collar, zealot*

Neason "Big Mac" McGregor 921

Gregarious Deep-Water Worker

"I thought the guy recommended I watch 'Keeping up with the Cardassians.' You know, like the sci-fi show. Boy, was I surprised. It was about these women called Kardashians. TV wasn't like that last time I checked. Yeah, it's been a while, mate."

Appearance: He's big and brawny, legs and arms made thick and taut by hard work. His once-red hair is sun-lightened and kept in a crew cut. And yes, the tattoo on his left bicep is of an anchor and the word "MOM."

Roleplaying: He's a hugger. A handshake will never do when a big beefy hug will cement a friendship.

Personality: He's gregarious and outgoing, but purposefully clueless about real-life concerns. Unless events touch him, his family, or his friends, he prefers to stay in the dark. Life on the mainland can be confounding, especially all the newfound gadgets—and TV shows.

Motivation: He's always willing to lend a hand—or if need be, two big fists—to assist his friends. He loves work at sea because he lives free of distractions.

Background: He's a big-equipment operator specializing in deep-water assignments. He's hired on at various times as an oil rig driller, an operator for oceanography expeditions, and as a hand for deep-sea salvage operations. He doesn't act like it, but he's got more money than he can spend thanks to his hazard pay.

Traits: *(TT) Adventurer, laborer, outdoorsman, wealthy*

Seth Kayani 922

Radical Wilderness Expert

"Respect the land, and the land will take care of you. That is what our ancestors believed. We need to return to those ideals if we are going to survive."

Appearance: In his late sixties, Seth has weathered skin with numerous wrinkles. His hair is wiry, white, and long. He has a thin, toned body and rough hands.

Roleplaying: Seth is disinterested in modern technology, and doesn't hesitate to mention how something similar was done (and done better) using ancient ways. He likes to scavenge small snacks from trees and the ground while outdoors.

Personality: He has a strong belief that the ancient ways of living are far superior to the modern way, and he isn't shy about telling everyone this. He becomes annoyed when people do not take him seriously.

Motivation: Seth looks to lead a simple life in harmony with the land and ancient traditions.

Background: Growing up with his Navajo grandfather, Seth learned the history and traditions of his ancestors. Later, he attended college and graduated with dual degrees in ecology and ancient cultures. Seth spent several years in the national forestry service, where he became an expert in outdoor survival. Now, he is contracted by the military and government agencies to teach wilderness survival. He also accepts private contracts as a guide to locate lost objects and head search-and-rescue efforts.

Traits: *(PV) Ancient, academic, outdoorsman*

Benjamin Moore 923

Observant Photographer

"Yeah. I think I've got something like that on a film roll around here somewhere. Real sick stuff it was, too!"

Appearance: He wears worn jeans and dirty white sneakers with the laces undone. His blue hoodie has small tears in it, and its faded Duke Blue Devils logo is barely visible. A large, battered camera hangs around his neck. His black hair is disheveled and short.

Roleplaying: Ben uses small quips and has an intense manner about him. He leans forward when talking and speaks about composition and color. He'll never remember the model of car at a crime scene but instead how it was parked, the lighting, and the bumper sticker.

Personality: He's very much a rebel with numerous causes. Personal gain isn't foremost on Ben's mind. He doesn't care about materialistic needs beyond how they affect his art.

Motivation: Ben is dedicated to his art, particularly when using it as a tool to speak to the masses. He photographs murders, urban blight, and social mischief (like flash mobs). He likes to make a poignant statement.

Background: Ben is very much a starving artist but he remains true to his ideals. His work barely sells enough to keep him afloat, so he lives in a dingy loft. His camera gear isn't the greatest, but Ben's skill is more than enough to compensate. He's too intense for most folks, and his non-conformist, "screw you" attitude doesn't win him many friends.

Traits: *(DM) Artist, impoverished*



Lord Aislinger

Artist: Andrew McIntosh

Lord Aislinger 924

Adventurous Noble

"Why my dear boy, what use is life if it is not filled with adventure?"

Appearance: Aislinger wears a ragged military coat and has short, shaggy black hair. He always stands tall and proud. He exudes confidence.

Roleplaying: Aislinger is always charging ahead to new opportunities. His fortune finances incredible adventures that he refuses to be left out of.

Personality: Charming and cavalier, Lord Aislinger is full of stories. He rarely feels a need to lead the group, but he won't be left out of the most exciting parts. He cares little for pomp and ceremony.

Motivation: Lord Aislinger seeks dangerous entertainment and is always looking for the next new thrill.

Background: As a boy, Lord Aislinger quickly grew bored with the decorum of nobility. Being born to his parents late in their lives only added to this boredom. The moment he was of age, he enlisted in the military to escape. Always rebellious, Aislinger had as rough a time in the service as he did with his family, but at least there was adventure and excitement if he volunteered for dangerous tours of duty. When he inherited the family fortune, he left the military and began funding expeditions to interesting places full of ancient treasure or mystery—and accompanying them. Lord Aislinger is more than a rich thrill seeker: His advice and push-forward attitude create results, but they just as often cause hassles for his companions, as he rarely considers safety precautions necessary.

Traits: *(JA) Charming, eccentric, royalty, zealot*

Flanna O'Shay 925

Oily Former Convict

"The more you make me twist, the more I'm giving second thought to going straight, you know."

Appearance: She has an abundance of kinky, curly red hair. She wears simple dresses with flower patterns. She always looks uncomfortable performing domestic chores. She is nearly six feet tall and prefers flat shoes.

Roleplaying: She can cast an intimidating pose when she puts hands on her hips and glares down at you.

Personality: She's not immediately likable or trustworthy. She's still inclined to take shortcuts and shady deals, despite her intention to stay straight.

Motivation: She wants to live clean, but her own nature and her former associates are always pulling her back. When pressed for cash, she's not above taking a small (deniable) role in a confidence game, but if someone offers her a chance for a legitimate profit, she'll jump at it.

Background: She thought she was untouchable as a teen, and her criminal exploits became more daring; she usually stuck to a favorite type of swindle or cheat. Prison was an eye-opening experience for her, one she vowed not to repeat. But she chafes at life on the outside. She's itching to use her "skills," but is waiting for an opportunity to employ them in a legitimate way. If only someone would take a chance on her—she'd be fiercely loyal.

Traits: *(TT) Criminal, impoverished*

Countess Maria Castillo Vega 926

Picky Researcher

"You say that you can prove this document is authentic, but you acquired it from the lower territories of the peninsula. Several pieces from that area have been revealed to be forgeries. The lack of a slight curl on the lower case letters here and here suggests that this document is not genuine."

Appearance: She is a lovely woman who dresses in very expensive, sophisticated clothes. She wears her family crest on a pin on her lapel.

Roleplaying: The countess never breaks from protocol, and she maintains perfect manners at all times, but she does not correct nor embarrass others who breach proper etiquette.

Personality: Countess Vega is the epitome of class, style, and grace.

Motivation: She seems obsessed with collecting journals and maps from various shipwrecks of pirate vessels from the 1700s. She tells people that it is her passion for nautical history, but her secrecy suggests that there is a more complex reason.

Background: The countess was quite rebellious during her youth. She had earned a reputation for being more interested in the nightlife of a debutante than in upholding her title. Then, while she was sailing the world, she was reported as lost at sea for over a week. Eventually, she was found in a life raft near the Bermuda Triangle. After several weeks of recovery she re-emerged in public as a changed woman. It was around this time that her interest in historical pirate documents began.

Traits: *(PB) Charming, mysterious, royalty, scholar, wealthy*

Erika Dayne 927

Brilliant Politician

"If we can get those poll numbers just a touch higher, I can win that district next year. Here's what we need to do…"

Appearance: Impeccably dressed, subtly made-up, and blessed with "chief executive hair," Erika is a striking woman in her mid-thirties. Polls indicate that her strong jaw line and habit of raising one eyebrow make her "relatable" and "approachable."

Roleplaying: Erika never has a hair out of place, always says exactly the right thing, and is three steps ahead of everyone else in the room—and smarter than all of them, too.

Personality: Erika's political persona is a carefully crafted blend of strength, intelligence, and likability intended to make her as electable as possible. It works because she really is all of those things. Behind the persona, she's also pragmatic but soft-hearted, gives freely of herself, and suffers no fools.

Motivation: She wants to become the next president of the United States.

Background: A politician on the rise, Erika is a strong candidate to become America's next chief executive, and she's lived her professional life like an audition for that job. She's staggeringly intelligent and has a knack for anticipating her opponents' moves that makes her a truly formidable politician. On top of that, she's a good person and has no skeletons in her closet. She can be a powerful ally for politically connected PCs—and she'd make an amazing president.

Traits: *(MR) Famous, focal, genius, leader, political*

Laurentiu Mironescu, Ph.D. 928

Disreputable Professor

"They said I was crazy, but here is the evidence! If they could see this... But they can't. They can never see it. This would be too much for their little minds."

Appearance: He's the poster boy for Disheveled Eccentric Professors Anonymous.

Roleplaying: Laurentiu mumbles a running commentary and debates with himself.

Personality: He's never fully recovered from being laughed out of the halls of academia, and buries himself in research in a vain attempt to redeem himself.

Motivation: He seeks the evidence that would vindicate him.

Background: A brilliant professor of history with a strong background in science, Prof. Mironescu claimed to have discovered controversial but incontrovertible evidence that our world is not what it seems. (This could be a Mythos-like elder race, UFOs, faeries, cold fusion, or whatever is appropriate for your campaign.) His reputation earned him some attention, but he was literally laughed out of the auditorium when he presented his theory. He insisted that his evidence was solid, but it failed every subsequent test. Claiming that his evidence had been tampered with, he retreated to the anonymity of a small regional college. The truth is that his evidence was sabotaged by those who would stand to lose much if the truth were exposed.

Traits: *(KS) Academic, ancient, eccentric, genius, scholar*

Pedro Ramirez 929

Daring Adolescent

"Pardon me, mister, but you don't want that crew to take you down river. They're bandits. I can take you, and for only half the price, too. Don't let my age fool you, mister. I've spent all my life on this river, and I know its waters best."

Appearance: His pants are torn, ragged, and too short for his frame. His T-shirt is stained with sweat and dirt. He is thin and gangly, but he has an aura about him that radiates charm.

Roleplaying: Pedro tries to anticipate his customers' needs and is quick to either perform a service himself or to offer information as to who in the local village would be the right person to talk to. He always holds out his hand, hoping for a little bit of money for his efforts.

Personality: He has a can-do attitude, but is overconfident and frequently gets himself into trouble by biting off more than he can chew.

Motivation: He wants to find his father no matter what the cost.

Background: Pedro's mother died shortly after giving birth to him, and his father raised him as best he could. His father taught Pedro how to pilot their boat up and down the river that flows through the local jungle territories. One night, his father left to pay a debt and never returned. Pedro was left on his own, but will not rest until he finds his father again.

Traits: *(PB) Adventurer, charming, child, pilot*

Marty Anderson 930

Angelic Invoker

"May the angels Raphael and Abdiel avert danger from you this day."

Appearance: Marty dresses in crisp white button-down shirts, dark pants, and sunglasses. His brown hair is artfully wild, and he has brown eyes and a broad smile.

Roleplaying: He invokes the angels before most actions, smiles with sincerity, and is polite and formal.

Personality: Marty wants the world to be a better place. He writes and calls his congressman, circulates petitions, and calls upon the angels to succor the weak and needy.

Motivation: Angels saved his life; the rest of his life can be given over to repaying them and it still won't be enough.

Background: Marty had stage three cancer; they were discussing whether it would be weeks or months before the end. In desperation he turned to a fortune teller—who, it turned out, didn't read tarot cards. She examined him, calculated the angels' positions, and invoked their aid. The cancer hasn't bothered him for the last three years; his doctors have no explanation for the reversal. Marty does—he's thrown himself into the occult world, studying angels and their invocation. He has the fervent conviction of a convert, but reins it in to help even those who don't believe. He's a dedicated charity worker, dispensing advice alongside the more mundane necessities.

Traits: *(SM) Counselor, occult, zealot*

Caroline Boudreaux 931

Undaunted Champion

"Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, any verdict other than 'guilty' would be a travesty of monumental proportions when one considers the depravity of the crimes committed by the accused."

Appearance: She wears a trim brown business suit and skirt with high heels and carries a brown attaché case. Her blond hair falls just past her shoulders and she wears small reading glasses over her hazel eyes. A long scar runs down her left cheek, marring her otherwise beautiful features. She's athletic and fit.

Roleplaying: Caroline is hard-nosed and a plain speaker inside the courtroom, but outside she is eloquent and well-mannered. An articulate speaker, she's persuasive and very smooth in her handling of events.

Personality: She projects an air of confidence over her physical deformity and doesn't let it ruin her life. As a prosecutor, Caroline is outgoing and sympathetic to the plight of others.

Motivation: She's dedicated to the cause of justice not only in the courtroom but also on the streets, where they have their own kind of justice.

Background: Her promising career as a prosecutor seemed destined to make her district attorney until she began targeting local organized crime. A break-in at her home was meant to send a message, and during the struggle her face was injured. In the intervening time, Caroline has returned to practicing law, but her aspirations for the DA's office are now on hold. She remains committed to cleaning up the streets.

Traits: *(DM) Charming, hideous, white collar*

Sharon Kingsley 932

Rookie Police Officer

"All I ever hear from you guys is how little I know; that I'm the rookie. But who is it that spotted the trace of coke on the driver's shirt? The trace that lead to the 10 kilos in his trunk?"

Appearance: Sharon is above average height with a large build. Her short haircut and her sunglasses hid her femininity.

Roleplaying: Sharon talks tough to hide her own insecurities. She has a penchant for foul language and works it into most conversations.

Personality: Despite her enthusiasm, Sharon does not know how the street works. Lacking in practical knowledge, she relies on her instincts.

Motivation: She wants to be the best police officer she can. She's got something to prove to those that didn't think she could survive on the streets.

Background: Sharon grew up without much direction until her senior year of high school, when she saw a lecture by the local police department and decided to join the force. When she told her friends of her decision, no one believed she could do it. In the academy, her instructors constantly told her that she wouldn't make it. On her first day, the sergeant told her that she wouldn't make it. Despite her lack of street knowledge, Susan's instincts are sharp and have guided her to several important busts. She is always looking to prove herself and will help anyone out if she thinks that it could lead to her next big bust.

Traits: *(PV) Focal, police, warrior*

Representative Jordan Gant 933

Talkative Politician

"Thank you for having me on the show. I know that we are almost out of time, but can I say just one more thing?"

Appearance: With blond hair and blue eyes, he wears his blue power suit and red tie with confidence. Some say that he is too handsome for his own good, and others don't take him seriously as a politician, claiming he's just a "pretty boy" for his party.

Roleplaying: Representative Gant always has one more thing to say about any issue.

Personality: His personality is a little bit rough. He is easily offended, especially if someone suggests his success in politics is merely based upon his looks.

Motivation: He wants to prove that he is a serious politician to all of his naysayers. This sometimes gets him in trouble.

Background: Jordan Gant was an ambitious student in law school, but he needed to make some extra cash in order to pay his bills and continue to attend classes. He took a job as a male model for a campus calendar, and this led to other modeling jobs. While the money helped, he has regretted the decision ever since, because those pictures are still used by his opponents to try and discredit him. For this reason, he tends to talk too much in his attempts to prove that he is a serious lawmaker.

Traits: *(PB) Beautiful, leader, political*

Otávia Henriques 934

Nervous Mercenary

"What was that?"

Appearance: Although physically fit and decked out in well-used hardware, she has an awkward look about her.

Roleplaying: She often says the wrong thing at the wrong time, and as a devout Catholic she can be a bit judgmental.

Personality: Normally socially awkward and jumpy, she transforms into the perfect soldier when everything hits the fan.

Motivation: She uses her God-given gifts to help those who can't help themselves.

Background: The first time Otávia felt comfortable around others was in her early teens, when some punks tried to extort cash from her oldest brother while they were minding the family store. She broke the lead punk's gun arm with her broom and stabbed him with the broken handle. She then asked her youngest sister to bring the fire extinguisher from the office she was playing in, and used it to great effect on the remaining punks, all while calmly directing her siblings how to help out. Amazed at her ability, her father took her to a number of martial arts schools, but the only one that she enjoyed was a full-contact fight club. As a devout Catholic, she always uses her skills to help out those unable to defend themselves or in need of a champion. Since her initial training, she's added firearms and other weapons to her skill set.

Traits: *(KS) Adventurer, eccentric, religious, saintly, warrior*

Sasha Tremare 935

Cunning Linguist

"Nimefurahi kukutana nawe."

Appearance: Tall and beautiful with ebony skin, immaculate silver-shot hair, and dark, darting eyes, Sasha dresses perfectly in an array of custom tailored suit-dresses that accentuate her natural beauty.

Roleplaying: Sasha speaks in a low, soothing voice. Her movements and speech are languid and sensual, despite her fast-moving mind.

Personality: A gracious and polite woman with a stunning intellect, Sasha usually reaches conclusions before others, even presented with the same information, but is rarely obnoxious or rude, instead giving others a chance to reach their own conclusions before speaking.

Motivation: Sasha seeks intellectual challenges and interesting diversions to keep her mind sharp.

Background: A child prodigy, Sasha graduated high school at 12, received several doctoral degreess by the age of 21, and has mastered over 15 languages. She was recruited by the NSA, but eventually left to start her own cryptology business. A millionaire by 30, she now spends her time supporting various research projects and taking the occasional case which piques her interest, and is often called in to consult for the FBI and CIA. She is currently writing a treatise on the Voynich manuscripts.

Traits: *(MN) Academic, beautiful, business, famous, genius, scholar, wealthy*

Rev. Randy Rojas 936

Pleasant Clergyman

"All are welcome here, brother. I am happy to share what I know, and when you are ready to turn that sword into a plowshare, just let me know."

Appearance: Randy is a large man, over 400 lbs. His face is scarred and he is missing an eye, which has been surgically closed. He dresses in a reverend's shirt and collar.

Roleplaying: He smiles often and laughs all the time. He greets people jovially, turning every handshake into a hug.

Personality: Randy is a warm, friendly, and inviting person. Everyone is his brother and sister, and he will make people as comfortable as possible.

Motivation: Randy has given himself to God. He works hard to tend to his neighborhood flock.

Background: Raised in a gang neighborhood, Randy dropped out of high school and ran with the local crew. One night, while hanging out with his fellow gang members, Randy was ambushed by a rival gang. They dropped a Molotov cocktail into his car. In the ensuing fire, he lost his eye and was horribly burned. It was in the hospital that Randy found God and gave up his gang affiliation. He was able to open a small church in his neighborhood. Now, he serves as a tremendous source of information about the neighborhood and the gangs that surround it.

Traits: *(PV) Counselor, hideous, religious*

Siobhan McAllister 937

Passionate Activist

"The world is dying and organized religion and "family values" aren't going to save it. We need to return to our primal, communal state, when we lived as one with nature."

Appearance: Siobhan is a young woman just out of college. She straightens her naturally curly red hair. She wears a slogan-emblazoned T-shirt, skinny jeans, and Converse sneakers, usually accessorized with scarves, thin ties, or an open button-down shirt. She won't wear anything made from animal products.

Roleplaying: It only takes a couple of minutes to realize how passionate Siobhan is. She's always angry about something, regardless of whether it directly affects her. Pointing out her comfortable upbringing only angers her more as she interprets it as a dismissal of her opinions.

Personality: She is a jumble of emotions. She's angry and depressed, although even she can't pinpoint why. She feels that every injustice is personal and she throws herself into any cause that she believes in. Siobhan is a vegan and is currently on a raw food diet.

Motivation: She wants to create a perfect world, one cause at a time.

Background: Siobhan had a relatively comfortable upbringing in a quiet suburban neighborhood. Once she became a teenager Siobhan became more aware of the world around her, joining groups that promoted various causes. She's well-connected in such circles and personally knows someone influential in any given organization. Siobhan is never shy about sharing her opinions.

Traits: *(WC) Aggressive, zealot*

Kando Joichi 938

Shrewd Investment Banker

"I need some insider information, and I want you to get it for me. Take your usual fee, and add two zeros to the end."

Appearance: Trim and fit, Kando has a soft, rounded face that seems at odds with his usual expression of calculating alertness.

Roleplaying: Prickly and sensitive, Kando makes it hard to like him. He flaunts his intelligence, dismisses others as idiots, and pays top dollar to get what he wants.

Personality: Kando wants money and power, and he isn't afraid to break a few rules to get them. He breaks the mold of the workaholic Wall Street executive who puts in 80-hour weeks: He's always home by 5:00 pm, dotes on his family, and never does "power dinners." He's blunt to the point of offensiveness, and can be hard to get along with.

Motivation: Kando wants to make enough money to buy his former employer's company outright.

Background: Burned by his former employer, who fired him for having a "lax work ethic" because he wouldn't work 20-hour days, Kando still feels that termination intensely. He has a nose for good investments, and he works every day to prove that his former company was very, very wrong to fire him. Which they were—he's amazing at what he does. If the PCs can stand him, he can send an enormous amount of money their way, particularly if they're inclined towards illicit activities.

Traits: *(MR) Aggressive, business, genius, power hungry, white collar*

Jillian Croix 939

Recovering Savior

"No one is beyond our help."

Appearance: Jillian is a waif of a woman with slender arms, sunken features, large brown eyes, and slightly discolored teeth. Her chestnut hair falls down to her shoulder blades. She wears simple jeans and a halter-top. A silver crucifix hangs around her neck.

Roleplaying: Jillian doesn't speak much and is jumpy. She has a nervous habit of bouncing her feet and bites at her bottom lip. When speaking, she's quiet, as if ashamed.

Personality: She's sympathetic to the plight of the needy and those who live on the street, as she once did. She's always giving people the benefit of the doubt and this naiveté is sometimes used against her. Jillian doesn't mind; she carries a lot of emotional baggage from her past. She's street smart and has many contacts.

Motivation: She seeks to help others and share the good word. Her sordid background makes her willing to overlook others' faults.

Background: A street urchin, Jillian was a petty thief at the age of 12. Hanging out with gangs, she luckily avoided prostitution, but not drugs. It took a near-death overdose to scare her straight and spark her religious awakening. In Jillian's eyes, if she can do it, anyone can. She feels a calling to help others from falling as she did. She understands that others aren't as strong, so she's willing to bend the rules and help when she can.

Traits: *(DM) Religious, stealthy, zealot*



Simone Noir

Artist: Matt Morrow

Simone Noir 940

Fetish Singer

"Of course I know Judge Fein. She has quite… exotic…tastes. She preserves to keep them private, so watch who comes and goes from her place on Wednesday nights if you want to see her 'friends.'"

Appearance: Simone looks like a mid-20th century torch singer with a gothic sheen. Her hair is a lustrous black, her skin is porcelain white, and her gangster-era dresses are always cut to show off her never-ending legs. She has a deliciously wicked smile.

Roleplaying: She is charming and flirty, lacing almost every sentence with double-entendres and sexual innuendo. In spite of this she seems more playful than disturbing and she doesn't try to talk anyone into doing anything with which they're uncomfortable. She feels her job is to discover what is "comfortable."

Personality: Simone was once an unassuming college student. She "gothed up" and sang to make money, but her new personality completely took over. Simone is like a Superman that repressed Clark Kent. She's fun, outgoing, risqué, and eager to try new things.

Motivation: She is an unabashed hedonist.

Background: Simone began life as Jennifer Waters, an above-average student, but shy and introverted. Discovering she could sing opened doors for her, and Jennifer soon invented a goth persona, Simone Noir, to go with her sound. Within months, "Jennifer" disappeared as "Simone" became popular in local venues. Now in her tenth year of singing, Simone is well-connected with the club scene and a fixture at fetish parties. She's currently toying with a steampunk look.

Traits: *(WC) Artist, charming, eccentric, entertainment*

Mark Kent 941

Straight-Arrow Politician

"I'm here to represent you. When I vote, it's to help the district."

Appearance: He wears the traditional blue suit, dark tie, white collared shirt of an American politician. His hair is cut short but not severe. He is moderately handsome, more youthful looking than his 50 years, and of above-average height.

Roleplaying: Before every public appearance, he goes through a ritual of tilting his chin up, straightening his tie and adjusting the sleeves at the cuffs.

Personality: He is attentive, personable, and seems earnest. He is immediately likable.

Motivation: He became a public servant to "do good," and believes he fills that role. He is far from being worldly, but for constituents and activists, he's always willing to grant aid, access, and whatever influence he can muster to help.

Background: He often campaigns as "Honest Mark Kent, a neighbor you can trust to send to the capital." Because he follows his heart more than his head, he often frustrates his own party's whips more than the opposition. The scope of larger issues eludes him, and because he can't connect the dots, he's hard to make political deals with. Whenever in doubt, he follows a simple rule: vote for the district. His two sons are now in college, but their popularity as high school sports stars did a lot to ensure his re-election.

Traits: *(TT) Leader, political*

Mizuki Kobayashi 942

Corporate Assassin

"Your group shows a 24% contraction year over year; double that of the next-worst division. Please explain."

Appearance: Mizuki is 5'5" and effortlessly sexy with brown hair falling to mid-shoulder, dark eyes, and comely curves. She dresses to emphasize her Japanese features—but her California upbringing lets a simple clothing change and attitude shift transform her dramatically.

Roleplaying: She leans forward to distract men—and derail conversation without drawing notice. Her makeup kit is always at her side, and she goes through its compartments, studying others in its mirrors. Similarly, drawing on lipstick is often enough to get her opponents to dismiss her—or lower their guard for a key moment.

Personality: She is supremely confident, but often adopts a stereotypically Asian diffidence to pass without notice. She loves upsetting expectations, reveling in the moment she reveals her deadly purpose.

Motivation: Mizuki is confident that she's among the world's best warriors; few who have faced her are alive to dispute her claim. It's what she was raised to be, and it pays well.

Background: She's a child of two worlds; an excellent gymnast from age four, dangerous with a staff by six—deadly before she was a teen. She earned a business degree from Nagoya University, but works behind the scenes for the corporations that can afford her. Before, she was dispatched to review flailing divisions and write effective reports, but her secret skills as an assassin are far more lucrative.

Traits: *(SM) Business, mysterious, warrior*

Thanh "Tommy" Nguyen 943

Cocky Hacker

"I can has honeypot? Seriously? Epic fail. Nom-nom-nom... All your data are belong to us."

Appearance: A skinny Asian man in his early twenties, he wears blue jeans and a comic book T-shirt, and frantically types something into his laptop. He pauses and smiles before hitting "enter" like it's a trigger.

Roleplaying: He speaks in geeky pop-culture references and in-jokes.

Personality: He's cocky, self-centered, and driven, but knows his limits.

Motivation: He gets his kicks breaking into things nobody else can.

Background: A computer whiz kid, Tommy graduated high school at 14. While still a juvenile, he was kicked out of three colleges for hacking. Arrested for attempting to hack the NSA, he decided that his career as an outlaw hacker was over. He launched a computer security testing business, becoming a white hat hacker and doing quite well at it—once he hired client service personnel to keep him away from the customers. He usually verbally abuses anyone who asks to speak to him personally, but it's just a test to see what they're made of. When not working, he frequents pop culture sites and starts flamewars on forums and message boards.

Traits: *(KS) Aggressive, business, eccentric, genius, scientist*

Natasha Shane 944

Patient Mediator

"No, Mrs. Robinson, I don't think it's reasonable for you to demand your husband have his manhood removed as part of the divorce settlement."

Appearance: A full-figured woman with vivid blue green eyes and lustrous mahogany hair, Natasha dresses professionally in dark earth tones. The stress of her job often causes her to have small breakouts of acne.

Roleplaying: To Natasha, remaining calm and detached from difficult situations is all-important. She is constantly consensus building and trying to get others to come to a compromise, never committing to a single position. She speaks in low, soothing tones and encourages others to do the same.

Personality: Unbiased and open to all sides, Natasha tries to never make a decision of her own, but rather guides others towards making a mutually beneficial decision.

Motivation: Natasha enjoys the challenge of guiding two completely opposite parties into finding a mutually agreeable solution.

Background: A natural peacemaker, Natasha was defusing arguments and encouraging compromises between her headstrong and combative family members almost as soon as she could talk. Though her family eventually splintered, it only strengthened her desire to bring people together. Today, as a legal mediator for an up-and-coming law firm, she is encouraged by the good she sees from her work.

Traits: *(MN) Charming, counselor*

Ricardo Espada 945

Pessimistic Private Detective

"I hate going to weddings. It's hard to be happy for the couple when you know that it's probably going to end badly."

Appearance: Ricardo is in his mid-thirties, although he looks about 10 years older. He wears a long coat over a button-down shirt and khaki pants and sports a baseball cap when it's raining. He's almost constantly on his state-of-the-art phone, pretending to read messages when he's really taking video.

Roleplaying: He is quick and to the point, frontloading conversations with questions he wants answered. He knows that, as a private investigator, no one has to speak with him, so he tries to get as much information as he can before the inevitable brush-off.

Personality: Ricardo is a pessimist. He feels that everything in his life has gone badly, and spending most of his time gathering evidence for divorces has only reinforced his outlook. He still attends church regularly, as "the next world has to be better than this one."

Motivation: He believes that everyone deserves to know the truth, no matter how painful.

Background: Ricardo grew up in a rough neighborhood, his parents divorced when he was five, and his sister had a baby at 16. He had his share of beatings and gang peer pressure but managed to graduate high school, only to lack the funds for college. He found love only to see his marriage crumble. His only lasting success is his career as a private investigator.

Traits: *(WC) Criminal, police, stealthy*

Alexandria Sengalis 946

Overzealous Blackmailer

"I know that I said $50K, but if you want these photos it's now double that. Yeah, I'm raising the price. You know why? Because I can and because you are going to pay it."

Appearance: Alexandria is a young woman in her mid-twenties who wears designer clothing but never fancy shoes. She prefers simple canvas shoes with rubber soles, as they are easier to sneak around in.

Roleplaying: With any negotiation, she will agree on price and later on try to demand more. When someone refuses to give into her demands, Alexandria becomes arrogant and cocky, or throws a small fit.

Personality: She is boisterous and demanding, but it is all an act. She will cave when presented with a serious threat. Unfortunately for most people that she blackmails, they never see past the façade.

Motivation: She has expensive tastes and she enjoys snooping on people. She believes that she is not committing a real crime, because she never uses violence. She has, however, made many enemies who do not share her scruples.

Background: Alexandria learned at an early age that all people have secrets and that some people will pay handsomely when you threaten to expose their secrets. She blackmailed other children to ensure that she was invited to their birthday parties, she blackmailed professors to get good grades in college, and now she blackmails powerful people for cash. If you need dirt on someone, she's the person who has it.

Traits: *(PB) Abhorrent, criminal, notorious, stealthy*

Mitch Westlake 947

Flippant Confidence Man

"Hello. I am Dr. Lathrop, and I believe I have a reservation, though I'm a bit early. The penthouse would be fine. Does it have adult movies? Because that is a deal breaker."

Appearance: Mitch is a very plain-looking man in his mid-thirties. He has brown hair and a fair complexion. This bland "palette" gives Mitch the ability to look like many different people.

Roleplaying: While Mitch does a very good job picking up the mannerisms of the people he imitates, he is always pulling some kind of prank or telling some kind of joke; the more shocking the better.

Personality: He has a wicked sense of humor and loves making mischief for other people. Mitch does not take things too seriously.

Motivation: Mitch is not very motivated; he hustles to keep money in his pocket. He has no "master plan" but is envious of people who do.

Background: A smart man who keeps getting in trouble, Mitch is a dangerous combination: highly intelligent but unmotivated. With some drive and direction, Mitch might have been a talented actor. Instead, he uses his acting skills and keen mind to impersonate people and hustle them. Inside Mitch is decent guy; none of his hustles have ever done anyone harm. If approached with an offer, Mitch will take it if he can have some fun with it.

Traits: *(PV) Criminal, dilettante, genius, humorous*

George Rey 948

Inquiring Foreman

"In my town, when I left it, only kids your age wore beards."

Appearance: Short, wide, and all muscle, George has a square jaw which protrudes slightly, and a perpetual five-o'clock shadow. These features, coupled with heavy brows and prominent ears, give him a very simian appearance.

Roleplaying: George speaks quietly in a low voice with flawless diction, at odds with his Neanderthal appearance. Aware of his strength and bulk, he moves slowly and carefully to avoid clumsy accidents and frightening others.

Personality: Thirsty for all sorts of knowledge, George spends most of his money on reading material. Otherwise thrifty and simple, he is unassuming and would prefer to keep a low profile.

Motivation: George works hard to keep his place financially so that he can feed his reading habits.

Background: Born to a poverty-stricken family, George had to help by dropping out of high school and taking a construction job. His work ethic and keen mind made him a good candidate for further training, and as a foreman he finally had the financial stability he needed to support his desire for continuing education. Well known in both construction and academic circles, he's always willing to pull a few strings to get his hands on a rare or expensive book. History, philosophy, literature—he devours it all.

Traits: *(MN) Academic, laborer, scholar*

Stark Vilma 949

Hard-Nosed Entrepreneur

"I'm investing for the greatest rate of return, not in your people. Fire them all."

Appearance: He is a large, athletic man with stark white hair, a mustache, and steely blue eyes. Dressed in a dark hand-tailored suit with a gold watch and cufflinks, he checks the latest news on his cell phone.

Roleplaying: Stark dominates any conversation, seizing control and setting the tone. He's brusque and makes his points by stabbing down with his index finger.

Personality: Stark is accustomed to getting his way. He's pragmatic and decisive, working from a set of well-researched facts when choosing investments. He's not averse to following his instincts, however; he's so wealthy there's typically little personal risk involved. He recognizes a good investment and generously rewards those who succeed.

Motivation: Stark thinks about little but maximizing his profits. He is driven to success at any cost and doesn't like it when people get in his way.

Background: He's not a people person. He was born into a position of power and craves ever more. The thrill of acquiring power is what keeps him going; Stark will never be truly satisfied. Money is disposable, but he doesn't have a history of being careless with it. A short-term loss typically is recouped as part of a long-term plan. The more unobtainable something is to Stark, the more he craves it—including individuals.

Traits: *(DM) Business, power hungry, wealthy, white collar*

Dag Gunnarson 950

Wealthy Philanthropist

"All it takes is one great idea and—boom!—hula skirts and Mai Tais! Beats the hell out of sweating in a cubicle all day! So what do you need?"

Appearance: Dag is a blond-haired man with a tanned, well-muscled body. He wears mirrored sunglasses and usually smells like coconut oil. He is always on his phone or tablet computer, checking emails, texting, and taking calls.

Roleplaying: He is confident, always bragging about his accomplishments and lifestyle. He sometimes complains that things are too easy, but no one is fooled.

Personality: He is proud of how much he's accomplished in his short life. Unfortunately, he sometimes forgets that his serendipitous combination of genius and luck can't happen to everyone, and therefore sees many people as lazy or underachieving.

Motivation: Now that he's wealthy, Dag is a philanthropist. He sponsors people that are doing good works. He won't get his own hands dirty, though.

Background: Dag was a middling student in school until he had that one great idea in his early twenties. That one idea completely transformed his life, and he is now filthy rich with his 30th birthday still years away. After traveling the world and enjoying everything he ever wanted to do, Dag turned to philanthropy. He now uses his wealth to help others to do great things. He still enjoys a jet-setting lifestyle; he just feels better about living it.

Traits: *(WC) Dilettante, wealthy*

Phoenix Armiger 951

Callous Arms Dealer

"Buy the guns or don't, I couldn't care less. Those rebels aren't going to shoot themselves, though."

Appearance: With freckles, red hair, and a wide, open face, Phoenix looks like her last name should be "Moonbeam." So, she ties her hair back, binds her breasts, never takes off her sunglasses, and wears men's bespoke suits.

Roleplaying: Phoenix has a huge chip on her shoulder, and she loves to share it with others.

Personality: Saddled with the name "Phoenix" by her hippie peacenik parents, she grew up and became an arms dealer to spite them. They wanted Phoenix to believe in free love, so she decided to believe in free bullets instead. She made herself callous and uncaring—although deep down, she's more conflicted about her profession than she lets on.

Motivation: Phoenix wants to prove that she's the tough, uncaring badass she appears to be.

Background: Raised by hippies, Phoenix took teenage rebellion a bit too far: She thought of what she could that her parents would hate most, settled on becoming an arms dealer—and then actually did it. She started out working with another arms dealer, but after a few years she took over his organization from the inside, had him killed, and was instantly propelled into the highest levels of the underworld. What she needs most is friends (preferably unscrupulous ones) who she can trust—a resource that's been in short supply thus far.

Traits: *(MR) Criminal, merchant*



Dag Gunnarson

Artist: Avery Liell-Kok

Marie LeFleur 952

Vodou Priestess

"You come here with the same pale skin and cheap suit as the man who killed my Maman, and you say you need me? Cher, this gonna cost you."

Appearance: An old Caribbean lady in a colorful dress and hat, she sits on the front porch of an old house, drinking iced coffee.

Roleplaying: Her sing-song accent and speech patterns are reminiscent of the Caribbean.

Personality: She is amused by much of what goes on, but can be dead serious when the situation demands it.

Motivation: She serves both the Loa and her people, but still holds a grudge over her mother's death.

Background: Born in Haiti and raised partially in and around New Orleans, she was brought up to be a Mambo, or a Vodou priestess. Her mother was the center of her life, until the night when a group of men in suits and white hoods rode up and shot her on her front porch. Marie knows on some level that her mother's time had come, but she still holds a grudge over it, and takes it out bit by bit on any city folk. She is willing to help anyone who needs it, if they seem worthy and honor the Loa and her, but the price of her advice and assistance definitely follows a sliding scale.

Traits: *(KS) Ancient, counselor, eccentric, impoverished, leader, magical, mysterious, occult, primal*

Heather Wolson 953

Tough Mechanic

"Look, I don't like your attitude and I'm the only one around these parts that can fix your truck. So if you don't shape up, you're gonna be towing this thing outta here."

Appearance: Heather is of average height and full of lean muscle, with wavy blond hair. She is very attractive, but takes steps to hide her looks by staying unkempt and covered in grease stains.

Roleplaying: She treats people honestly and never lies. She is often seen with a wrench in her belt and rarely stops chewing gum while talking to people.

Personality: Heather is anything but demure, but this only helps her keep up with the guys. She won't change her behavior for anyone or any situation and has a quick temper.

Motivation: She just wants to do well at her job and be treated with respect. She can't stand to see someone ostracized and gets into fights protecting people who need it.

Background: Tough and callous, Heather tells it like it is and won't bow down for anyone. She was raised by her father, a mechanic and a single parent, and wanted to follow in his footsteps. She never really cared that she didn't have a maternal figure and was always more interested in cars and trucks than clothing and dolls. When she grew up and moved to the city, she found she had to toughen up to fit in. She toughened up, and did it with gusto.

Traits: *(JA) Beautiful, business, crafter, laborer*

Rachonda Vale 954

Caring Teacher

"I'm here to help these kids. But you know what? Every day, they help me more by helping recover what I lost, which is faith in other people."

Appearance: She favors light, breezy tops in solid bright colors, dark slacks, and high heels. Her dark hair is cut fairly short, giving her a more youthful, approachable appearance.

Roleplaying: She likes to stake out a tough pose, arms crossed over her chest, then break into a wide, disarming smile.

Personality: She's tough and insists on an orderly classroom. She's faced the sharks of the corporate world and the most demanding law professors—she can stay calm in the face of whatever the kids and neighborhood can throw at her.

Motivation: She wants to help kids who get in trouble because of their circumstances while restoring her own sense of justice.

Background: She was a top-flight corporate legal eagle who got tired of representing clients whose only aim was to use the law to justify their greedy actions. She gave that up to be a teacher in an inner-city neighborhood. She came from similar circumstances, so she has no illusions about the challenges. But she is determined, willing to help anyone else who is like-minded, and now has a better sense of self-worth than at any other time in her life.

Traits: *(TT) Academic, counselor, white collar*

Zora DeMille 955

Troubled FBI Agent

"Two shooters, one from over here. See any shell casings? Real pros."

Appearance: She wears a dark blue business suit with pants, pumps, and a government-issued Smith & Wesson at her side. Her black hair is pulled back in a ponytail. She wears little makeup, favoring her darker complexion and exotic appearance.

Roleplaying: Zora frowns when she is suspicious—which is often—and quietly pokes and prods into things that aren't her business. She'll asking leading questions with an accusatory tone. She has a habit of resting her hand on her sidearm when upset.

Personality: She's a no-nonsense FBI agent with a checkered past, and she struggles to find ways to relieve her constant stress. With so many dark secrets in her closet, she's understandably jumpy and unwilling to open up to others. Much of the pressure she feels is due to her personal demons.

Motivation: Zora is focused on trying to prove that she's not a screw-up. She's dedicated to not losing another partner in the field.

Background: Her parents were illegal immigrants, something that Zora dealt with before joining the FBI. She focused on narcotic investigation and enforcement; her Brazilian background made her a frequent undercover operative. This led to casual drug use on assignment, which she still struggles with today. Her last drug bust went bad, and, unable to risk breaking cover, she watched as her partner was tortured to death in front of her.

Traits: *(DM) Mysterious, police*

Elyn Braverman 956

Drug-Dealing EMT

"Oops, that morphine slipped right out of my hand and into your pocket. That'll be $700."

Appearance: Long shifts and late nights show in Elyn's face. She has dark circles under her eyes, is always wearing yesterday's clothes, and has a slightly haunted look about her.

Roleplaying: She chews spearmint gum constantly and compulsively, saying it calms her nerves.

Personality: Elyn is nervous, twitchy, and perpetually out of sorts—except when she's on a call or dealing with a patient. Then, she's all business, with a warm bedside manner and a calm demeanor. She feels trapped by her gambling problem, but refuses to acknowledge that it's an addiction—and she's positive she's just one good night away from paying off her debts.

Motivation: She wants to avoid dealing with her problems, which entails making enough money to keep them at bay.

Background: Elyn has a good job as an EMT for a local ambulance company, but she also has a crippling gambling addiction and the debts to prove it. To keep her bookies at bay, she slings prescription drugs on the side. Unfortunately, she's her own worst enemy: She makes enough as a drug dealer to keep gambling, but she's a terrible gambler. PCs who can keep her out of the casino, gainfully employed, and help with her debts will earn a steadfast friend with loose morals and expert medical skills—plus any medication they might need, of course.

Traits: *(MR) Criminal, medic*

Hatay al-Sakkâkî 957

Lustful Warrior

"My squad will cover the northern exits; at 2202 we'll push here and here. Let's see them escape that."

Appearance: Hatay is a little over six feet tall, powerfully built, and thickly muscled. A neatly trimmed black beard emphasizes his strong jaw and dancing blue eyes.

Roleplaying: He is a warrior first, checking entrances when he moves into a room, and preparing escape plans. Discussing a mission, he is no nonsense, plainly laying out the facts. Women throw him off; he either retreats to stiff formality—though his eyes continue to trace and undress them—or he begins setting up an evening of pleasure.

Personality: Hatay is deeply religious, and views his military and security training as an extension of his calling. He performs his Salah with fervency and devotion—but remains challenged by lust.

Motivation: He is loyal to his imam and the great task he's been set.

Background: Hatay trained as a warrior, versed in traditional as well as modern tactics and weaponry. His faction was suppressed in Turkey; their "extreme" devotion conflicted with the modern state. Steadfast, he refused to abandon his faith, becoming famous during the trial that resulted in his exile. His imam told him that he would be called to guard the rightful caliph one day, which sustains him. He travels the world looking for the hidden caliph, fighting to remain true to his task despite the temptations of women.

Traits: *(SM) Famous, religious, warrior*

Ashley Morgan 958

Directionless Protester

"Save the...um wait, what are we saving this week?"

Appearance: Tall and runway-model thin, Ashley has flaming red hair and bright green eyes. She is always dressed impeccably in this year's hottest fashions, even at Greenpeace rallies and the like. She carries herself with an air of self-assurance and has a fearsome gaze.

Roleplaying: Ashley is a member of the upper crust of society and, aside from her passionate ideological stands, behaves carefully so as to not scandalize those close to her. She speaks with perfect grammar and manners, but knows how to verbally flay someone as only a socialite can.

Personality: Strong-willed and always confident, Ashley is used to giving orders and having them obeyed. Though her heart is in the right place, her many commitments stretch her time and energy thin and her zealotry for her causes tend to make her close personal friends few and far between.

Motivation: Ashley wants to save the world, one cause at a time.

Background: Married young as the trophy wife of a powerful businessman, Ashley occupies her time while he is away on business by using some of his fortune to support all of her save-the-world causes. Save the Whales, Save the Rainforest, Greenpeace, Save a Barn, Stop World Hunger...you name it, she will campaign for it.

Traits: *(MN) Beautiful, dilettante, eccentric, wealthy, zealot*

Rosyln Kale 959

Gullible Benefactor

"So you need the money to cover a charter flight, guides, and some money to bribe local officials? You say this is a good cause? Let me get my check book."

Appearance: An attractive woman in her mid-thirties, Rosyln has a toned body with a few extra curves. She has long, beautiful black hair she wears over her shoulders. She always dresses in the latest fashion trend.

Roleplaying: She is always seen with a water bottle in hand, and drinks constantly. She takes the stairs and walks as much as she can. She is a fast walker and a fast talker.

Personality: Rosyln is easily swayed by popular opinion, a good argument, or a passing trend. She is always excited when something new comes to her attention.

Motivation: She likes to feel as if she is on the cutting edge by investing her attention, and money, in the things she finds interesting.

Background: Rosyln comes from second-generation money, and has lived a privileged life of private schools and country clubs. She graduated college and created a foundation where she could use her family's money to help people. Over the years, her foundation has given her clout and a number of political and corporate connections. The foundation has funded numerous expeditions, rescues, and retrievals. Those in the know are aware of Rosyln's impressionable nature and seek her out when funding is required.

Traits: *(PV) Beautiful, political, wealthy, white collar*

Matty Hurkins, Esquire 960

Pessimistic Lawyer

"We'll win the trial, but the judge's decision will just be overturned when the case gets appealed. You just can't catch a break in this town."

Appearance: A short, middle-aged man wearing an outdated suit, he smells of cheap bourbon.

Roleplaying: Matty points out the worst possible outcome for every situation. Even if the current situation is positive, he will still predict a dark future to come.

Personality: He's unmotivated, despite having built a law practice all by himself. He drinks not to get drunk, but to self-medicate his depression. He is slowly wasting away.

Motivation: He has no goals. His life is miserable. In an odd way, he has used this to his advantage. In his mind, he has nothing to lose, and that means he can take risks that others would avoid.

Background: Matty's parents demanded that he get the highest grades possible in school. Then they demanded that he be accepted into the finest university, then law school, and then he had to join a reputable law firm. Eventually his parents passed away, and Matty finally had to choose his own direction in life. He realized he had no idea what he wanted, so, by default, he started his own law firm. His clients vary from local businesses to hardened criminals, and, despite his terrible attitude, he's still an amazing lawyer.

Traits: *(PB) Counselor, notorious*

Howard Reyes 961

Unfortunate Field Anthropologist

"Anthropology is a desk job! I'm not supposed to be out here in the field being shot at. How did I let you talk me into this?"

Appearance: Small and meek, Howard's horn-rimmed glasses and skinny frame only accentuate the "awkward scholar" stereotype he fits into so well.

Roleplaying: Howard bemoans his fate whenever he gets pulled into field work, but once something of academic interest is placed before him, he gets lost in intellectual joy.

Personality: Bookish and quiet, Howard is fundamentally an academic bookworm. He can get lost in thought easily and never seeks out anything dangerous or exciting.

Motivation: Howard only wants to sit around and study ancient cultures, but his wide field of expertise and grasp of ancient history makes him in demand for many expeditions. He always seeks to finish them quickly and get back to desk work, but secretly revels in the excitement and thrills.

Background: Studying ancient civilizations seemed like the perfect sedate life for young Howard, but little did he know it would lead him into a life of perpetual adventure. Having the right mix of archaic knowledge and quick wits makes him perfect for field work, and the university he works at often sends him out to the field in order to get the most benefit out of him. Oddly, these field missions usually find Howard's teams being chased by angry natives, hindered by black market dealers, or pursued by ancient monsters.

Traits: *(JA) Academic, genius, scholar*

Venvena Espinosa 962

Unconventional Humanitarian Worker

"I'm making a difference. But it's the patients who are the real heroes. My sacrifice is nothing compared to their courage and dignity."

Appearance: She's a caramel-skinned 30-something woman with straight black hair pulled back in a pony tail. She stands about five feet tall and wears beige field clothes and work boots beneath a bright white physician's coat. The organization's logo is proudly emblazoned on the front. Because her left leg is lame, she walks with a stainless steel medical crutch.

Roleplaying: She has a beautiful singing voice, and she often hums or sings to patients as part of her bedside manner.

Personality: She is loving and caring, but also smart and resilient. She is capable of continuing her work with compassion despite the emotional toll.

Motivation: She couldn't conform to restrictions required by insurers when treating HIV/AIDS patients in the U.S., so she joined a global humanitarian organization to provide treatment in regions ravaged by the disease.

Background: Her leg was crushed in an auto accident back in high school. During her recovery, she decided to become a physician. Later, she started to specialize in HIV/AIDS treatment. Because of her organization's neutral stance, she can't provide assistance to any political activity, but anyone working to help improve a situation will receive her help.

Traits: *(TT) Medic, saintly*

Alan Han 963

Obsessive Hotel Manager

"We'll assign you another suite if you'd like, but I assure you that our walls are not 'paper-thin.' Please accept this voucher for a complimentary dinner as compensation for your inconvenience."

Appearance: Alan wears the blazer of a hotel manager over fashionable clothes. His hair is impeccably styled every morning before his shift. He keeps a cheery face all day long and exudes confidence.

Roleplaying: He is very calm and deferential. He remains cool and poised no matter what the problem. He reassures patrons that everything will be taken care of and sees to it personally.

Personality: Alan is a self-promoter. He's also a bit obsessive-compulsive, but it works in his line of business.

Motivation: He enjoys the finer things in life. His career not only helps pay for them but also keeps him in constant contact with high society.

Background: Alan was born into a working class family but desired more. He joined a hotel as a bellboy and quickly worked his way up the ladder. Eventually, he parlayed that career into a new position in the most posh hotel in town. He's now the hotel manager and controls day-to-day operations at the hotel. Alan has lost all of his youthful mannerisms and dialect and now speaks in the crisp tones of the elite. While he plays the role, he knows that he is merely rich, not wealthy, but he has many contacts in high society.

Traits: *(WC) Charming, entertainment, white collar*

Dr. Fiona Watson 964

Reckless Addict

"I got the bullet fragment out. You are going to need to change those bandages every couple of hours. I can't write you a prescription since I lost my license to practice, so you are on your own for pain killers. Speaking of which, want to get high?"

Appearance: She is gaunt, her hair needs to be washed, and her clothes are filthy. If her bare shoulder is seen, it has a long scar winding over it from back to front.

Roleplaying: She can function only when she has had her fix—otherwise she is so completely overcome by her addiction that she will ignore all other matters except getting high. Once her addiction is satisfied, she is a carefree person who doesn't want any trouble.

Personality: In the periods between being completely stoned and suffering from withdrawal, she is an extremely intelligent and insightful person.

Motivation: Fiona is a train wreck and she knows it. She stopped caring long ago, and now believes that if it feels good, just do it and damn the consequences.

Background: Dr. Watson was a surgeon at the forefront of triage and emergency room medicine. Then, she suffered a near-fatal injury to her shoulder as a passenger in a car crash. She was put on prescription pain killers and became addicted to them. Eventually she became a junkie, lost everything, and now serves as an underground doctor for criminals.

Traits: *(PB) Criminal, eccentric, medic*

Larson Wills 965

Disabled Reporter

"I literally am the squeaky wheel."

Appearance: He sits in a wheelchair wearing a blue turtleneck and charcoal slacks. His sandy blond hair is short-cropped and several days of stubble show on his face. A pair of reading glasses is perched on his nose. He jots notes in a small pad.

Roleplaying: Larson is used to stares due to his disability, but will ask pointed questions if someone's gaze lingers too long. He rocks his chair back and forth in thought and is quick with a joke, even at his own expense, to break the ice.

Personality: Larson refuses to use his disability as an excuse, and this decision empowers him. He's ruthless when chasing a story and looks for the softer, human side. A hopeless romantic, he's still quite the ladies' man and makes hearts throb.

Motivation: He's an ideal reporter, dedicated to finding a story and uncovering the truth. His moral compass points true north.

Background: A car accident damaged Larson's spine, taking his ability to walk. It's unsure if the story he was working on at the time—inner city prostitution and government kickbacks—may have had something to do with the vehicle that came out of nowhere. He's remained undaunted, returning to work and fighting the good fight. He's a skilled and witty writer and views his new situation as a positive change. Larson's finding that romantic relationships are much more difficult with the wheelchair around.

Traits: *(DM) Adventurer, beautiful, charming, white collar*

Devo Ted 966

Fanatic DJ

"Good evening all you beautiful mutants!"

Appearance: Normally an unremarkable, portly middle-aged man with a receding hairline, at a gig Devo Ted sports a yellow T-shirt, dark glasses, and the classic Devo energy dome (the upside down red flowerpot hat).

Roleplaying: Ted is constantly moving, dancing to the music from his turntable, his portable music device, or his head. He approaches everything with over the top enthusiasm and a goofy sense of humor.

Personality: Fond of helping others through music and humor, Ted is the life of the party both personally and professionally. A people watcher, he is intently tied to the crowd and takes a guest not enjoying themselves as a personal challenge; he will do everything he can to improve their mood.

Motivation: Ted wants to help everyone relax and enjoy themselves.

Background: A popular radio personality and club DJ, Ted's earned his nickname with fanatical enthusiasm for '80s music, especially Devo. Due to his profession, Ted has contacts all over the entertainment industry and access to otherwise restricted areas. Because his thumb is always on the pulse of those around him, he often can't help but pick up information and connections within the press of the crowd that others would overlook, making him a valuable source of well-kept secrets.

Traits: *(MN) Charming, eccentric, entertainment, humorous*

Dr. Amelia Schopenhauer 967

Gullible Parapsychologist

"That flash of light on the moon—did you see it? The Grays are trying to communicate with us!"

Appearance: Amelia has small, close-set eyes, mousy brown hair, and wears gigantic glasses in oversized plastic frames. She wears a flannel shirt and overalls regardless of the season.

Roleplaying: Amelia speaks too quickly, constantly spouts crazy theories, and has the attention span of a caffeinated ferret.

Personality: If you told Amelia that her picture was next to the entry in the dictionary for "gullible," she'd go check. She believes every conspiracy theory she's ever heard, even the ones that conflict with each other.

Motivation: Amelia wants to prove to the world that aliens are real and Elvis is still alive.

Background: "Doctor" Schopenhauer has a mail-order doctorate in parapsychology, a complete collection of True Believer "Mysteries of the Infinite" books, and a stack of rejection letters from scientific journals. She'll pack up her van and drive 500 miles at the drop of a hat if she hears a report that aliens have landed in Liverpool. She believes that her sister was kidnapped by aliens when they were both children, despite her parents' continued insistence that she did not, in fact, ever have a sister. Amelia has a photographic memory and a bottomless appetite for all things paranormal and supernatural. If even 1% of her crackpot theories are true, she'd be an amazing ally for a group of intrepid investigators.

Traits: *(MR) Academic, eccentric, humorous, scholar, scientist, zealot*

Edith Dalenka

968

Grandmotherly Munitions Expert

"Oh my, yes, this is fascinating, dearies. Can you see how the rifling has been worn down at the muzzle? It's got a ring-gauge like a 50-year-old hooker, which means this trigger's been pulled more than a teenage boy's johnson."

Appearance: An older woman, dressed in a quaint flowered blouse, she examines weapons through reading glasses suspended on a pearl-encrusted chain.

Roleplaying: Her ability to switch between endearing little old lady and foul-mouthed weapons expert leaves even her friends shocked.

Personality: On the surface, she's the kind of lady who keeps multiple cats and takes tea in the afternoon. Beneath that lies the heart of a warrior, the brain of an expert, and the mouth of a sailor.

Motivation: She loves weapons, enjoys the company of adventurous sorts, and hates any kind of totalitarian government.

Background: Born in post-WWII Czechoslovakia, she showed an early aptitude with mechanical devices and became a munitions inspector. When her younger sister was killed by an incompetent but politically-connected doctor, she joined a revolutionary cell. She hid her actions well, and sabotaged both weapons and ammunition over the years. A close call led to her escape and her parents' arrest and subsequent death. She continued her fight against communism, working for anyone who would fund her. When communism fell, she took a job as a curator for an arms museum, where she is regularly consulted by local and federal police.

Traits: *(KS) Academic, eccentric, genius, scholar, warrior*



Edith Dalenka

Artist: Avery Liell-Kok

Mr. Oren Seversen

969

Friendly Hospital Volunteer

"May I help you? No need to fret, it's easy to get turned around in here. I've helped more than a few doctors get where they're going, so there's no need to be shy about asking for help."

Appearance: Oren is a senior citizen, mostly bald with white hair at the temples, but still fit and trim. He wears a polo shirt with plaid golf pants and clean white tennis shoes.

Roleplaying: He keeps a golf pencil tucked behind his left ear and his pass key is looped to an elastic spring at his belt.

Personality: He's friendly and respectful, quick to spot new visitors to the hospital.

Motivation: He is quick to offer his assistance to visitors, providing directions or guiding them through the maze of corridors himself. He finds being a volunteer a more fulfilling way to spend his retirement than anything else he's tried.

Background: First he spent his retirement going fishing, then playing golf, and finally attending sporting events. All were fine activities—in moderation—but the former factory executive wanted to do more to help people. Then he became a volunteer at the hospital. Used to finding his way amid the maze of large manufacturing buildings, he soon became the "go-to" guy for directions and information. He now knows every nook and cranny of the medical center complex.

Traits: *(TT) Counselor, medic*

Ingrid Liller

970

Passionate Police Chief

"I will not have this city held hostage by the Torliono family. I am approving overtime for all departments. Now get me my car; we are going out there as well. I want to put the cuffs on them when they are busted."

Appearance: Ingrid is a thin woman in her late fifties. Just over 5' tall, she is thin and wiry with salt and pepper hair that she wears in a bun.

Roleplaying: She has a strong stare, and is prone to outbursts of frustration and anger. Her face turns red when she gets angry.

Personality: Ingrid is a force of personality. Her emotions run hot and it is clear to everyone what she is feeling.

Motivation: She has a strong passion for her city and a strong hatred for crime. Her frustration with the rising crime has caused her to turn her back on some of her officers' more radical solutions.

Background: In the police academy, Ingrid met her future husband. They dated as patrol officers and were married before they became detectives. Things were looking promising until an organized crime family killed her husband while undercover. After that time, Ingrid dedicated herself to fighting crime and getting justice for her husband. Her crusade landed her as Chief and now she is in a position to find justice, but she thinks that vengeance might better.

Traits: *(PV) Focal, police, white collar*

Dan Wingler 971

Retired Thief

"Yeah, the SecTec-130 is a nice system. The problem is that most companies don't push the firmware upgrade that prevents you from shorting the alarm circuit with a stun gun. Not that I would know, I just fix computers."

Appearance: Dan is in his late thirties, with the some gray mixed into his black hair. He is overweight, carrying most of his weight around his middle. He has a mullet he wears in a ponytail.

Roleplaying: He walks with a slight limp. He runs his hand through his hair while he talks or thinks.

Personality: While Dan is quite knowledgeable about electronics, he is a terrible thief. He has come to peace with this recently and can make some jokes about being a bad thief.

Motivation: He would love to score some easy money using his knowledge of electronics.

Background: Growing up with a knack for electronics and computers, the guys in Dan's neighborhood tried to use him to help them break into some houses and stores. The first few jobs went fine, but after a botched job left him electrocuted with a broken leg, arrested, and eventually on probation, Dan decided to get out of the game. Today, he works at a big box electronics store repairing computers. He still keeps up on the electronics of the trade but is hesitant to go back into the field.

Traits: *(PV) Criminal, crafter, impoverished*

Lance Morel 972

Money Launderer

"Be glad I owe you one, or else I'd have taken this information elsewhere."

Appearance: Lance only wears tasteful and expensive suits tailor-made to his frame. His brown hair is slicked back and his face is clean-shaven.

Roleplaying: Lance is the epitome of style and sophistication, always smooth and controlled. His face rarely betrays any emotion that he doesn't want it to, and he always has a bit of a devilish smirk.

Personality: He remains cool and collected at almost all times, but can get a bit agitated when things are falling apart. It takes a lot to get him to this point, but he is always willing to screw someone over to get himself out of a bad situation.

Motivation: Lance enjoys the finer things in life and hates common criminality. He engages in criminal business to keep in the green, but often provides information to keep himself or his adopted city safe from destabilizing elements like common gangs or lethal drug runners.

Background: Lance is an information broker and money launderer. He knows the who, what, when, where, and how of most criminal operations going on. His chief business is laundering money, but sometimes he'll help people by providing information. He realizes that many people don't want their information out there, so he never rats on clients (at least not the ones he likes). Lance tends to provide information when it takes someone bad out of business.

Traits: *(JA) Business, criminal, focal, stealthy, wealthy, white collar*

Chester King 973

Skilled Humanitarian

"We'll need to lay the pipeline here, and that won't be easy, but once we're done, this village's fields will have water. I didn't travel halfway around the world for nothing, so hand me one of those shovels."

Appearance: A medium-sized man, Chester's dark complexion is offset by white, woolly hair that he wears pulled back into a pony tail.

Roleplaying: He hums or whistles his favorite classic rock and Motown tunes while working.

Personality: Chester studies problems intensely, develops solutions with the input of others, and gets straight to work once a decision has been made. He doesn't make a promise that he cannot keep.

Motivation: Chester is a person of great faith, and he believes that it is his spiritual duty to help the poorest of people on the globe.

Background: His father was a doctor and his mother was a lawyer, and both were expecting Chester to attend either medical or law school after college. They were shocked and disappointed when Chester joined the Peace Corps instead. Eventually, they accepted his decision as it became clear that the work Chester was doing was helping people in the greatest need. He has seen the world in all of its beauty, and he has witnessed humanity at both its best and its worst. As long as he has a tune playing in his head and work to keep his hands busy, Chester is a happy man.

Traits: *(PB) Adventurer, focal, laborer, religious*

Faith 974

Free-Spirited Martyr

"Baby, I hope that tap was just foreplay, because if that's all you've got I'm going to be very disappointed!"

Appearance: Faith wears a pale blue nurse's smock with a stethoscope around her neck and carries a clipboard in her hands. Her long black hair is tightly pulled back into a bun and her hazel eyes are framed with heavy makeup. Next to her left eye is a tattoo of a single ruby tear running down her cheek. She wears a collar with a silver ring on the front.

Roleplaying: She's a loud talker who is blunt and speaks her mind. She's apt to start a fight for no other reason than to have something to do.

Personality: Faith doesn't like conversation; she prefers action. She jumps into any situation—usually helping people—with reckless abandon.

Motivation: Faith is devoted to helping others. She has a martyr complex and believes her role in life is to suffer for others. She's a masochist, and while she doesn't avoid bringing pain to those who deserve it, she certainly enjoys receiving it.

Background: Faith's early life on the street was one of hardship, drugs, and broken families. She escaped that life and educated herself, and now works as a nurse. Off duty, she goes to raves and is an unapologetic, swearing, punk rocker. She'll provide free medical care when appropriate and seeks to help others. She has two angel wings tattooed on her shoulder blades.

Traits: *(DM) Adventurer, aggressive, focal, medic*

Agatha Harcombe 975

Mysterious Museum Curator

"I know why you are here. You seek answers to what really happened on campus last night. Fortunately, I may have something useful for you."

Appearance: A 30-something woman with long, straight brown hair and an elfin face, Agatha dresses rather conservatively and in old-fashioned clothes, although she also wears jewelry depicting arcane and religious symbols that no woman of society would've been caught dead wearing.

Roleplaying: She speaks with the authority of years, often referring to events in the present tense even though she couldn't possibly have been alive back then. She finds the strange and unusual rather easy to accept.

Personality: Agatha is a calm person with a quaint outlook on life that is reflected in her wardrobe and home décor. She is quite content to live alone, as she's never found anyone compatible enough to share her life. She is never depressed.

Motivation: Her motivations are mysterious, but she always seems willing to help.

Background: Agatha is an enigma. She runs an occult museum out of a Victorian mansion, and has an extensive library of occult tomes as well as several artifacts from around the world. She's willing to loan both to characters with occult-related problems. Agatha is well-versed in various forms of divination, including tarot, and is a medium. Some whisper that she's a vampire or witch; Agatha merely chuckles at the notion.

Traits: *(WC) Ancient, magical, occult, scholar*

Dana Seth 976

Disconnected Therapist

"You're only saying I'm rude because a bad relationship in your early childhood has left you unable to cope with authoritative criticism."

Appearance: A pudgy woman with prominent rosacea on her left cheek, Dana has a monochrome olive drab wardrobe, strawberry-blond hair that is most often pulled back into a bun, and an uncomfortably persistent, violating stare.

Roleplaying: Dana has few personal relationships, so she is most likely to fall back into a pattern of psychological analysis in conversation, asking questions about others' feelings or relating current events to past traumas. Used to dealing with dangerous or criminal individuals she is wary when conversing and often covers the same topics repeatedly.

Personality: Twisted from her lack of normal models of communication, Dana usually sees others as patients instead of people. She is precise and careful in her quest for knowledge, and will often catalog interesting interactions for future study.

Motivation: Dana wishes to further science's knowledge of the human mental condition by studying individuals with abnormal psyches.

Background: For years Dana has been the head physician at a psych hospital. In that time she has studied dozens of spectacular cases and read many more. She is a clear expert in the field of criminal psychosis and is an excellent resource for many law enforcement and medical organizations.

Traits: *(MN) Academic, counselor, eccentric, genius*

Aleksandr Romanov 977

Loyal Bodyguard

"For you, I handle this. For me, I do it bare-handed."

Appearance: This bodyguard's huge frame is almost as intimidating as his face. His stern eyes are surrounded by scars, and he has a broken nose and cauliflower ears.

Roleplaying: His strong Russian accent and simple speech patterns are easy to recognize.

Personality: His integrity is more important than anything else, including his life.

Motivation: He's devoted to the few friends that he trusts.

Background: A childhood of abuse over his last name taught Aleksandr that loyalty is a rare and valuable commodity, and that violence is oftentimes the only answer. When his parents left Russia after the fall of the Soviet Union, they started anew with almost nothing. His father was a soldier for a crime boss, whom he gave his life protecting. The criminal gave Aleksandr's mother a pittance for the loss of her husband. From this, Aleksandr learned that his loyalty must be given only to those deserving of it. Joining the Army, he became a decorated veteran, but was dishonorably discharged when he refused to turn on his commanding officer, who was baselessly accused of war crimes. As payment for his silence, he was hired by a security firm, and has been working on and off for them ever since. Recently, he has taken some time off to care for his cancer-stricken mother.

Traits: *(KS) Aggressive, military, warrior*

Middleton Walker, Jr. 978

Occult Scholar

"Aha! If I transpose the Sumerian characters, I can read these runes. Let's see, 'That is not dead which…'"

Appearance: Middleton looks like an Oxford professor 10 years older than he actually is—tweed coat with leather patches at the elbows, ivory pipe clamped between his teeth, wire-rimmed spectacles—the whole nine yards.

Roleplaying: Unlike the stereotypical scholar, Middleton is focused and not easily distracted. When he does something, he does it with his whole being.

Personality: Clever and quick-witted, Middleton could succeed at just about any profession if he wanted to, but he loves studying the occult. Sometimes his cleverness gets the best of him, and he solves a puzzle or decodes an ancient spell without considering the consequences.

Motivation: In the short term, Middleton wants to challenge his brain and uncover ancient truths. In the long term, he wants to find his father, who he believes is still alive.

Background: When his father, the famous occult investigator Middleton Walker, senior, disappeared while exploring an ancient cavern complex 15 years ago, Middleton became consumed by a need to find him. He mounted three expeditions to explore the caverns to no avail—so he decided to throw himself into his father's work instead. In time, he found himself fascinated by the occult, and he's since become a prominent scholar in his own right. He still searches for his father, but fresh leads have long since dried up.

Traits: *(MR) Academic, occult, scholar*

Jason Briggs 979

Neighborhood Protector

"If you want my help, ditch the attitude before I shove it down your throat."

Appearance: Jason appears like any normal human, except for his long, ragged ears, mottled skin, and clawed fingers.

Roleplaying: Infected with the disease of vampirism in his mid-twenties, Jason is sensitive about his appearance and condition, but channels his feelings into anger instead of despair.

Personality: Angry and violent, Jason still holds to a strict moral code. He only unleashes his rage on those who deserve it.

Motivation: Jason protects the slum where he grew up. He tries to avoid killing when he needs his fix, seeking out only the parasites that make things worse for others.

Background: While Jason is a protector, he is no white knight and he doesn't have a delicate touch. When Jason was infected with the disease, he set about to get revenge, and this he did. The one who changed him died violently as a message to others of his kind. Rather than hide in the darkness and feed on the innocent, as other vampires do, Jason walks proudly in his neighborhood and beats up the drug dealers and pimps that infect it. Jason is feared by many in his neighborhood, even the innocent. Jason will help people who share similar goals, but he rarely acts as a team player or waits for plans to be executed fully.

Traits: *(JA) Hideous, primal, magical, warrior*

Father Shamus O'Donnelly 980

Informed Priest

"As usual, lads, you've been thinking too much..."

Appearance: A broken nose and bitten ear signal that this is no ordinary priest.

Roleplaying: His jokes and thick Irish accent somehow soften his blunt and outspoken opinions.

Personality: He's as straightforward and honest as can be.

Motivation: Sometimes a flock needs leading; sometimes it needs protecting.

Background: Father O'Donnelly led a long and colorful life before becoming a priest, and he draws on it when people seek him out for advice. He's seen and done things that would test anyone's sanity, and has come through largely unscathed. He knows that evil exists, how to recognize it, and how fight it. He also knows that there are limits to the Church's power, and that a group of outsiders or even unbelievers can accomplish much. Because of his history inside and outside the Church, Father O'Donnelly has access to a surprising number of resources, from holy relics to ancient texts. But his greatest asset for a group of adventurers is his advice on overcoming evil.

Traits: *(KS) Counselor, eccentric, humorous, magical, occult, religious, scholar*



Jason Briggs

Artist: Christopher Reach

Dame Bettina Dutchwood 981

Charming Noble

"Oh, how delightful! I do love a good yarn—take your time, and don't skip a single detail!"

Appearance: Dame Bettina is 73, but looks like she's in her late fifties. She has white hair, rosy cheeks, and a disarming smile, and she wears golden spectacles on a chain.

Roleplaying: She's lively, outgoing, and not a bit grandmotherly, with a penchant for slipping a tot of whiskey into her tea.

Personality: Charming, genial, and a fan of all of the trappings of royalty, Dame Bettina has a talent for ingratiating herself with people. Only her butler, Middlesworth, knows about her unscrupulous hobby: sponsoring criminal ventures. To everyone else, she's exactly as she appears: a consummate noblewoman with a fondness for Hemingway and Kipling.

Motivation: Dame Bettina wants to live vicariously through the adventurers she sponsors, which sometimes prompts her to tempt them into ever more dangerous expeditions.

Background: The scion of a wealthy English family, Dame Bettina has a thing for adventurers—the more Livingstone-like, the better. She likes to meet them, hear about their travels and escapades, and then take them under her wing, becoming a patron. As a patron, she has powerful political and social connections, deep coffers, and a blind spot you could drive a lorry through when it comes to illicit activities—as long as the crimes are committed in service of a noble adventure, of course.

Traits: *(MR) Charming, eccentric, famous, royalty, wealthy*

Gregory Toffades 982

Soft-Spoken Scholar

"This struggle is much like the dispute between the factions of Hamilton and Adams within the Federalist Party during Washington's second term."

Appearance: Gregory shops at Hot Topic, often wearing brown and black plaid pants and a contrasting flannel shirt. A well maintained beard, pale skin, and shoulder-length brown hair round out his look.

Roleplaying: Direct but soft-spoken, Greg's not afraid to open up any topic—but he backpedals when he senses discomfort. He tends towards academic phrasings and political correctness, though rarely corrects others.

Personality: Gregory is so unassuming that he's easily forgotten or overlooked. He picks a new tack rather than ramping up the energy or shouting to convey his point.

Motivation: Being a good citizen is the highest compliment Greg can imagine. That so few people care, or spend any effort on keeping current with events, or have any historical context to put the events in, worries him. Not having a girlfriend keeps him focused on big-picture issues, as does his new fellowship.

Background: Greg's studies alerted him to the crisis democracy faces—so few well informed voters make lies and distortion more effective tactics than doing the right thing. His studies continue, but he's working hard to develop alternate information streams—locally at first, with hopes to scale up to state and national politics.

Traits: *(SM) Mysterious, political, scholar*

Professor Zelda Jones 983

Slightly Mad Scientist

"IT WILL WORK! DON'T TELL ME NOT TO YELL! NO, YOU CALM DOWN! MY STUN PEN WORKS FINE! SEE? YOU'RE ON THE GROUND, INCAPABLE OF MOVING, AREN'T YOU? NOW ADMIT THAT IT WORKS! Oh wait, you can't speak at the moment."

Appearance: Her shoulder length black hair has a streak of fiery orange on one side. Her glasses have chic, modern frames, and she likes to wear torn blue jeans and vintage T-shirts.

Roleplaying: She flies off the handle for any perceived slight, and she will throw things around her office while having one of her tantrums—except when her girlfriend Betty is present, because Zelda tries very hard to be a better person around her.

Personality: She is very ill-tempered and cannot take any form of criticism from anyone other than her girlfriend.

Motivation: Zelda wants to rebuild her career and make a comeback. The problem isn't with her work, however, it's with her personality.

Background: Zelda designed cutting-edge prototypes for the defense industry, but one of her designs failed miserably and injured several soldiers who tested it. The upper brass understood the risks with such projects and live tests. What they could not understand nor tolerate was Zelda calling them all warmongering idiots when they asked her to hand over her plans to one of her peers for a review. Needless to say, Zelda has yet to learn from her mistake.

Traits: *(PB) Aggressive, eccentric, genius, impoverished, military, scientist*

Sarah Two Crows 984

Nature-Attuned Trail Guide

"Shh. If you listen closely, you will hear the deer up ahead. We will take the south path so that we don't disturb them."

Appearance: Sarah is tall and has a light-brown skin tone and long, dark hair, which is part of her heritage as a Lenape.

Roleplaying: When she gets out and into nature, she is often talkative about the sights and sounds around her. When in the woods, she gets close to animals and asks them questions, seeming to get responses from them.

Personality: Sarah has a warm and friendly personality and is always willing to help people out. She gets very excited about things she likes, but can switch to quiet and thoughtful instantaneously.

Motivation: Sarah sees her job as a trail guide as a way to let people experience nature without ruining it.

Background: When Sarah was eight, she got lost in the woods and was not found for four years. She walked back into civilization and picked up right where she left off. She has always retained a bit of the wild in her, and told people she could talk to animals and hear the words on the wind. Though few believed her, she does have an uncanny ability to understand the woods around her.

Traits: *(JA) Beautiful, child, primal, magical*

Arnav Goli 985

Forthright Reporter

"Yes, you're right, I suppose. But what do you think is really happening here?"

Appearance: He is in his forties, with graying temples and dark skin. He makes a simple button-down shirt and slacks look well-dressed. He has an infectious smile.

Roleplaying: He's old-school, and always licks the tip of his pencil before jotting down notes in his notebook.

Personality: He is forthright in dealing with people. He never misrepresents himself. He never lets on when he knows people are lying to him—and he's excellent at perceiving when that happens.

Motivation: No matter what the daily assignment, he wants to tell that story as honestly and completely as he can. Well, as completely as one can in the 700 words his editor allows.

Background: He's had a lot of jobs over the years. After a stint in the Air Force, he sold insurance, then used cars, was an office manager for a dentist, and helped with an alderman's campaign. He knew he was good at communicating and dealing with people, so he became a newspaper reporter. Now he spends his days talking to people and telling their stories, though his current beat is on the activities, personalities, and government business of City Hall. His wife is an agricultural scientist. They have two children of their own, and are raising the orphaned child of his deceased brother.

Traits: *(TT) Business, charming, white collar*

Corsico Valencia 986

Cautious Hitman

"No, it doesn't feel right. I'll take him later, after I run through the plan again."

Appearance: Corsico is a broad-shouldered man with a buzzed head, wide-set eyes, and a handlebar mustache.

Roleplaying: He does everything slowly, never acts without a plan, and frustrates those around him by evaluating and reevaluating every option.

Personality: Corsico is meticulous, detail-oriented, and thorough. Without a plan, he's almost completely ineffectual, and he turns down jobs that don't fit his timetable and requirements. He has no qualms about killing people for money, reasoning that the more he gets paid, the more likely the target is a bad person.

Motivation: He wants to control every aspect of his life, something he couldn't do when he was held prisoner.

Background: Corsico can shoot the wings off a fly from a thousand yards, but despite his prodigious talent with a sniper rifle, he's excessively cautious about the tiniest details of every job he takes. He does everything in his power to lock down every single variable before taking his shot. An ex-special forces sniper, in the war he slipped up, got captured, and was held for 22 months under terrible conditions. After he escaped, he returned home a beaten and broken man, didn't reenlist, and slowly rebuilt his life as a private contractor. When the money wasn't what he'd hoped for, he turned to doing hits to make up the difference—and discovered his calling.

Traits: *(MR) Criminal, military, stealthy, warrior*

Liliana Trupkin 987

Active Congresswoman

"Old Sam may be a blowhard, but he'll deal. I'll call and clear the way."

Appearance: Liliana is short, with silver hair and wrinkles; still, she has clear blue eyes, and moves smoothly and without pain.

Roleplaying: Manners mark a conversation with Liliana; she remembers your name and proper address, and expects you to do the same. She's not afraid to talk frankly about power and its possessors; she's quite candid with her friends.

Personality: She has a bright spirit, still moving crisply with energy and interest. There's a world of things that need doing, and she's the woman to do them.

Motivation: Liliana was a woman of action, but age is slowing her. She feels accomplishment and reward for direct action, but mastered politics to accomplish more.

Background: Liliana grew up in 1950s America, well-loved and secure. She was raised to give of herself, joining the Peace Corps after college and living in rural Africa for more than a decade. She began her stint building clean irrigation; by the end, she had fortified the village and taught her friends aikido. She took the lessons home with her; she served in congress where she remained a friend to Africa, maintaining her contacts and ensuring a flow of humanitarian aid—and encouraging the U.S. to avoid treating with warlords. She retired from congress in the '90s to do good more directly, but still knows several congresspeople and their staff.

Traits: *(SM) Ancient, famous, leader, political, warrior, white collar*

Father Alan MacKenzie 988

Obsessive-Compulsive Priest

"I have a prayer for just this occasion! It dates back to Pope Alexander's library of Queen Christina!"

Appearance: Paunchy and middle-aged, Father MacKenzie's fleecy hair is thin and graying. He constantly fidgets, plucking at imaginary lint and straightening stray bits of his vestments.

Roleplaying: Father MacKenzie constantly mutters short prayers to patron saints applicable to his current action. He has further specific rituals for most actions, and becomes agitated if any of them are interrupted or others do not comply with them.

Personality: Genuinely devoted to his religion and to helping people, Father MacKenzie does his best to help others with their problems. He is aware of the difficulties his condition causes, and considers it a test of his faith.

Motivation: Father MacKenzie enjoys study and lecture, two of few processes that are helped rather than hindered by his slavish adherence to detail.

Background: His obsessive compulsive disorder made a non-rigidly defined life uncomfortable for Alan, so he endured years of seminary to get to the rigidly regimented life of a religious scholar. Alan found he greatly enjoyed not only the established routine but also the work itself; he considers his position a gift from a benevolent god and works even harder to share his blessing with others. He is one of the church's most accurate scholars. Though he doesn't work particularly quickly, he is extremely thorough and rarely makes errors.

Traits: *(MN) Academic, eccentric, genius, religious, scholar, zealot*

Clayton Barnaby 989

Experienced Vampire Hunter

"Look, kid, you're too soft for this war. Chalk up all the weird crap you've seen so far to a bad dream and go home. You don't want this life."

Appearance: Clayton's muscular frame is covered by a layer of soft fat and wrinkled skin. His face is leather-tough, and a scar on his right temple above his useless, milk-white eye gives him an unsettling appearance.

Roleplaying: He squints and grimaces a lot. When he fights, he unleashes a savagery that rivals the things he hunts. In order to gain Clayton's respect, one must prove oneself to him.

Personality: Clayton is a true salt-of-the-earth guy who doesn't warm up to strangers.

Motivation: He has children and grandchildren that he fights to protect. He wants to make the world safe for innocent people who don't know the true horrors all around them.

Background: Life in the army never prepared Clayton for what he encountered on that evacuation mission. When he saw that thing drinking the blood of the platoon members he was supposed to be rescuing, he realized that nightmares were real. When he was released from the mental hospital, he began researching the monster, and discovered how real such things are. Clayton was forced to leave his wife and kids to join the front line of the fight against what lies in the dark.

Traits: *(JA) Adventurer, military, pilot*

Debbie Kwan 990

Unassuming Artist

"I sketch what I see. Sometimes I just see things about people that belong in the picture. I don't know how; it's just a muse."

Appearance: Debbie is an unassuming young artist. She can frequently be found sketching a person or a landscape. She usually keeps her long black hair pulled back and wears baggy clothes with pockets full of colored pencils and other media.

Roleplaying: She prefers to speak through her art. She's quiet and prone to giving terse answers to questions, especially if she is in the middle of sketching. She bursts out laughing if someone "reveals" something that Debbie has already captured in a sketch.

Personality: Debbie is an excellent judge of character and a master at the cold read. This sometimes depresses her, as people rarely reveal who they truly are, always preferring to wear masks. Inwardly Debbie struggles with her own demons and whether someone will discover her mask.

Motivation: She lives to sketch and learn about her subjects.

Background: Debbie had an abusive childhood. She retreated into her sketches and, after leaving home for foster care, discovered that she could see things about people that they tried to hide. These things always revealed themselves in her sketches. When Debbie makes friends, she's willing to help them in her own way. Her sketches always seem to have an appropriate clue to aid the PCs in their investigations.

Traits: *(WC) Artist, magical*

Ian Zurn 991

Daunting Mercenary

"So it's going to go down like this, huh? That's fine. That is exactly what I get paid to do. Time to earn my money."

Appearance: Ian is a middle-aged man with a thick neck, thick arms, and thick legs. His head is shaved, but he has a full beard. He has a pair of tribal tattoos, one on each arm. He favors jeans, T-shirts, and his worn leather jacket.

Roleplaying: Ian stands with the posture of someone who has combat training. When he fights he likes to use his elbows and knees.

Personality: Ian is a scary guy. The way he talks, the way walks, and even how he opens his beer says that Ian can kick some ass. In truth, he is a rather nice guy with a good sense of humor, but he rarely lets that show.

Motivation: Ian is a man who truly enjoys his work. He loves getting into fights and being in danger; it's when he feels most alive.

Background: Ian graduated high school and enlisted in the Army. He eventually transferred into a Special Forces unit. In the Special Forces, he has seen time in nearly every major theater of operation. He received several medals and commendations during his tours. When he retired from the military, he was recruited into private security. Ian has worked alone and with groups; he is always up for another job, especially one that involves some fighting.

Traits: *(PV) Military, warrior*

Wyland Samson 992

Nervous Chemist

"Ahh! Don't sneak up on me like that. I wasn't doing anything, just cleaning up some lab supplies. What do you want anyways?"

Appearance: Shaggy brown hair and a scruffy beard surround Wyland's face. He has a goofy smile (when he smiles) and a nervous twitch.

Roleplaying: Wyland always seems nervous or on edge. His glasses constantly slip down his nose and he is often scratching his short, brown beard. When he talks, it is always fast and hard to follow.

Personality: Whether it is fear of his circumstances or the lingering effects of the drug he was force-fed by the Mafia, Wyland is always a bit on edge. He is quick to jump to any task he is given, seeming almost afraid of anyone giving him orders.

Motivation: Wyland is a survivor, even if that means being a cringing coward. He just wants to live to see a better time, but he doesn't know how to get himself there.

Background: Creating designer drugs was never what Wyland planned to do with his life. His gambling problem threw him into the clutches of the mob, and he was forced to create designer drugs to keep his family safe. When his wife and sons were killed by a rival gang, he went legit. He tries to put his knowledge of chemistry and the criminal landscape to use helping the authorities with criminal investigations, if he can keep clean long enough to do it.

Traits: *(JA) Abhorrent, crafter, criminal, medic, power hungry*

Humberto Amate Perez 993

Handsome Cowboy

"...then seven miles through the canyons, and you're in Laredo. We should start just after midnight. Tequila while we wait?"

Appearance: Dark brown eyes, a muscular build, and a trimmed beard top a well-toned body. Humberto moves with full confidence, setting women to swooning.

Roleplaying: Humberto swaggers, confident that every female eye is drawn to him. He politely doffs his cowboy hat, often knocking dust loose by tapping it against his boot.

Personality: Confident and direct, Humberto shares smoldering glances with women and is a man's man. He eagerly takes up challenges and dares, and is furious if his masculinity is challenged.

Motivation: Though ranching doesn't pay very well, he grew up on horseback and enjoys moving in concert with a well-trained horse. He loves the respect he's given as a cowboy.

Background: Humberto was raised by his mother until he was seven, when his father intervened and began making a man out of him. He learned ranching—and later smuggling—from his dad. While he prefers a rancher's life, he's very good at navigating the border, and is paid well for helping the cartels move their goods and people. PCs might find his smuggling skills useful, be hired for their local knowledge, or develop Humberto as a contact to keep tabs on the underworld.

Traits: *(SM) Beautiful, criminal, outdoorsman*

John Browning 994

Budget Detective

"You'd better let me go first and do all the talking. I have experience in this."

Appearance: John is a large, well-built man with ragged brown hair tucked under a Tigers baseball cap. He wears a loud Hawaiian shirt, jeans, and running shoes. He has a bushy mustache and pale blue eyes. His torn denim jacket conceals a shoulder holster.

Roleplaying: John is quick with a smile and outgoing, with a firm handshake. He nods in thought and will grunt his approval. Any response begins with, "Well…"

Personality: He fancies himself an accomplished detective and ladies' man but in reality is neither. John will turn the smallest coincidence into a full-blown conspiracy. He's riddled with insecurities and flutters from goal to goal.

Motivation: He's eager to draw a paycheck and is looking for affirmation of his life choices.

Background: John grew up in an average Midwestern family, and then moved to the "big city" to join the police force. At least, that's what he tells everyone. In truth, John never made it on the force and instead got his private detective's license. He mostly does stakeouts and the occasional background check. He sees himself as a PI cast in the mold of those seen on TV, but in reality, he mostly drinks a lot of coffee and takes photographs from his car. Recently he's been digging up dirt on political candidates, looking for their mysterious benefactors.

Traits: *(DM) Focal, political, stealthy*

Katalin Lakatos 995

Audacious Thief

"The last thing they expect should be the first thing you attempt."

Appearance: Remarkably plain-looking, she disappears in a crowd.

Roleplaying: Katalin speaks with a faint accent, and commonly uses foreign phrases.

Personality: Life is a series of challenges; with enough training and information, all of them can be overcome.

Motivation: She lives to do the impossible.

Background: Her father's locksmith business taught her that people will pay far more to get in to something than to keep others out. It also provided her with hours of puzzles and games, such as "How fast can I pick that lock?" and "How many tries will it take to crack this combination?" Gymnastics training and spelunking with her brothers taught her that her body can do more than she ever thought possible. And smuggling wine and cigarettes over the border taught her that sometimes, it's best to just do it. A close call and an arrest warrant drove Katalin away from home, but her talents and an innate ability to learn new languages kept her in cash and in the game. She is now in semi-retirement, trading her skills and knowledge to certain governments in return for immunity from prosecution. Since then, she's trained any number of agents, and even gone on critical missions.

Traits: *(KS) Adventurer, genius, mysterious, stealthy, wealthy*

Maxine "Max" Pemberton, Ph.D. 996

Experimental Scientist

"Let me repeat, there will be no—that's capital N, capital O—no unauthorized experiments in this lab. Do I make myself clear?"

Appearance: Her profile is severe. She pulls her dark hair back in a tight bun, wears narrow rectangular eyeglasses, and keeps her lab coat buttoned up to the collar. She favors casual business attire most days.

Roleplaying: She has a habit of pulling her glasses down her nose to peer through them disapprovingly. When being reprimanded, she pushes them back up defensively.

Personality: She is stern but also servile in many ways. If a person in authority makes even a casual observation, she takes it as criticism and works to "fix" it immediately. She is eager to please, assist, or otherwise acquiesce to any person in authority.

Motivation: She is a stickler for the rules—even ones she didn't have a hand in making. She doesn't question the authority of others, and expects others to regard her the same way.

Background: Maxine's parents were academics and she grew up near a university campus. Immediately after earning her doctorate, she joined a government research lab, having never experienced life outside an academic environment. This somewhat sheltered life cultivated a trust in authority figures and taught her to value scholastic merit above all else. She presumes that all leaders share these values.

Traits: *(TT) Academic, leader, scientist*

Danielle "Bit Dump" Athens

997

Fugitive Hacker

"If they were smart enough to catch me they would have done it already."

Appearance: A tall, gangly young woman with wild, bleached blond hair, Danielle's dark eyes are framed by a host of freckles. Her clothes are dirty and wrinkled and she has a slight odor of cigarettes and stale sweat.

Roleplaying: Scared of being caught, Danielle is hard to get a straight answer out of, especially regarding information that could jeopardize her freedom.

Personality: Danielle is addicted to the thrill of computer crimes and giving it up simply isn't an option for her, even if it would mean a return to a normal lifestyle.

Motivation: Feeding her addiction for the rush of her crimes is Danielle's biggest motivator.

Background: Danielle had a knack for computers and hacking from a very young age. By the time she headed off to college, she had an extensive rap sheet with multiple counts of hacking. Forbidden to own a computer by her parents, Danielle started scavenging spare parts from the local dump and built a piecemeal machine in the trunk of her car, using it at local Wi-Fi hubs to continue her dangerous hobby. When the police started looking for her again, Danielle went on the run. She now lives the life of a vagrant, selling her considerable hacking skills for the money she needs to survive.

Traits: *(MN) Criminal, genius, impoverished, mysterious, notorious*

Dale Hamilton

998

Reluctant Celebrity

"I'm very proud of this film. Yes, I was invited to several parties following the ceremonies. No, I won't be attending them. I just want to enjoy this moment with my family. Besides, I have an obligation to be on the set early tomorrow morning."

Appearance: He is tan, athletic, handsome, and versatile in his appearance.

Roleplaying: Dale likes to stay out of the limelight, but he never turns away a fan that recognizes him. He will always sign an autograph and shake a person's hand with sincere gratitude for their appreciation of his work.

Personality: He is a quiet person who constantly observes people. Occasionally, he is caught mimicking another person's body language, dialect, or mannerisms. Dale is constantly honing his skills as an actor.

Motivation: He is very appreciative of the wealth and fame that his acting has earned him, but he has no desire to be a celebrity. His only concern is to deliver the best performance he is capable of.

Background: From an early age, Dale has always been on the stage. Eventually, he moved to Los Angeles after studying in New York and performing on Broadway. He kept his nose to the grindstone and never fell into the traps that other celebrities have succumbed to. His dedication has made him a star, and now he is one of the biggest names in Hollywood.

Traits: *(PB) Artist, beautiful, charming, entertainment, famous, focal, wealthy*

Deana Cales

999

Weary Powerbroker

"Honey, the Senator is a good friend. I can give him a call and get that investigation dropped. I would be happy to do that, if you could help me with a little problem I am having."

Appearance: An attractive woman in her mid-fifties, constant workouts and diets kip Deana thin and fin. She has shoulder-length blond hair.

Roleplaying: Deana has a permanent connection to her smart phone, always checking and writing messages. She sighs often when she talks, and often brings up what she's planning to do when she retires.

Personality: Deana has been in the game for some time, and it has begun to take its toll. Deana is no longer as sharp as she used to, believing that she has done it all and that every new deal is a derivative of the last.

Motivation: It used to be all about the deal, about the power she could wield, but now Deana thinks of getting out of the game and retiring.

Background: Deana was a born into a political family and grew up with senators and ambassadors as family friends. She went to the best schools and worked several government positions. Later, she left government and went into consulting. Soon, people sought her out for her connections, and it didn't take long for her to get into brokering deals to get things accomplished. She quickly became known as the grease that kept the wheels of government turning.

Traits: *(PV) Counselor, political*

Alicia Perry

1000

Driven Businesswoman

"A 15% drop in three weeks? I want a report on my desk tomorrow identifying the primary contributions."

Appearance: Alicia is a tall woman of about 40 with Nordic features—blond hair, blue eyes, and stout enough she won't blow away in a storm.

Roleplaying: Conversations with Alicia are exercises in dominance; her points are right and must be acknowledged as such. Interrupting her earns an icy glare—or she'll pointedly call out your rudeness to keep you in line.

Personality: Alicia is uptight and perfectionist, with a ready energy and the will to lead. She knows how easy it is for a woman to be viewed as passive, so she'll keep people in line and shut them down to keep attention and acknowledgment on her.

Motivation: She loves having power, and uses it to settle scores. If you cross Alicia, you'll eventually pay the price.

Background: By effort and training, she's succeeded in a realm where women are still unexpected. After acquiring a Harvard MBA and working in multinational corporations, she developed the experience and contacts to launch her own successful business. It's taken a lot of effort and contacts, but she's getting accolades for her success. Unfortunately, she's also left behind a trail of bitter personal aides and administrative assistants who nurse grudges.

Traits: *(SM) Aggressive, business, leader*

Indexes

As designers and authors, but more importantly as GMs, the team behind *Masks* has a thing for indexes. We want to marry them, settle down, and have their babies, because indexes are awesome.

In all seriousness, though, we really do love indexes—and we hate that so many gaming books don't include them. The longer or more involved the book, the more it needs an index, and *Masks* is both lengthy and information-dense.

To make it as easy as possible for you to use this book, we've included three indexes in this chapter—NPCs by Trait, NPCs by Name, and NPCs by Author—as well as an appendix, NPC Groups. The indexes will help you find exactly the character you need, while the appendix makes populating taverns, starships, and towns a breeze.

Index: NPCs by Trait

A bolded page number indicates more than one character on that page features the listed trait.

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Academic Organization: Bannon Foxwhistle (118), Deego Spracket (72), Jasper Oscamedes (103), Paulette Strummings (93), Professor Tithus Corelian (115)

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Bandit Gang: Hartzell Preston (Leader) (30), Erik Lemore (84), Ginnie Moore (109), Justina Sweetblade (75)

"Big Bad" with Minions: Peri Anolgrim (Leader) (27), Jarrod Marriott (51), Roberto Graviani (40), Vivian Desmont (96), Zachary the Phoenix (86)

Caravan Leader and Caravan Members: Tanserus Balkanor (Leader) (88), Angakkuq Illuak (79), Belamy Taldiss (87), Erik Lemore (84), Fattias Carter (53), The Widow Jones (121), Oreamnos Surefoot (99)

City Watch Unit: Carissa Lawbringer (Leader) (28), Andrea Nichols (55), Lissa Cochrane (67), Marla Erets (31), Welnae Barrow (93)

Cult Leader and Minions: Lydila the Darksayer (Leader) (42), Kyle Lawson (41), Mister Rankins (31), Sebastian Redtail (49), Telasha Mel'seurat (44)

Elite Thieves: Amille Sarsis (57), Amina Fawneye (28), Mysterioso (39), Ophelia "The Mask" Dal-Vorn (40)

Footpads: Durgo the Lucky (47), Landwehr (106), Twarra Isker (82)

Forest Guardians: Istan (59), Janorra of the Glade (51), Nal Den (48), Ridella Greenbow (55)

Holy Warriors: Sister Aileen (115), Ghul-Fan Hraska (33), Kaduchi (83), Rebekah Dunwaith (117), Sagil (37), Sanida Aemountu (109), Lord Silus Renzler (45)

Iconic Townsfolk: Aldus Vaiyle (52), Princess Alexandra Ves'ryn (107), Celile (111), Desa Abani (80), Jack Rawlins (93), Lissa Cochrane (67), Livinous Adal (71), Rosalyn Tesera (87), Ulfgar Bartreson (57), Weland Gofannon (71)

Incompetent Wizards: Coryn Arana (62), Lurika the Soul-Stealer (64), Maximus the Mysterious (116), Rodett Atwell (46), Sarjeva Romelain (103)

Leader and Cabinet: Chamberlain Martain Capella (Leader) (35), Isilmore Baroque (58), Adjudicator Jerome Dalton (114), Lissia Quartermaine (35), Zorian Waymer (70)

Mercenary Unit: Brynhild Skaldmeier (Leader) (27), Darius Bellwater (107), Ezekiel Michaelmas (53), Naomi Wyerrn (117), Quorra Kang (104), Xeet, the Bearer of Pain (99)

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"Merchants' Guild": Armand Patrella (118), Merrill Tasker (120), Micklin "Mickey" Fell (106), Madame Selena Bouvier (95)

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Noble with Retainers: Liende Strand (Leader) (74), Charlotte Morgan (54), Miss Iona Blunn (33), Lady Nysha Hones (66)

Priest and Acolytes: The Reverend Icabod Fraimd (Leader) (29), Nestor Lancaster (101), Acolyte Skobb (46), Victoria Silk (41)

Rival Adventuring Party One: Andrelle Ironbrow (115), The Domino (51), Erland Nimz (91), Jacad Riworar (104), Uzumaia Three-Eyes (113)

Rival Adventuring Party Two: Benny the Bard (98), Diedre Cindall (95), Kilp Whitebow (107), Najir Matrell (29), Theria (102)

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Tavern Patrons: Jai Purille (96), Jarrod Marriott (51), Johann von Diemar (101), Livinous Adal (71), Marcus Hayes (79), The Madame of Whispers (119), Russell Clifford (62)

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Contributor Bios

Producing Masks required a tremendous amount of work from our talented, dedicated creative team—it's a bit insane how much time and effort goes into a project like this! Many thanks to everyone who contributed to Masks.

John Arcadian stumbled into the roleplaying game industry way back in 2003 because of a hobby project. Never expecting it to go far, John is now an RPG industry blogger, CEO of a small-press gaming company, and has met many of his geek-heroes from days of yore. John lives in an idyllic rural area of Ohio. Rumors that he only wears kilts are mostly unfounded.

Patrick Benson has been playing and GMing RPGs for over 20 years now. He has blogged about GMing for TreasureTables.org and GnomeStew.com, and he tinkers with Fudge game designs at his blog SinisterForces.com. He also runs a web forum for GMs at YouMeetInA-Tavern.com. He was a contributing author for Engine Publishing's first book, Eureka: 501 Adventure Plots to Inspire Game Masters. To pay the bills he is an IT Systems Engineer who builds global infrastructures.

Walt Ciechanowski has been freelancing in the RPG industry for several years, and is currently the Victoriana Line Developer for Cubicle 7 Entertainment Ltd. He's been playing RPGs long enough to remember filling in dice numbers with crayon and still can't figure out what to do with his Facebook account. Walt lives in Springfield, PA with his wife, Helena, and their two children, Leianna and Stephen.

Sara DeNunzio is a merciless wielder of the mighty red pen, exhausted mother of two young scalawags, and retired fire eater. In her spare time, she enjoys watching Doctor Who and pretending to understand particle physics. Please contact Sara if you need your book edited or your time machine tested.

Robert M. Everson, aka "Spenser," has been gaming for the better part of 30 years, and half of that in the same group as Phil Vecchione. He has been a fan and supporter of Gnome Stew since its birth. His months-long dream of being affiliated with the gnomes became reality when he achieved minion status by proofreading articles for the Stew. He is currently scratching several writing bugs, including a blog and a fiction project.

Darren Hardy is a web designer and gaming enthusiast living in lovely Petoskey, Michigan. His gaming interests run the gamut from puzzle, board, and word games to roleplaying and electronic gaming. His other hobbies include biking, kayaking, hiking, cooking, and reading. He's constantly hunting for the elusive creative flow that gets stuff done. If you find some, he's willing to pay extra for it.

Dan Von Holten

Spunky Editor

"Hi!"

Appearance: Average in appearance, Dan's hair and eyes are brown.

Personality: He's friendly, but not always outgoing.

Motivation: If you asked what drives him, it would be adventure, mystery, or cheese.

Background: Voltron, Star Trek, and similar shows got Dan hooked early. Then, it was RPGs and dabbling in any martial art he had the chance to try. He likes traveling and could show up anywhere.

Avery Liell-Kok is a painter and artist. A longtime RPG player and character doodler with a fine art and art history background, she got bored of illustrating all of her fellow gamers' games for free and began seeking gainful employment. She lives Indiana with her fiancé.

Don Mappin is pretty old, because for nearly 30 years roleplaying games have been a staple of his life. Author of a dozen RPG books, Don has worked with Iron Crown Enterprises, Last Unicorn Games, Decipher, AEG, and others on properties including Rolemaster, Star Trek, and Stargate. Retired from the rock star-RPG-writer-lifestyle, he now spends his time working in IT management, enjoying his family and two children, or—you guessed it—gaming.

Scott Martin has been gnome at the stew since its founding, but added new felt hats in 2010. With his wife, Jennifer, he opened Crazy Squirrel Game Store in his hometown of Fresno, California. His articles were published in Open Game Table, Volume 2 and he wrote plots for Eureka alongside his fellow gnomes. In "Gnome Stew: The Movie," he dies from excessive felt burn in scene two.

Andrew McIntosh is a Seattle-based artist who has worked in the video game industry since 2005. His work has been featured in galleries in Seattle, Oakland, and Vancouver, where it has delighted and disturbed viewers in equal measure. You can also view his work online at (theartofam.com). If only he would use his powers for good instead of evil...

Daniel Milne is a gamer who makes his home in Utah. Whether it's played on a table, through a console, or over the Internet he'll be there to give it a test run. To date, he has thwarted 12 alien invasions, been orphaned 85 times, and saved the world from certain destruction on 163 separate occasions. Despite this, he has never rescued a princess.

Matt Morrow has been creating illustrations professionally since 1996. He worked for a computer magazine as an in-house illustrator until 1999, where he crafted hundreds of editorial illustrations. Since then, Matt has been juggling being a stay at home dad with three great kids and working on freelance projects in various areas such as newspapers, children's books, and RPGs, drawing subjects from hedgehogs to zombies. You can find a portfolio of his work at (mz9000.carbonmade.com).

Sam Mustain is a rules-lawyer who still remembers where to find the THAC0 tables in the AD&D Player's Handbook. He has been gaming almost non-stop since 1993. He studies law in Chicago, where he lives with his wife, Brianne.

Matthew Neagley grew up a fan of RPGs and has been GMing since the late '90s when he got his first basic DnD boxed set. Though he'd love to game more often (who wouldn't?), his schedule is packed with articles for GnomeStew.com, writing projects like Eureka and Masks, and pursuit of a degree in statistics. Fortunately his wife and daughter often agree to put up with his "experimental GMing," which consolidates things somewhat.

Brian Nowak is a freelance editor with a ruthless red pen and an impressive ability to come through in a time-crunch. He's done work for (among others) Bastion Press, Wizards of the Coast's RPGA, and now Engine Publishing. He's a geek and bibliophile—a cultivated cosmogonist with a penchant for writing sentences Microsoft Word deems "too long." He threw his first funny-shaped die in 1997, making him one of the greenest gamers he knows.

Martin Ralya is a writer, publisher, blogger, and huge GMing geek. A GM since 1989 (with a physique and pallor to match), he started Gnome Stew with the Masks design team in 2008 and founded Engine Publishing in 2009. His first RPG industry freelance gig was in 2004. He lives in Utah with his amazing wife, Alysia, and their beautiful daughter, Lark, in a house with six entire sub-basement levels dedicated to books and games.

Christopher Reach works as a freelance artist, producing illustrations for both pen and paper and web-based games. He creates images utilizing digital media, drawing on his training in traditional painting techniques. He has worked on packaging art, covers, web banners, and various other projects. To contact Chris and view his work visit (ChristopherReach.com).

Kurt Schneider is not a geek, as he has never orally decapitated poultry. He has never orally decapitated anything, although he has sucked the guts out of many crawfish heads. Kurt has been gaming since the late '70s, writes for the game mastering blog GnomeStew.com, contributes to any number of gaming forums and mailing lists (where he is commonly known as "Telas"), and is a contributing author for Engine Publishing's first book, Eureka.

Peter Szmer has been drawing since he can remember, and, in fact he believes that he wanted to draw before he wanted to walk. He was born in Poland in 1979 and he spent most of his childhood riding a bike, drawing, and reading adventure stories. After finishing School of Fine Arts he moved to London and at present he is working as a freelance illustrator for RPG and fiction book publishing.

Troy Taylor is happiest when up to his elbows in plaster and craft paint, creating dungeon terrain and detailing miniatures for his homebrew Steffenhold campaign. In the D&D edition wars, he holds fast to the belief the 1981 Basic/Expert rules reign supreme, though he'll happily roll 3d6s to make a character from any era. A journalist, Troy lives in Illinois with his wife, Paula, and their children, Carolyn, Preston, and Jonathan.

Phil Vecchione has dedicated thirty years to sitting behind the screen and tossing dice with friends. He is known for his system promiscuity and looking for the "next great campaign." To feed his gaming addiction away from the table he is one of the writers for Gnome Stew, and an author for Engine Publishing. In those moments when he is not gaming he is a husband, father, and project manager.

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