SIGN IN *Stranger*

In *Sign in Stranger*, you play humans who leave Earth to form a colony on an alien planet. Armed with only their trainings and each other, the humans must learn to make sense of this strange new world which is unlike anything they have seen before.

The Colonists find their way on the new planet, and make a place for themselves, but change the world, and are changed themselves by the alien life around them.

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I.   BACKGROUND

On January 27th, not so many years from now, a large meteorite strikes southeastern Canada. A plague spreads outward from the crash site, killing all life--plant, animal, human--that comes into contact. Quarantine is imposed, but as neighboring people scramble to escape and the world governments struggle to make sense of the scale of the impending disaster, a new threat looms.

Fire rains from the sky, scorching stone, lake and tree beneath it. For three days light blazes down on what was once Montreal, destroying again all that once lived. Vast shapes appear in the sky, beaming messages in strange ululating tongues, uttered by nightmarish tentacled creatures. All over the world, military forces are rallied, and employed against these alien forces.

The human forces are utterly defeated. The human nations await their fate at their new alien overlords. A calm settles over the Earth as its citizens await a message from their masters.

After three months, the message comes, from the same strange hissing tongues, now wrapping themselves around earthly syllables.

"We've come to save you…"

Over time, the whole story is told. The Galaxy is seething with life. Interstellar travel has been happening for untold millennia and sentient species have come into contact with other sentient species time and time again.

With contact has come trade: economic, cultural--and biological. Diseases have ravaged through world after world, the microbial inhabitants of one world finding weaknesses in the genetic defenses of those from another. Worlds have been emptied, opening the way for continuing devastation from domination through warfare.

Until the Cure was found.

The Cure changes life. It creates a common bond between new life that it finds, and those it has come from. A universal inoculation that introduces isolated life to the viral cultures of the intermingled worlds. Without the Cure, all life is threatened. But with the Cure… C

Change happens. Slowly, sometimes imperceptibly, but overtime the life one has known becomes something else. Something other. Other than what was and has been known.

Since interstellar space travel is needed to contact others, the interstellar community leaves newly developing worlds in innocence of their existence until the fledgling world acquires the ability on their own.

Humanity was in quarantine, violated by the alien ship that crash landed on Earth. The crash endangered all life on Earth. The Xsian <zis-see'-un> crew signaled their people before they hit, allowing the Xsian fleet to quickly come forward to raze the exposed population of Earth. Given this untimely catapulting of humanity into the galactic community, the Xsians took it upon themselves to sponsor humanity. To offer them the Cure and help them connect with the interstellar species.

However, Earth turned them down.

The many nations of the Earth warred and squabbled over the best course of action. Consensus could not be formed. Some people of the world rejected the Cure, desiring to continue the quarantine to preserve the earth as it was and had been. Others sought to embrace this new change, wanting to join the universal community, to learn about new worlds, new technologies and societies. Or to leave earth behind for their own reasons.

So a compromise was developed. Earth would not take the Cure. Those who wished to remain on the planet would do so. No traffic from off world would be allowed. Humanity could stay in its cocoon a while longer.

But those who wished to leave, could do so. Never to return.

A Xsian base was built on the moon. The Lunar site is a joint human/Xsian community; a gateway for those humans who wish to travel into the universe. To establish human colonies on different worlds. To learn about what the galaxy holds for humanity. To step into the unknown.

II. INTRODUCTION

In Sign in Stranger, the story follows a group of humans leaving earth to form a colony on another planet. This new world is inhabited by aliens and other creatures, among which the humans must find their place. The colonists have received special training to prepare them. Their mission is to research and gather information about the new world and the beings that inhabit it, to send back to the Earth they have left behind. However, all they encounter on the new world is alien and unfathomable to the humans: how things operate is unclear, the forms of life they come into contact are different than anything they have seen before, and they themselves are being changed by this world. The humans experience intense culture shock initially, and must always struggle to bridge the chasm of understanding between themselves and their alien hosts. The colonists must rely on one another for help in dealing with the stresses of their new home, though these pressures may push them apart. Over time, the humans gain insight into their new world and become key players in struggles playing out on the planet and, perhaps, throughout the galaxy. This group of strangers, wayward and homeless, will change the world even as they themselves are changed by it.

The players of Sign in Stranger take the role of the group of human colonists. Each person plays one human, as well as aliens and other beings encountered over time. The characters interact with different aspects of the world—plants, animals, objects, aliens—and have successes and failures associated with these interactions. Failures give the players the opportunity to learn more about the characters' pasts and to forge deeper bonds of friendship. At times, the consequences of failure are the creation of rich sources of adversity. The players create complication for the characters to deal with and untangle during periods of crisis and choose questions for the characters to investigate. Over time, the players develop an elaborate set of physical, biological and social systems through the vehicle of their characters exploring the world around them.

Sign in Stranger is intended for long term, in-depth, collaborative play. The pace of the game is set for thorough and leisurely investigation and elaboration of character and world over many sessions of play. Players are encouraged to engage in sustained in-character interactions, as well as to give full and detailed descriptions of the game world. Players actively collaborate to create in-world events and elements and to create meaningful opposition and adversity—as well as support and allegiances—for the characters in play. Players are asked to invest special attention to the issues facing their own and certain other characters, as well as contribute in a supporting fashion to the stories of other players for whom they have lesser responsibility. The game empowers all the players, and asks for commitment to working with—and against--one another in order to craft the world and the story that the characters weave within it.

III. SETUP

Unlike many other role playing games, in Sign in Stranger all of the players will have the same types or responsibilities throughout the game. In many other games, there is a GM or Game Master, who is responsible for creating and presenting descriptions of the world in which the game takes place, for playing minor characters and villains, for keeping everyone on task with respect to the rules and to maintain dynamic pacing of the plot and character development. In Sign in Stranger the responsibility for all these jobs is shared equally among all the players.

For example, during the very first session of the game, all of the players will make up an alien race and a planet which they inhabit. At this time, the players also create the main character that they will play throughout the game: their Colonist, newly expatriated from Earth, and given a unique training to help the colony establish itself on the new planet. However this character is the first of many they will play.

At the start of each session, the players also add to a pool of words that will be used to randomly generate descriptions for aspects of the world that the Colonists choose to colonize. The words take three forms: Nouns, Verbs and Adjectives, and they can be whatever comes to mind—they are used to create the disconcertingly alien environment that the Colonists will come to call their new home.

Once these the characters and their choice of a new world have been created, the players then choose which planet by playing in character the Colonists looking over their choices and deciding on a new world.

First Session:
1) Nouns, Verbs, Adjectives
2) World/Alien Species creation
3) Colonist creation
4) Choosing a World
5) First Glimpse of the New World
6) Personal Log Entry

1) Nouns, Verbs, Adjectives

Each player writes down 15 words on small pieces of paper (say one or two inch square sheets torn or cut from notebook paper, or whatever is at hand). The words fall into three categories: write 5 nouns, 5 verbs, and 5 adjectives.

Put all of the words of each type together. For example, put all the nouns together with one another in a pile separate from the verbs. Shuffle each set so that the words by different people are mixed up amongst one another. Place each group of words into a separate bag or cup. Then, set them aside to be used later in the game.

The words will be used to inspire descriptions of things that the Colonists encounter on the alien planet. These things are known collectively as elements of the world.

Before each play session, add more new words to the ones left over. Add 2-5 per player depending on how many are used in each session. If all words in a category get used up in the middle of a session, have everyone create a new set of 5 each at that time.

Optional Color table: (roll on a 10 sided die)
1: white   2: black   3: grey   4: brown   5: red
6: orange   7: yellow   8: green   9: blue   10: purple

This is an example of a color table. Your group may opt to use something like this in addition to Adjectives or with Nouns. If desired, create a custom color pallets for the new world (e.g. more shades of blues, grays and neons for a water world) or use a different one for the various types of environments found on it (e.g. ice, desert, temperate forest, etc.)

2) World/Alien creation

Each player creates a world and an alien species by filling out a World & Species sheet. Players should fill their sheets out separately from one another, initially without discussion.

WORLD NAME: create the name of a world inhabited by an alien species, on a distant solar system, light-years from Earth.

PRIMARY SPECIES: there may be several sentient species that live on this planet. This is the species which is the primary species. This may be because it is the most populous, or because it is the species indigenous to the planet. Or it may be because it is the species that dominates the planet for reasons cultural, military or economic. Circle "yes" by Home Planet if the species originated here. Do not choose the Xsians. They hold a special place in the human universe and information relating to them is included in the game.

LANGUAGE GROUP: this is the (or a) family of languages used by the primary species on this planet. The name is the first entry to a lexicon to the language. It will inspire the sound and look of the language as a whole.

SIZE: choose the size and type of the planet. This will influence how many other species may be present in sizeable numbers. The range of choices is: satellite, small planet, large planet, giant. Giant refers to a gas giant, such as Jupiter or Saturn.

ENVIRONMENT TYPE: this describes the area that is inhabited by the primary species where the Colonists will settle. This choice will influence much about the descriptions of the world, the species present and what the humans will have to do to adapt to living on the world. The choices are land surface, subterranean, aquaeous, gaseous, space. Space may mean it is an artificial colony, or that the species are vacuumorphs, etc.

JOB LISTING: interstellar classifieds. This is the occupation available to the human colonists. Give its name in the language of the Primary Species. Example: "Prelling" the "friginhain". Nearest Earth Equivalent is an approximation of what the job entails. Example: "Herding deer."

OTHER SPECIES: the names of some number of other sentient alien species with settlements on the planet. Choose from the species created by the other players. Go around the table and have each player share just the name of their species, writing them down on a single piece of paper as you do so. Use this list to pick some number of other species based on the size of the planet.

Number of other Species:

PLANET SIZE	# OTHER SPECIES
satellite	one
small planet	two
large planet	three
gas giant	random*

For gas giants, roll a six-sided die. On a 1, there is one other species, on a 2-3 there are two, on a 4-5 there are three, on a 6 there are four other species.

ALLURING/REPELLENT: two aspects of the primary species. One that humans find attractive, one that they find disquieting.

Once this has been completed, set these sheets aside. Do not read over or share the rest of the information at this time. It will be needed later in the session.

3) Colonist Creation

Each player creates their human Colonist character. This character will help to found a colony on one of the worlds that have been created. Create a character by filling out a character sheet as follows.

Name: choose a name for your character.

Description: write a brief description of the character. A word or two about their physical appearance, or personality will do. Examples would be: "retiring young Latina mother", "tall, engaging black man", "willowy white teen".

Earth Profession: what this character did for work, or which was their calling, on their home planet.

Belongings: trans-system travel is difficult and expensive. Each colonist is provided with clothes and supplies to provide for their minimal needs, and is only allowed to bring personal effects of the amount that would fit in a standard shoe box. List five objects of personal or sentimental value that your character brought from Earth. You may also return to this field later to list up to five pieces of equipment that are needed for the colonists' Lunar training speciality, once that has been chosen.

Stress Response: activity or type of response this character has under extreme stress. The stresses of living on an alien planet can be great, and these characters will be tested as they never have been before. Examples are: sleeps too much, gets angry, goes on a bender, works harder, wants to be alone.

Otherness/Assimilation Level: the degree to which this character has adapted to their new environment. Assimilation may be represented by cultural changes such as dress, language and comfort with new things. It may also be represented by physical or physiological changes. The Cure makes the characters undergo genetic changes that help them better survive in their new home. But these changes cause stress and alienation from other humans who have not undergone them. All characters begin with an Assimilation level of 1, giving them an Otherness level of 5.

Lunar Training: While transitioning from their old life to their new, the characters spent six-months to a year on Luna, undergoing intensive waking and hypnogogic training for a set of skills that will be needed on the new colony. There must be a Doctor, but no more than one of each training type. Players should discuss which trainings are chosen in order to coordinate this. The team of colonists has been specially chosen for their balance of complimentary skills. There can be no more than one of each of the trainings chosen. Choose a training from the following list.

Trainings:

*Medicine	Mechanical Engineer	Communication
Botany/Agriculture	Structural Engineer	Politics/Law
Zoology	Biotechnology Eng.	Economics/Trade
Geology	Military Science	Culture

*Note: There must always be one colonist with medical training.

These skills will be called upon to help them understand and make sense of the strange new world around them.

Relationships with Other Characters: this is with other colonists or important aliens. Colonists do not start with any relationships. These are created and added to over time during the game. Relationships are important resources during conflicts, once created and inform important aspects of later play. See page XX, in the Section "Play" for more information on Relationships.

Personal Log: journal entries for the character. Colonists are encouraged to keep records of their personal experiences, and players will add to the log during each session. Throughout the game, flashbacks of the colonists' time on earth will also be played out and recorded. These memories help the colonists deal with issues that arise with settling on the new planet.

Official Record: information about the new world. Each character records information that pertain to their Lunar Training specialty. As the colonists successfully discover new information about the world, they record it on their Official Record. For the players, information is recorded here once successful conflicts have been resolved.

Story Seed: The players write down two words on small pieces of paper, that express a general issue a colonist is dealing with from their past on Earth that have contributed to them joining the colony.

Examples of acceptable Seeds: Revenge, Ambition, Broken Heart, Patriotism, Greed, Curiosity, Sacrifice, Adventure, Quest, Love, Mission

Examples of unacceptable Seeds (but which would be excellent Troubles later on): Killed her Dad, Paid to by DuPont Chemicals, Searching for lover who left earth, Spy for Human Federated Union, Wants to pay back Xsians for crash-landing on Earth, Searching for God, Wants to cure cancer, Looking to get rich on alien technology.

The pieces of paper are folded, mixed up together and put into a central place from which all may choose. If someone chooses their own, they may choose to keep it or to put it back and draw another.

4) Choosing a World

Once the Colonists have been created, the players enact their first scene together. The Colonists have completed their respective trainings on Luna and have chosen (or been placed with) this group of future émigrés. The meet in a room in the Lunar base and are given descriptions of prospective worlds. These are, of course, the World/Alien Species sheets created earlier by the players. One player may take the whole stack and read them to the others.

Each player debates, in character, the relative charms and draw-backs of the planets. The Alien Species traits, as well as the description of work are all key points to discuss. The environment the humans will be asked to live in may be a sticking point as well. There is no further information available about this world. The Colonists' Xsian hosts have done their best to provide the pertinent data that will help the humans choose their new home but—there is still a lot that the Xsians have to learn about humans.

There is no right way to choose a world, and no set procedure to use. Will the group vote democratically? Choose a leader? Require full consensus? If your group falls into a deadlock, remember that there is no returning home. Earth is a closed chapter, at least until the whole planet chooses to partake of the Cure. Make compromises. Find a solution.

After all, if your group can't even choose a planet together, how can they hope to survive on one?

However, conflicts between characters are a fine, even, a good thing. As well as alliances and connections that may be made. See who is on your side in this discussion, and who is against you. Relationships between the Colonists will be valuable on the new world. Good or bad, a strong connection with another character is an asset. Nurse those grudges. Scratch those backs.

5) First Glimpse of the New World

Allow your characters their first sight of the new world they will inhabit together. Have each player Create a World Element (see Rules of the Game section below) by choosing one Noun from among the Random Words and describe together what it means. Write down these observations on the World Element Sheets.

6) Personal Log Entry

End each session, starting with this one, by recording memorable events and observations about the world and other Colonists in your character's Personal Log.

IV. Structure of the Game

In *Sign in Stranger*, all the players collaborate to create the world, create complications and play the many beings encountered on the new planet. The game has structures to help everyone coordinate their efforts:

1) Types of Characters
2) Special Scenes
3) Questions and Troubles
4) Scales of World Exploration

1) Types of Characters

There are three types of characters that are played:

Colonists
Supporting Characters
Plot Characters

Each player begins the game with a human Colonist character. This will be their main character throughout the game. The actions of this character will be used to explore the world, encounter complications and conflicts and to face internal issues of loyalty and change.

Supporting characters are aliens or other humans that are important people in the Colonists lives. These characters may be on the planet with the Colonists, back on Earth or be from the human Colonists' remembered past. Players will likely play several of these types of characters that have relationships with other players Colonists.

Plot characters are important beings that hold power and influence over the Colonists or the Colony as a whole. Each player has at least one Plot Character they play.

Characters are discussed in greater depth on pages XX-XX.

2) Special Scenes

Throughout the game, when they players wish to accomplish certain things for their characters, they can call for certain special scenes.

There are four special scene types:

> INVESTIGATION
> CHARACTER
> FLASHBACK
> CONFLICT

INVESTIGATION scenes involve the Colonist exploring the world and the culture of its inhabitants.

CHARACTER scenes focus on the personal interactions between two or more characters.

FLASHBACKS show past events of the Colonists' lives on Earth or during their Training on Luna.

In CONFLICT scenes, the Colonists face opposition or adversity in their environment, with alien species or, perhaps, with other Colonists and their allies.

Investigation and Conflict scenes give the players the opportunity to create aspects and find interconnection among elements the world around the Colonists, allowing what was once hideously strange and enigmatic to gain context and meaning for the human settlers. They may result in injuries or emotional overwhelm for the characters, especially when they are new to the planet. Or, in the creation of problems and complications in the Colonists' lives at the colony.

Character and Flashback scenes allow the characters to bond more deeply with one another, exploring their differences or finding companionship. These scenes also allow the characters to heal from damage to body or soul that their experiences in the alien world have wrought.

All of the different scene types allow players to address Questions and Troubles.

3) Questions and Troubles

The issues and complications the Colonits encounter on the new world are represented as Troubles and Questions which are recorded on the Trouble Sheet. These help the players keep track of the storylines they trace with their characters.

QUESTIONS are things that are unknown to the Colonists, or to the players. They may be answered by Investigation or escalated into Troubles. They may deal with aspects of the alien planet around them, such as what to eat, what kinds of religious customs are followed by the aliens, whether they have currency, or how they wage war.

TROUBLES are pressing issues that cause problems for the humans. They are resolved by Conflicts or escalated into new Troubles. Troubles may relate to such things as conflicts with neighboring aliens, threats from plants or animals, with unfathomable or disturbing aspects of their own dwellings, with questionable directives from Terran Authority, or with regrets about people or duties left behind on Earth. For each Trouble, one character "holds" it, or takes responsiblity for describing the adversity that it brings to the colony.

The Trouble Sheet is public to all. Questions may be added

at will. Troubles are added as the outcome of Investigations and Conflicts, or as escalations of Questions. Players add Questions and Troubles to the Colony's area, to their own Colonist's area on the Trouble Sheet or give one to another character.

Troubles and Questions affect either a single Colonist, or the Colony as a whole. The Colony begins with three questions:

* What can the humans eat?
* How does their shelter function?
* How can they be employed?

Each Colonist begins play with one questions:

* Why did I leave Earth?

How Questions and Troubles are resolved is discussed in greater depth on page XX.

4) Scales of World Exploration

As the Colonists investigate questions and deal with troubles, the playeres create the world. The scope of creation begins with a narrow focus, and widens over time to include larger areas and greater complexity in the alien cultures. As Troubles and Questions are resolved, the scale available to the players and the characters increases.

The Scales are listed below, along with the number of Troubles or Questions that need to be resolved in order for aspects of the world at this scale to be able to be freely created.

Scales:	Troubles/Questions resolved:
LOCAL/INDIVIDUALS	0
REGIONAL/GROUPS	5
"COUNTRY"/INSTITUTIONS	15
PLANETARY/"INTERNATIONAL"	25
INTERSYSTEM/INTERPLANETARY	40

LOCAL/INDIVIDUAL. At the start of the game, the players can freely describe and investigate the beings, plants, buildings and natural objects of the world that immediately surround the place where the Colony is located. Traits and characterstics of individual sentient aliens and other beings are detailed.

REGIONAL/GROUPS. After five questions or troubles have been resolved by the group or by individuals, the players start addressing descriptions of groups of aliens, biological species, land forms, technologies and social customs of the world that occur in the broader geographic are where the Colony is located. Dynamics of interactions between different sentient species can begin being observed.

"COUNTRY"/INSTITUTIONS. At this point, characteristics the largest independent grouping of the sentient beings in which the Colony exists may be described freely; the term "Country" is used very loosely. The aliens may well organize themselves along other categories than geography and nationality. Institutions refers to organizations or organizing principles of the societies such as the church, crime, marriage or democratic republicanism.

PLANETERY/"INTERNATIONAL". The world is your oyster. Freely investigate and describe interactions between the largest political groups, or institutions. The players have access to describing the broad regions of the planetary landscape and biosphere.

INTERSYSTEM/INTERPLANETARY. Aspects of other worlds may now be elaborated. The economic and political interactions between worlds and systems are explored. The status of Earth and

humanity's status in the universe can be addressed.

When play is at a given scale, Troubles and Questions are limited to issues that occur at this scale as are elements of the world that can are investigated. However, as Troubles and Questions are resolved successfully, players will have the opportunity to establish things in the world at the next highest scale.

V. PLAYING THE GAME

With the second session, the players now begin the process of creating the new world through exploring in character. They also do so by describing out of character what their characters see and deal with.

There are various things the group should do each session to help this process along. The players begin now to create Plot Characters to put pressure on the Colonists, and Supporting Characters to offer aid and create deeper connection with the world. The second session also has certain unique aspects about it.

EVERY SESSION

Begin each session by refreshing the pool of Nouns, Verbs and Adjectives as needed.

PERSONAL LOGS

After refreshing the Random Words at each session, read what the players wrote in their Colonist's Personal Log at the end of the last session. This will help refresh in everyone's mind what happened last time, as well as give greater insight into the disparate views that the Colonists hold of the world and eachother. Information from the entries can be used for additional cards in Investigations and Conflicts, if desired.

At the end of each session, each Colonist makes an entry. They may do so at any time during the session as well.

Meta Discussion

After reading the Personal Log, a certain amount of Meta discussion may be useful. Look over the Trouble sheet as a group, peruse the World Elements that have created. Get a sense of the general direction that people would like to see this session go.

PLOT CHARACTERS

Espcially at the start of play, players will claim Plot Characters to play. These will help give more shape to the Colonists interactions with the world.

Eventually, everyone will have one, but at the start of the game there may be just one or two that the players know about. Playing plot characters are described in depth in the *Character* section.

Here are some suggestions for beginning Plot Characters:

* XSIAN AMBASSADOR whose job it is to oversee the humans settling in to their new home.
* TERRAN AUTHORITY CONTACT who the group reports to back on Earth or Luna.
* ALIEN HOST FAMILY with whom the Colonists are staying
* ALIEN BOSS that oversees the Colonists at their jobs on the new planet

SUPPORTING CHARACTERS:

Whenever a player chooses they may pick a Supporting character they have played to be a recurring character. They will have played them in a scene that was focused on another player's

Colonist. This Supporting character will now have a relationship with the Colonist whose scene they appeared in. These characters can be aliens on the planet, of the primary or another species, or they can be important characters from the Colonist's past, seen in a Flashback. Name the character and write down their information on the Plot/Supporting Character Sheet. Further descriptions of playing these character is in the Character Section.

Play out the adventures of the Colonists, addressing Troubles and Questions along the way. All the characters may be together, interacting with one another and the world. Or the team may split into groups to investigate diferent parts of their surroundings.

THE SECOND SESSION

Now you are ready to enter the new world. Play out the humans' first day on the new world.

How are they greeted by their alien hosts? Where do they sleep, eat, pee? Follow up on the Questions by Investigating or having other types of special scenes.

Create new elements of the world, such as the dwelling the Colonists are living in, descriptions of the aliens or their cities and wildlife. This process is explained in the Rules section.

UNPACKING THE BAGS

The new colonists are issued a standard package of supplies and items:

3 dozen packages of standard coveralls: blue and green (small, medium, large)
3 dozen packages of standard underclothing (underwear, socks—small, medium, large)
Hygenic supplies: toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap, sanitary pads
Field towels (wring and dry)
Single ply blankets
1 winter overcoat per colonist
1 pair of boots per colonist
1 all purpose camp knife per colonist
6 crates of full spectrum E-Z rations
Desalinator/Water decontaminator unit
One hand-held computer with solar power unit complete with solitaire and the King James Bible

Read this list to the players. Since interstellar travel is expensive, the colonists are expected to fabricate what they will need on their new home. They are sent with 6 months supply of food, encounter apparatus for hostile enviroments if needed, and currency (as appropriate) enough to supply them with shelter for 1 year.

Included in the files on the hand held computer, is a list of survey questions which they are asked to fill out and return to Earth for study purposes. The colonist's mission is two-fold: to learn and to survive. The colonists will take these supplies and all that they can find on their new home and begin these tasks.

Each person is allotted their personal belongings. They are also have items of specialized equipment that the colonist needs to support inquiry into their area of speciality. Aside

VI.   RULES FOR PLAY

1) Creating a World Element

When creating and exploring the world use the Nouns, Verbs and Adjectives for inspiration about what the characters see. Pick a word randomly from one of the three sets of words.

NOUN: choose one the first time an element is seen.
VERB: pick to see how a being or environment are behaving or moving.
ADJECTIVE: pick an adjective to better gain more detail about an element that has already been Investigated.

Feel free to roll for a color or colors at any time to use in the descriptions of the world.

Once the Word has been chosen, the group brainstorms about how the word applies. Describe just the physical appearance or sensations brought about by the World Element. All the players make suggestions. There is no wrong answer. Any explanations of how things function or what their intent is are only speculative at this time.

The Focus player writes down a description of the World Element.

2) Investigating

Once a world element has been described characters may Investigate it. This is how the players establish what role the different parts of the world play, and give meaning to the strange environment surrounding the Colonists.

To Investigate, play out in character what the Colonist does to learn more about this being or thing. How do they approach it? What do they do? They may touch, taste or observe the actions of the being or object. They may use equipment brought from Earth or found on the planet. They may travel to a public place with a guide to learn more about how the sentient aliens interact or conduct transactions. The Colonists may be invited to take part in an alien custom, and so on.

Other Colonists can take part in the scene, although the Focus Character will be the one making the closest contact with the alien world. If another Colonist has a relationship with the Focus Character, they can assist with the Investigation. An alien may also assist, if it has a relationship with the Colonist or the group. Having help makes it more likely that new information will be uncovered. However, it means that those who help may also share in negative fallout if the Investigation goes wrong.

INVESTIGATION SCENE RULES:

When the investigation has been described, draw cards to determine how much is ascertained, or if there were any unintended unfortunate consequences.

The cards drawn are from a standard poker deck with Jokers removed. The Focus character's base draw is equal to their Assimilation level. There are several ways that a player may gain more cards:
• Assistance from one character with a Relationship to the Focus Character
• Using their Lunar Training and equipment
• Using their Earth Profession or a belonging
• Bringing into play something that was written in another

Colonist's Personal Log

Belongings and Equipment may be used in addition to or instead of Earth Profession or Lunar Training, but only one die is gained for each use of items from these pairs.

Investigation Cards: (number drawn)
Assimilation + {Relationship + Lunar Training/equipment + Profession/belonging + Log Entry}

Assisting in a scene means taking part in a meaningful way in the investigation, as well as interacting with the other character in a way that matches their relationship. Both positive and negative relationships can be used to help, but if a character has a negative relationship, they should needle and bust the other characters chops, or whatever is appropriate to those characters' relationship.

DETERMINING OUTCOMES

Once the cards have been drawn, determine the outcome based on the suit or rank of the highest card pulled:

Investigation Outcomes: *Highest Card*

Face Card   (any suit)
Outstanding Success
• All players watching or participating add a Function to the Element.
• Players of Focus and Supporting characters add a Connection.

Red 2 through 10   (heart or diamond)
Success
• Players with characters involved in the roll add a Function to the Element.

Black 2 through 20   (spade or club)
Partial Failure
• Panic Roll for focus character.
• Something unexpected or funny happens which is described by a player, or the players not playing the Focus or Supporting characters.

Ace   (any suit)   *Ace overrules all other outcomes.*
Abysmal Failure
• Focus Character gains short term injury
• Panic Roll for Focus and Supporting Characters.
• Focus player draws another card for additional fallout.

Abysmal Failure Fallout: (based on suit of card)

Spade -- injury to Colonist becomes long-term
Heart -- share Troubles (see below)
Club   -- create new Trouble (see below)
Diamond -- change existing Function or Connection to a new, problematic one, or create a new negative one that causes problems for the Colonists.

• INJURIES

Injuries are physical damage to a Colonist. Once the degree of injury has been determined, the Focus Player describes what form it takes. Note the type of damage on the character sheet or on the Medical Log.

While injured, a character may not be the lead character in an Investigation or Conflict. Injured characters may assist other characters, or initiate a Character or Flashback sequence.

Short-term injuries are healed by the beginning of the next session. A successful Conflict by the Doctor may also heal a short-term injury immediately.

Long-term injuries are healed over a series of sessions. Draw a card at the start of each session to see if the injury has healed: if a face card is drawn, the injury is no longer a hindrance. However, if an Ace is drawn, the injury becomes a Permanent Change and the character's Assimilation goes up by one. Describe how the injury changes the Colonist.

- Sharing Troubles

When this is the result of Abysmal Failure fallout, Troubles are shared among the Colonists who took part in the Investigation. This is done differently depending on the type of relationship the characters have.

Positive relationship: Add a Trouble from the Focus Character's Trouble sheet area to the Supporting character's sheet.
Negative relationship: Supporting character's player creates a new Trouble and adds it to their character as well as Focus character's area on the Trouble sheet.

- Creating new Troubles

The focus player adds a new Trouble to either their own character's area on the Trouble sheet, or to the whole group's area.

- Change Function or Connection

The Focus Player picks an already existing Function or Connection and the group collaboratively chooses an alternate for this that is problematic for the humans.

If the World Element has not Functions or Connections yet, create a new problematic one.

3) Panic Rolls
A character that fails in an Investigation roll may become overcome by the sheer otherness of their new environment. Overwhelmed by the challenges presented and the stresses of failure, they may be thrown back into base conditioned Stress Responses that were formed long ago during their life on Earth.

Panic Rolls:
Roll a single six-sided die against a character's Assimilation level to see if they Panic.
If they roll under, they do not Panic.
If over, the character becomes Impaired, begins acting out its Stress Response and the player must then play out a Flashback sequence.

Impairment
Characters who are Impaired may not use their Profession skills or assist in another character's scene. While they are impaired, they will fall into patterns of behavior described by their Stress Response. A characters can return to normal and become unimpaired by taking part in a Character scene or an additional Flashback. The events of this scene must relate to their Stress Response, or to some aspect of the scene in which they began to Panic.

4) Character Scenes
Character scenes take place between characters with a relationship and focus on the interpersonal interaction between them.

The relationship may be positive or negative. Either is fine. It simply guides how the characters interact, and is made more detailed by the description: for example, lovers may bond in a character scene, rivals would compete.

Character scenes make excellent follow up scenes to Panic Roll failures.

A Character scene may stand alone, or any other type of scene (Investigation, Flashback, or Conflict) may be declared to be a Character scene. In a simple Character scene, there is no set structure. If creating a relationship, follow the suggestions below. If part of another type of scene, follow that scene structure. Injured characters may take part in simple character scenes.

A Character scene may serve several functions:
- To explore the relationship between two characters.
- To create a relationship between two characters.
- To refresh an impaired character.
- To address a Trouble.

In all scenes, the players will learn more about the relationship between two characters. Rules for creating a relationship follow below. If impaired, taking part in a Character Scene of any type brings the character back to full power after the scene is complete.

To address a Trouble, frame the scene to include elements of that issue, and invite the player who holds the Trouble to advance the plot with respect to this Trouble during the scene. If it the Trouble is at a Turning Point, the players may attempt to resolve it through a Conflict.

5) Creating a Relationship
If two Colonists have no relationship, the players may create one by participating in a Character Scene. This scene takes a special form.

Play focuses on the characters in question. All the other players observe and participate, either in character or by making suggestions. The non-primary players have the role of putting pressure on the primary characters, elaborating on how these characters might make a connection or experience negative friction, and how issues the characters might have experienced could overlap and become involved and entangled. Suggestions and narration about the characters' past, things they may regret about leaving Earth, and all other items written on the character sheet are encouraged to be brought into play.

When the scene comes to a conclusion, all players except the focus player give an up or down vote: up for the relationship being a positive one, down for negative. In case of a tie, the focus player may vote.

The players write the other character's name in the relationship area on their character sheet. Circle the appropriate box, positive or negative and write a description of the relationship on the line between name and type.

Example relationships for Colonist Frederick:
Positive relationship: Johann   devoted lover   +
Negative relationship: Wulin   hates him for his
                                      cowardice   -

Relationships may also be created with aliens and other non-Colonist human characters, such as humans from the character's past on Earth. These relationships may be created automatically. The focus character decides on the nature of the relationship. Circle the appropriate symbol ("+" or "-") and write a description.

6) Flashback Scenes
Flashback sequences shed light on events in a Colonist's past. If a Colonist fails a Panic Roll, they must have a flashback related to the events that just took place. A Flashback scene may also be chosen to address a Question or Trouble.

There is no need to roll dice in a Flashback, but the other players take rolls that helps create tension and resolution within the scene.

A Flashback may be declared as an prelude to a potentially harmful Conflict scene in order for the player to gain an additional die to roll. It may also be used following a failed Panic Roll to refresh a character from their impairment. Injured characters may take part in Flashback sequences.

In a flashback sequence, the focus player chooses when the scene takes place in the Colonists' life. Describe when it is, where it is, and a stressful situation facing the character. Then cast the other players as characters in the flashback. The characters present have power with respect to the focus character. Choose characters that fulfill the following roles:
- Someone with power over the focus character (a parent or superior)
- A friend or ally
- A rival or enemy
- Someone who the focus character wants something from or desires
- A dependent who needs something from the focus character

At least three of the following roles must be filled. If the shoe fits, cast players in roles that are similar to the role their character played in scenes in the present. The other players are responsible for putting pressure on the focus character, to push that character into stress. Superiors ask it to fulfill obligations, dependents rely on the (future) Colonist, enemies try to intimidate the character. Even friends can dare the focus character into dangerous acts, though they also offer friendship and support.

Bring the scene to a boil, then when it reaches a climax, end it, coming back to the present day.

7) Conflict Scenes
When a Colonist faces opposition from a Plot Character, other Colonist, or the World a Conflict can be called. In a Conflict cards are drawn to determine which side gets to determine the outcome. The players have the opportunity to risk certain things in order to increase their chances of winning.

When Troubles and Questions reach a Turning Point or Crisis, a Conflict ensues. If the Colonists win the Conflict their players establish more about the world at a higher scale, giving the characters more knowledge about the world around them, and power within it. If they lose, the Question or Trouble will continue to plague the community, raised to a higher level or affecting more than it did before, but continuing to give the players the opportunity to create the world around the Colonists.

Conflict Cards

When a Conflict occurs, determine who the focus characters are on each side. For the Opposition, it will likely be a Plot Character. It can be an aspect of the world (eg the weather or a plague of insectoid creatures). If it is the world, the person who holds the Trouble is in charge of taking part in the Conflict. If it is a Plot Character, that player's character draws the cards and takes part in the negotiation.

One of the Colonist's players must agree to be for their character to be the focus player on the Colonist's side, and they draw the card and so on. If the conflict is between two Colonists, their players draw cards against one another.

Other characters can assist a Colonist involved in a Conflict. The characters must have a relationship with the Colonist and their player must describe how they help. For each character helping, the Colonist gets an additional card. But the Colonist's player must risk that relationship in order to gain more the additional card.

Conflict Cards:

First round:
Colonists are dealt a number of cards equal to their Assimilation +1.

Opposition (Plot characters or World elements) are dealt a number of cards that correlates with how far developed the Question or Trouble is:
- First Turning Point: 2 cards
- Second Turning Point: 3 cards
- Crisis: 4 cards

Comparing the Cards:
Each side sums their two highest. Aces count high, with a value of 11. The side with the highest sum is winning. (For a tie, the side with the most red cards wins. If all red, those with the highest heart wins.)

Second Round:
The losing side has the option to start a second round.

Colonists: can call upon the aid of a character they have a positive relationship with, use one of their belongings or piece of their equipment, or take physical action themselves.

Opposition: offer something of value to the Colonist that could be a secondary outcome of the Conflict.

They then draw another card. If this card makes their highest pair beat the other sides, they gain the advantage. However, for Colonists, if that card is a Club,

they lose what they risked: If they took physical action, they gain a long-term wound, if they risked a relationship, that relationship now becomes a negative relationship, and if they used a belonging or piece of equipment it is lost or destroyed.

For the Opposition, what is offered becomes established regardless of the outcome.

Third Round:
Whichever side is now losing has the option to draw another card for the third round. The side choosing to draw again risks or offer as in the Second Round, though it must be diffferent from what was offered or risked in the second round.

Compare highest pair again and determine a winner. However, this time, if the card drawn is either a Club or a Spade what was risked is lost.

Example Conflict:

A Colonist is dealing with her Boss at the Framplteeeeg factory. It is a Turning Point of the Question "How will the Colonists support themselves?" The supervisor wants the Colonists to undergo a surgical procedure that will let them better interface with the machines they operate. The Colonists resist and a Conflict ensues.

This is the first turning point, so the Plot Character's player draws three cards. The Colonist's cards were the King of Spades and the 5 of Diamonds. The supervisor's cards were the 8 of Hearts and the 2 of Spades. The Colonist's sum is 15 while the supervisor's cards sum is 10, so the Colonist is winning.

The player in charge of the supervisor initiates a Second Round. She offers that the implants will allow the Colonists to take part in other types of media communication that the aliens employ. That player draws another card, the 9 of Diamonds, which gives her the lead.

For the Third Round, the Colonist's player describes his character, the Doctor, inspecting an implant using an attachment for one of the hand-held computers to analyze its components. He draws the Ace of Spades, so although the Colonists win and they find an alternative to the implants, the attachment of the computer is corroded by acidic goo that drips out of the implant cradle and becomes inoperable.

Since this Conflict was a Turning Point there are special outcomes:

If the Colonists win, they get to establish one thing at the next Scale of World development and the Trouble does not escalate.

For example, in the above episode the Colonists could establish more about the media that was created and how the aliens communicate.

If the Opposition wins, the Trouble escalates. The Opposition player adds something to the Trouble that increases the intensity of the Trouble, puts more at risk or that creates greater complications for the Colonists.

For example, in the above episode if the Opposition had won that player could have changed to the Question to a Trouble such as "The Colonists' work involves invasive implant".

8) Healing Injuries

When a Colonist has been injured, the Doctor can try to reduce the level of injury by taking part in a Healing Conflict. The Doctor is the Focus character for this Conflict and describes what their character does to try and heal the other Colonist. However, the player of the Colonist gets to say whether there is a second or third round of cards since it would be their body that is at risk for further injury.

If the Doctor wins Conflict the wound is reduce by one level: long term wounds become short term and short term wounds are healed. If the Doctor loses the Conflict after the first round, there is no change in the injury. If after the second or third rounds, then what was risked may be damaged, depending on the cards drawn.

Other players in the group may operate as the Opposition in concert or elect one person to do so. The things offered should relate to the nature of what caused the wound.

9) Questions and Troubles

As described earlier in the rules, the Colonists each start with one question in their area ("why did I leave Earth?") and the group starts with three ("what can the Colonists eat?", "how does their shelter function?" and "how do they support themselves?")

Each Question or Trouble is written on a line on the Trouble Sheet. Beside the line are a number of boxes. 15 boxes for group Troubles or Questions, 9 boxes for individual ones. Each of these boxes represents a scene in which something was revealed about this issue, or in which something was established via an Investigation or Conflict. When this occurs, check off one of the boxes.

The boxes are grouped, by fives for group Troubles and Questions and by threes for individual ones. The end of the first two groupings indicates a Turning Point, and the end of the row is a Crisis Point.

During a Turning Point, the players of the Colonists must face the issue in a Conflict (as described in the Conflict section). At the Crisis Point, they also must face the issue, but if the Colonist side is successful, then the issue may be resolved and retired.

Questions may be added to the Trouble Sheet at any time. Anyone may add one to the group space, and the player of a Colonist may add one to their own Colonist's area. Questions may be escalated into Troubles during Turning Points or Crises.

Troubles are added as Abysmal failure outcomes of Investigations as described in the Investigation Section. For each Trouble, one player must take responsibility for it and become the person who "holds" this aspect of the plot. When another player chooses to address that Trouble, the person who holds the plot for that Trouble describes how the Trouble affects the Colony or that individual Colonist.

V. Plot and Supporting Characters

Plot Characters

When creating a Plot character fill out the Name, Species, Affiliation and Description of the character. Then circle the number equal to the highest Assimilation number that a member of the Colonists has. For each level, fill something in the space next to the level and those lower in number. So each plot character will start out with at least a description of how that character has power over the Colonists.

When choosing who holds the plot for a Trouble, the player of a Plot Character related to it is a good choice. Plot characters can be created when Troubles are created.

Supporting Characters

Supporting characters can be created whenever a character has been introduced and a player of a Colonist agrees to form a relationship with it. Someone else must agree to play that character. They may be aliens, or humans from the Colonists' past as seen in flashbacks. Fill out the Name, Species and Description, as well as the name of the Colonist with whom the character has a relationship and that Colonist's Assimilation.   For each level of Assimilation (up to 4) fill out one of the categories below the Colonist's name area on the sheet. Also write the character on the Colonist's sheet, circle positive or negative and describe

the nature of the relationship.

Uniform Survey, Questions for Study:
1.   What sentient species are present on this planet and what are their characteristics?
2.   What foods are edible for humans on the planet, where can they be acquired?
3.   What kinds of shelter do the local beings utilize?
4.   What forms of clothing do beings wear on this world, what is appropriate for humans?
5.   What forms of employment are open to humans, what are these activities like?
6.   What forms of currency or trade are used or practiced?
7.   What cultural norms and practices are present?
8.   What is the weather on this world? The length of the day?
9.   What are the land, seas and atmosphere like?
10.   What energy sources are used?
11.   What forms of technologies are present?
12.   What are the modes of transportation?
13.   What notable plant and animal species are present in the local environment and larger world?
What are their characteristics and uses?
14.   What are life cycle and stages of development of species here?
15.   What forms of reproduction do the sentient species utilize?
16.   What forms of reproduction are present in other species?
17.   What forms of governance do the beings on this planet utilize?
18.   What forms of religion, philosophy or spirituality are practiced?
19.   What are the major institutions such as marriage, family, church, government, education?
20.   What forms of industry and manufacture are there?
21.   What machines or other technologies are used in industry?
22.   How is food produced and stored?
23.   What forms of communication and media are used?
24.   What forms of weapons are used by these species?
25.   What medical technologies are applied?
26.   What is the history of habitation of this planet?
27.   What political entity is the colony located within?
28.   What forms of laws are operating where the colony exists?
29.   What forms of entertainment and art are practiced by the inhabitants of this world?
30.   What are the great works of art in the mediums of this world?
31.   What are the monuments and landmarks?
32.   How are the young of the species present educated?
33.   What are the social stratifications present (eg race, class, etc.)?
34.   What are the relationships between the political or cultural groups?
35.   Where is there warfare going on? Who is involved? What are the issues at stake?
36.   What are the social ills on this planet? How are they addressed?
37.   Who are the major historical and mythological entities here?
38.   What major ideologies and theories have been formulated?
39.   What is the relationship of these species with others on this planet? On others?
40.   What form of relations can be formed between this planet and Earth?

World and Species

World Name: _____

Planet Size/ # Other Species: *Satellite (1)   Small (2)   Large (3)   Giant (random)*

Environment Type: *Land Surface   Subterranean   Aquaeus   Gaseous   Space   Other:_____*

Primary Species: _____

Home World?   Yes / No

Language Group: _____

Alluring Trait: _____

Repellent Trait: _____

Other Sentient Species: _____

Job Listing: _____

Nearest Earth Equivalent: _____

Further Notes:

Colonist

Name: _____

Description: _____

_____

_____

Home: _____

Profession: _____

Stress Response: _____

Assimilation: 1 2 3 4 5 6

Lunar Training: _____

Injured: Impaired:

Belongings: _____

Wound: LT / ST

_____

Relationships:

Character	Description	
_____	_____	+ / -
_____	_____	+ / -
_____	_____	+ / -
_____	_____	+ / -

Personal Log:
Session

_____

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Player Name: _____

Personal Log

Colonist: _____

Session

Other Characters

PLOT

Name: _____ Species: _____

Affiliation: _____

Description: _____

_____

1	*Power over the Colonists*	_____
2	*Offer the Colonists*	_____
3	*Want from the Colonists*	_____
4	*Threaten the Colonists*	_____
5	*Desire*	_____
6	*Fear*	_____

SUPPORTING CAST

Name: _____ Species: _____

Colonist: _____ Colonist's Assimilation: 1 2 3 4 5 6

Share with Colonist   *Want from Colonist*   Injuries:

Offer the Colonist   *Compete with Colonist*   ☐ ☐ ☐

Description: _____ + / -

Name: _____ Species: _____

Colonist: _____ Colonist's Assimilation: 1 2 3 4 5 6

Share with Colonist   *Want from Colonist*   Injuries:

Offer the Colonist   *Compete with Colonist*   ☐ ☐ ☐

Description: _____ + / -

Name: _____ Species: _____

Colonist: _____ Colonist's Assimilation: 1 2 3 4 5 6

Share with Colonist   *Want from Colonist*   Injuries:

Offer the Colonist   *Compete with Colonist*   ☐ ☐ ☐

Description: _____ + / -

Player Name: _____

Name:
Description:

Aspects:

Connections:

Name:
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Aspects:

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For the Colony

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For the Colonists

Name, Training

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TROUBLE

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