

HELLAS™

WORLDS OF SUN & STONE

QUICKSTART RULES



AND SO THE STORM THREW US DOWN AT LAST UPON THAT WRETCHED SHORE, SOME BLASTED REMNANT OF WHO KNEW WHAT, PERHAPS A FRAGMENT OF SOME PLANET LONG FORGOT, NOW ADRIPT FOREVER IN THE PANTHALASSA, AS WE WERE NOW, THE SHIP WE MOORED UPON THE ROCKS, AND LEFT HER THERE WITH CREW TO ATTEND REPAIRS AS BEST THEY COULD, FOR OUR SLIPSAILS WERE TATTERED AND OUR DRIVE WAS NEAR AFIRE, AND WITH FOUR OTHERS I SET OUT TO EXPLORE OUR ROOSTING PLACE, THINKING TO SEEK OUT ANY INHABITANTS – AND, IF SO IT WERE TO BE, TO DISPATCH THEM HASTILY – LEST THEY DISCOVER US FIRST, BETTER IT WERE TO BE PREDATOR THAN PREY.

THUS WE LABORED ON, OVER THE ROUGH GROUND, FINDING NAUGHT THERE BUT SCATTERED ROCK, SHATTERED REMNANTS OF SHIPS LONG SINCE MOORED AND GONE BEFORE US, AND SCRUB, INEDIBLE AND HARSH, ONCE HAD I DINED ON SUCH FARE, PREVIOUS TO THIS TRIP, AND FOUND THE TASTE ASHEN AND COLD, AND NOT AFAR FROM EATING DEATH ITSELF, WERE SUCH POSSIBLE.

AND AFTER ONE LONG HOUR – SUCH AS TIME BE RECORDED ON ATHENAI, FOR TIME WOULD STAND STILL IN THIS SULLEN PLACE – WE CAME UPON A CAVE, A CAVERN FORM'D, BUBBLED UP AS IF FROM THE BLACK EARTH ITSELF, AND FROM WITHIN FLOWED CRYSTAL WATERS, AN OMEN IF EVER THERE WERE, OR SO WE THOUGHT. "A SIGN," I SAID. "LET US MAKE OFFERING TO HOSEIDON, HE HAS SHOWN US THAT HE IS WITH US, AND AMONG US, AND HAS GIVEN US TO DRINK, EVEN IN SUBSPACE."

THUS SOLEMN RITES WERE PERFORMED TO HOSEIDON, AND MYSTIC SONG SUNG, AND OFFERINGS MADE, BUT CRE WE FINISHED A NOISE AROSE FROM WITHIN THE CAVE, A SCREECH AND CRY, AS IF A WOMAN IN PAIN, A HORRIBLE SOUND.

AND A COLD FEAR RAN SHIVERING RAN THROUGH OUR BLOOD...

WHAT IS HELLAS?

HELLAS is an epic, generational space opera that spans 100 years of the fourth and final age of the Hellenes, a spacefaring race that has warred for control of their galaxy for countless millennia. The player characters are Heroes who will set off to save their worlds from an ancient threat. They will live, triumph, suffer, and eventually die as Heroes, either achieving apotheosis and ascending into immortality, or succumbing to their fate.

HELLAS is greatly inspired by the heroic stories of ancient Greece and uses Greek-inspired language, themes, and tropes. However, HELLAS is not Greek, nor is its characters presumed to be living in some distant future or bygone past based on our own reality, any more than a fantasy RPG based on European mythology is based on a real medieval Europe.

The player characters are the central stars in the game. Nothing of importance happens without their characters' involvement. It is impressed upon the players that they are the movers and shakers in the game world, and that they have the potential to literally change the course of events as it unfolds. There are subsystems that allow the characters to manipulate and change the social well being of an entire planet. Furthermore, players are motivated by glory and destiny to move their character forward through their adventures. Proactive play is rewarded; the penalty for idleness is no glory and a forgotten life for their character.

IF YOU LIKE THESE, YOU'LL LOVE HELLAS!

300: The acclaimed Frank Miller comic

Agon by John Harper

Clash of the Titans: Need I say more?

Exalted by White Wolf

Hercules: The Legendary Journeys: A lighthearted adventure series

Jason and the Argonauts: Classic claymation.

Krull: A group of Heroes band together to fight impossible odds.

Mythic Greece by Iron Crown Entertainment

Nine Worlds by Matthew Snyder

Spirit of the Century: Evil Hat productions' grand game of pulp heroic action.

Troy: A visually stunning epic telling the story of Achilles

WHAT DO I NEED TO PLAY?

To play this game, you need the HELLAS book, some paper, something to write with, some twenty-sided dice, a lot of imagination, and a group of people, one of whom is willing to be the guiding force in the game — the "Game Master." The rest of the group, simply called "the players," takes on roles of major characters in the stories that they and the Game Master create together. These stories are called "adventures," or "scenarios." Very short adventures, usually encompassing only one or two obstacles to a simple goal, are referred to as "encounters." A series of encounters can become an adventure, while a series of adventures can turn into a campaign. The HELLAS book contains a chapter on how to come up with adventures as well as a full-blown campaign spanning 25 years; these sample rules also include a sample adventure.

A SHORT GLOSSARY

Destiny: The glorious ending to a Hero's travels and adventure. The opposite of Fate.

Drachma (dm): The standard monetary unit of the HELLAS setting.

Dynamism: The ability to affect and manipulate the universe through force of will.

Hel: The Hellenic word for Sun

Las: The Hellenic word for Stone.

Metousia: The system used by players to allow their Heroes to change the universe.

Omni Table: The universal table used to determine success and failure at an action.

Panthalassa: A different dimension used for interstellar travel. Also called Slipspace.

HELLENIC NAMES

Hellenes generally do not identify themselves with distinct family or last names, they identify with a single name, often passed down through the generations but occasionally chosen by the Hellenic him/herself. Feel free to pick a different name to use with one of the sample characters that follow.

MALE NAMES

Achillios	Kyros
Alceus	Korudon
Aristokles	Lamachus
Atemas	Lycurgus
Baruch	Lysander
Brontes	Menelaeus
Busiris	Mentor
Callimachus	Milos
Cassander	Nicias
Cimon	Nikolos
Cyrus	Orestes
Damen	Orion
Dion	Parthenios
Draco	Pindar
Etor	Stamatios
Eugenios	Stavros
Eurybiades	Stefanos
Feodor	Thallo
Georgios	Thespis
Gilos	Titos
Hali	Todor
Hector	Vasilis
Hesperos	Xenophanes
Hippias	Xenophon
Jaxon	Zephyrus
Kai	Zotikos



Letter(s)	Sound
Ae or Æ	Ay
C	S (or K)
Ch	Kh
-des	Dees
-les	Lees
-ope	Ah-pee
-tes	Tees

FEMALE NAMES

Adara	Hyacinthe	Phaedra
Alethea	Ianthe	Phoebe
Aura	Iphigenia	Rhea
Barbara	Jocasta	Selena
Calisa	Kalliope	Sonia
Cassandra	Kolina	Stephania
Clio	Lelia	Tessa
Damara	Lonia	Thekla
Damia	Melania	Thetis
Dionna	Monika	Tiphane
Echo	Niobe	Vania
Elena	Nora	Varvara
Eugenie	Nyssa	Xenia
Galatea	Odele	Zenobia
Hedia	Ophelie	Zoe

HEROES OF HELLAS

The Hellas Core Rules feature 8 unique races and a complete character generation system, including the ability to create a detailed lifepath for each character. Players may use the characters below or create heroes of their own. The characters listed below have been abbreviated for the sake of quick start play.



SAMPLE AMAZORAN

DINARA

Amazonan of Etruria

Epithet: Strong-willed

Glory: 10

Age 22

Favored of Artesia

Profession: Amazonan Fire Lancer

A heavily scarred Amazonan with hair of gold

INT	+0	PER	+0
WIL	+1	CHA	+0
STR	+0	DEX	+2
CON	+0	SPD	+2
CR	+3	DYN	-1

Hit Points: 20

Hero Points: 5

Skills:

Brawl +7, Command +2, Computers (personal) +1, Cultural Studies (Amazonan) +7, Evade +8, Intimidate +4, Lore (tactics) +3, Parry +5, Ride +2, Speak Language (Hellene, native), Speak Language (Any –Basic)+3, Stealth +3, Weapon (spear) +6, Weapon (Rifle)+10, Profession (lancer, DEX) +4

Special Abilities:

May add +2 to initiative rolls

May add +2 to any willpower roll

Talents:

Advanced Firearms Training

Equipment:

Amazonan Lemllar vest (PR 4) , plate helmet, hoplon shield, Amazonan Flame Lance (DR 13) and 500dm

SAMPLE HELLENE

IOLAUS

Hellene of Sparta**Epithet:** Iron-armed**Glory:** 10**Age:** 29**Favored of Heuson****Profession:** Spartan Hoplite

A young Spartan looking to prove his name is worthy of immortality

INT	+0	PER	+1
WIL	+0	CHA	+0
STR	+3	DEX	+2
CON	+2	SPD	+0
CR	+3	DYN	-1

Hit Points: 31**Hero Points:** 5**Skills:**

Brawl +3, Climb +1, Command +4, Etiquette (Hellene) +3, Evade +4, Intimidate +2, Lore (tactics) +2, Navigation +1, Pankration +2, Parry +6, Speak Language (Hellene, native) +1, Stealth +1, Survival (Deserts) +2, Throwing +2, Weapon (Spear) +7, Weapon (Rifle)+4, Weapon (blade, lg)+4, Profession (warrior, STR)+4

Special Abilities:

May re-roll one failed roll per game.

May add +2 to any Command roll

Talents:

Advanced Military Training

Hardiness

Equipment:

Spartan tactical cuirass vest (PR 7), Hoplon shield, father's Spartan infantry spear (DR8+ STR), Spartan Slug Rifle (DR13), military clothing, and 500dm





SAMPLE NYMPHAS

PHILOMENA

Nymphas of Delphoi

Epithet: Golden-eyed

Glory: 10

Age: 17

Favored of Aphrosia

Profession: Nymphas Thief

A comely Oread Nymphas, richly dressed

INT	-1	PER	+0
WIL	-1	CHA	+4
STR	-1	DEX	+2
CON	+0	SPD	+1
CR	+2	DYN	+0

Hit Points: 18

Hero Points: 13

Skills:

Appraise +2, Contortion +2, Deception +6, Cultural Studies (Nymphas) +7, Deception +7, Disable Mechanism +4, Evade +10, Search +3, Seduction +5, Sleight of Hand +4, Speak Language (Nymphas, native), Speak Language (Hellene –Basic) +3, Stealth +10, Profession (thief, DEX) +4, Weapon (Lg. Blade) +3

Special Abilities:

May blend in to natural woodland surrounding. Gains a+2 to hide or stealth rolls
May control men's minds with pheromones. Philomena must make physical contact and beat the subject in a WIL vs WIL roll.

Talents:

Street Cred

Equipment:

Doric Chiton and Hitmaton of high fashion quality, stealth suit, Nymphas thorn blade (DR 8+STR), Leather Vest (PR 2) and 500dm

SAMPLE ZINTAR

XITHOS

Zintar of Ithaca

Epithet: Nimble-handed

Glory: 10

Age: 31

Favored of Hephæstion

Profession: Zintar Engineer

A clever, many-tentacled Zintar

INT	+3	PER	+1
WIL	+1	CHA	+0
STR	+0	DEX	+1
CON	+0	SPD	-1
CR	+2	DYN	-1

Hit Points: 18

Hero Points: 5

Skills:

Cultural Studies (Zintar) +7, Computers (mainframe) +3, Demolition +2, Disable Mechanism +7, Drive +5, Engineering (electronics) +9, Engineering (mechanical) +9, Handicraft (vehicle) +3, Research +3, Swim +4, Sleight of Hand +1, Speak Language (Zintar, native), Speak Language (Any -Basic) +3 Profession (engineer, INT) +6, Weapon (Pistol) +5

Special Abilities:

All Zintars may see in the dark as if it is daylight

Zintars all use a carapace to move freely on land. Any damage done to the zintar is first taken from the Carapace.

Standard carapace: Hit Points: 30, SPD: 0, Armor: 4, STR: Same as user

Talents:

Jury Rig

Equipment:

Tool kit, Diadalos hand comp, 2 hover plates, welding kit, Hoplite Pistol (DR 8), 1 Blast Grenade (DR 18 3m radius) and 1,000dm



SAMPLE MYRMIDON

ODELA

Myrmidon of Athenoi

Epithet: Noble-hearted

Glory: 10

Age 23

Favored of Heria

Profession: Myrmidon Hoplite

A young myrmidon in brightly colored armor

INT	+0	PER	+0
WIL	+0	CHA	+0
STR	+0	DEX	+5
CON	+2	SPD	+0
CR	+3	DYN	-3

Hit Points: 22

Hero Points: 5

Skills:

Brawl +3, Command +2, Computers (personal) +1, Contortion +4, Cultural Studies (Myrmidon) +7, Evade +7, Intimidate +1, Parry +2, Speak Language (Myrmidon, native), Speak Language (Any –Basic), Weapon (spear) +4, Weapon (pistol) +3, Weapon (blades, lg.) +3, Weapon (rifle) +7, Profession (hoplite, STR) +4

Special Abilities:

May alter the shape of its body to creep under doors and through cracks or add two extra limbs (one per CON). Each additional limb may be used but causes a multiple action penalty.

On a successful grappling attack, the Myrmidon may spend additional actions covering and biting with its myriad small pincers doing its CON in bonus damage.

Can see in all directions

Talents:

Advanced Militia Training

Equipment:

Hoplite mesh armor vest (PR 4), Hoplon shield, Spartan infantry spear (DR 8 + STR), Hoplite Beam Rifle (DR 10 armor protects for half PR), military clothing, and 500dm



SAMPLE GOREGON

AVEL

Goregon of Ceto

Epithet: Haughty and boastful

Glory: 10

Age: 16

Favored of Appolon

Profession: Spartan Hoplite

A brown scaled Goregon adorned with the trophies of his battles and accomplishments. A celebrated Olympian and arrogant child.

INT	+0	PER	+0
WIL	+0	CHA	-1
STR	+6	DEX	+0
CON	+3	SPD	+0
CR	+2	DYN	-2

Hit Points: 28

Hero Points: 5

Skills:

Acrobatics +4, Balance +2, Brawling +3, Climb +2, Contortion +2, Cultural Studies (Goregon) +7, Evade +4, Ride +2, Seduction +4, Swim +3, Speak Language (Gorgon, native), Hypnotism +1, Weapon (Hafted) +4, Profession (athlete, DEX) +4

Special Abilities:

May add 6 (double CON) to resist natural organic poison (not synthetic poisons).

May use its tail to coil and grapple, or slap an opponent. This counts as an extra action that can be used in addition to any other melee attack with multi-action penalties. The tail does (DR3+STR).

Talents:

Adrenaline Rush

Equipment:

Doric Chiton of Noble quality, Goregon Axe (DR12+ STR), various medals and awards, and 1,000dm base





CONDENSED RULES

All actions in HELLAS are resolved by a single, simple procedure using the Omni Table:

1. Compare character's Skill or Attribute Rating with Degree of Difficulty.
2. Take the difference (positive, negative, or zero) and add it to a D20 roll.
3. Consult the Omni Table for the result. Players contribute by describing the Intent of their character's actions. The GM then interprets the outcome of the Omni Table.

OMNI TABLE

d20 Roll	Result	What It Means
0 or Less	Critical Failure	Not only does the attempted action fail, but it fails miserably and may have additional negative consequences (GM discretion)
1–5	Failure	The action fails to achieve the intended result
6–10	Partial Success	The action is only moderately successful, achieving part but not all of the intended effect (such as half-damage from an attack)
11–19	Success	The action achieves the intended result
20 or More	Critical Success	The action is more successful than intended, achieving the stated intent plus other benefits (e.g., a Critical Wound – GM discretion)

OMNI TABLE MODIFIERS

Omni Table die rolls may be subject to bonuses or penalties from Attributes, Skill ratings, Intent, Degree of Difficulty, Multiple actions, and other factors. GM discretion.

ATTRIBUTES

Attributes can be used as modifiers by adding the Attribute's value to the Skill level (the total is called the Skill Rating). Attributes can be used to determine the result of actions for which there is no specific skill. When an Attribute is used by itself for an Omni Table roll, it is doubled. This applies to negative-rated Attributes, but zero-rated Attributes stay the same.

SKILL RATING

Skill Level indicates degree of training. Skill Rating is training (Level) plus natural ability (related Attribute). Each Skill has an Attribute that acts as its modifier. To determine overall Skill Rating, add the level of the Skill plus its Attribute modifier. When a Skill is used for an Omni Table roll, always use its Skill Rating.

INTENT

Intent is a player's description of what his Hero hopes to accomplish by an action. This helps the GM determine the chance of success for the attempted action, as well as its actual outcome. The Intent of an attack might be to injure, disarm, trip, or any of a dozen other stratagems. If the player informs the GM beforehand of the character's intentions, the GM will be better prepared to interpret the result and to establish an action's Degree of Difficulty.

DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY

Degree of Difficulty (DoD) is based on the GM's appraisal of how hard it would be for an individual with an Attribute or Skill Rating of "0" to attempt a given action. The DoD modifier typically ranges between +10 and -10, with easy actions being given a bonus (+1, +2, etc.) on the Omni Table die roll, and difficult actions being given a penalty (-1, -2, etc.). The character's Intent is a major factor in determining DoD.

Difficulty	Modifier
Sure thing	No roll
Very easy	+10
Easy	+5
Routine	+0
Difficult	-5
Extreme	-10

MULTIPLE ACTIONS

As a basic rule, each character can take one action per round (roughly six seconds, enough time to trade blows with an opponent). For each action already performed during the round, characters suffer a cumulative -5 Omni Table penalty. Extra actions can be performed during a character's turn, or later in the round as responses to the actions of other characters.

ATTRIBUTE CHECKS

- Player states Intent (which Attribute, and what is he trying to accomplish?)
- Double the Attribute's numeric Rating
- GM determines bonuses or penalties (based on the DoD or opposing factors)
- Player rolls to attempt the action
- GM judges result.

COMBAT DAMAGE

Damage totals for physical attacks employing natural or other melee weaponry are modified by adding the attacker's Strength Rating to the weapon's Damage Rating (DR). Damage totals for device-propelled missile weapons, such as arrows, are not modified by the user's Strength, although hand-thrown weapons such as javelins are.

REACTION ROLLS

The first impression a character makes on a new acquaintance is determined by making a Reaction roll on the Omni Table. A Reaction roll is based on a character's CHA and modified by Glory. Failure indicates unfavorable or hostile reaction; Success indicates acceptance (or at least ambivalence). Critical Success yield the most favorable response possible.

MOVEMENT

Individuals and creatures move up to 30 meters in one round's time, plus 6 meters per +1 Speed Rating or minus 3 meters per -1 Speed Rating. This assumes an even surface, straight course of travel, and limited encumbrance. A SPD of -6 indicates an immobile creature or object. Vehicles use the same SPD scale as characters, except for faster-than-light travel.

TO ROLL OR NOT TO ROLL

There's no need to roll for every action. Only during stressful or unusual situations is a roll required to accomplish an ordinarily simple task. Just be consistent.

COMBAT

Combat results are determined by rolling a D20 on the Omni Table. Combat Skills also have an Attribute Modifier, which is called Combat Rating (CR, for short). The term, Combat Skill Rating, always refers to the combination of a Combat Skill's level plus the character's CR modifier.

It is not necessary to make a separate die roll to determine how much damage an attack does. Instead, weapons and other forms of attack do a set amount of damage based on their Damage Rating (DR), and the Omni Table die roll. Protection Rating (PR) describes the protective value of armor. In Omni System™ games, armor is rated by the number of Hit Points it absorbs per attack.

MISC. DAMAGE RATINGS

Body Slam	DR 3+ STR
Choke	DR 4 per round
Kick	DR 2 + STR
Punch	DR 1 + STR
Head Butt	DR 1 + STR
Shield Bash	DR 3 +STR
Burning	DR 4 per round
Falling	DR 2 per 1 meter drop

DAMAGE RATING

A weapon's Damage Rating (DR) is equivalent to the maximum number of Hit Points it is capable of doing in the hands of an individual or creature of "average" (0-rated) Strength. When using hand-held weapons, combatants add their Strength Rating (STR) to the Damage Rating total. The result indicates how much of the total DR a weapon does on a given attack:

- Partial Success: Half the total DR.
- Full Success: Full Damage Rating.
- Critical Success: Full DR + Critical Wound.

PROTECTION RATING

Armor is rated by its Protection Rating (PR), the amount of damage it absorbs in Hit Points from each hit. Shields reduce an attacker's Combat die roll by the shield rating, but while using a shield the defender suffers a penalty of -2 on all Dexterity-related die rolls.

COMBAT PROCEDURE

- Combatants roll for Initiative (Attribute roll using Speed; highest roll goes first)
- Player states Intent (what kind of tactic is the Hero trying and what is its intent?)
- GM determines bonuses/penalties (based on Combat Skill Ratings, other factors)
- Player rolls to attempt the action
- GM judges result

1. ROLLING FOR INITIATIVE

At the beginning of any Combat, each combatant makes an Attribute roll using their respective Speed Ratings. This is called rolling for Initiative. The character with the highest Initiative total is allowed to act first, and may choose a Tactic based on the slower opponent's Intent (see #2). The combatant with the next highest total goes next, and so on. For a simpler approach, have the combatants roll for Initiative only for the first round of Combat.

2. STATING INTENT

The player states Intent by choosing a weapon or Combat Skill, and a Combat Tactic: Attack, Defend, Movement, or Stunt. A character's Intent might be to throw a spear, parry with a shield, retreat, or try to trip an opponent. The winner of the Initiative roll can choose to declare Intent first or wait until other combatants have done so, in order to anticipate their opponents' moves and act accordingly. Either way, the individual with Initiative rolls first.

3. DETERMINING BONUSES AND PENALTIES

After the player indicates the weapon and tactic being used and describes the character's Intent, the GM determines if any bonus or penalty will be applied before the player rolls, based on the Combat Skill Rating chosen by the character. To save time during the game it's a good idea to have players figure their characters' modified Combat Skill Ratings in advance and record these numbers on their Character Sheet.

Apply a modifier based on the Degree of Difficulty. If the Combat tactic is being opposed by another individual, the DoD is always based on the defender's abilities. Decide which ability is most appropriate, based on the following considerations:

- ☞ If the defender is using a weapon, use their Skill Rating in that weapon.
- ☞ If the defender is unarmed, use the defender's Brawling or Martial Arts Skill Rating. If the defender has neither, use his basic Combat Rating Attribute.
- ☞ If the attack is unopposed, then the DoD is based on how difficult it will be for the character to achieve his stated intent, based on such factors as the targets' range and degree of cover, not the opponent's combat abilities.

Compare applicable bonuses and penalties, and use the total as the modifier that will be applied to the player's Omni Table Combat roll.

4. THE COMBAT ACTION ROLL

To determine whether the Combat action is successful or not the player rolls a D20 on the Omni Table, applying the GM's modifier to the result.

5. JUDGING THE RESULTS

After the roll, the GM interprets the Omni Table result, taking into account the circumstances surrounding the action, and other factors. Combat actions intended to cause damage will produce one of the following results:

- ☞ Mishap: the attack fails due to a mishap; the attacker stumbles and falls, hits himself, hits an unintended target, breaks the weapon, etc. (GM ruling)
- ☞ Failure: the attack misses the intended target.
- ☞ Partial Success: the attacker scores a glancing blow that only does half the attack form's total Damage Rating (rounded-up to the nearest whole number).
- ☞ Full Success: the attack does its full Damage Rating.
- ☞ Critical Success: the attack does full Damage Rating and achieves the stated Intent. If the Intent was to injure or kill, the victim suffers a Critical Wound, and must make a roll using his Constitution Rating to determine how badly he is hurt. Subtract the Damage Rating of the attack from this CON roll. Partial Success means the victim suffers a penalty of -5 on all further actions until healed of the Critical Wound. Failure or Mishap means the victim is incapacitated until healed.

HERO POINTS

Hero points represents the cosmic luck that all Heroes have in fiction—that little bit extra that gets him through the harrowing ordeal. There is always something different about a Hero that helps him stand apart from his more mundane counterpart. He is able to climb the mountain no sane person would, he can fight and best a lion, and he can take injury that would lay a normal person low. This is illustrated by the Hero spending Hero points.

Hero points are used through out the course of the adventure and only reset at the beginning of a new adventure.

Note: *A hero may spend two points per action*

Your character can use Hero points for a variety of things:

- ☞ Players may spend Hero points to increase a roll by +2. Hero points may be spent after the roll is made.
- ☞ Hero points may be used to negate a mishap or critical failure.
- ☞ One Hero point will add +4 to damage inflicted.
- ☞ Hero points may be spent to negate 4 points of damage per point spent. The Hero can spend up to his maximum amount of Hero points in this way

Example: Iolaus is fighting a giant machina construct on the asteroid archipelago in the Myrtoum solar sea expanse. At his disposal are three Hero points. The machina shoots a salvo of micro missiles at the nimble Hero, hitting him for 30 points of damage! Iolaus is in the pursuit of a Diomedean bridle (one of his Ambitions) and decides this would be a good time to use his Hero points to negate the damage. Iolaus' player spends all three Hero points and negates 12 points of damage.

- ☞ Two points will give you one extra Action for one round of combat without any multi-action penalty.
- ☞ Two points can be spent to negate the unconsciousness effects of a critical hit. This takes a full turn to complete.

COMBAT TACTICS

There are four categories of tactics: Attack, Defend, Move, and Stunt. Each counts as a single action; using more than one in a single round of combat requires the attacker to take a penalty for Multiple Actions. Attacks, Movement, and Stunts can only be performed during the character's turn. Defensive tactics can be used at any time during the round.

ATTACK

CLOSE ATTACKS

A Close Attack attempts to damage a foe at close range. Any hand-to-hand combat, with or without weapons, is considered a Close Attack. Unless the intended target is unaware or incapable of defense, a Close Attack is considered an Opposed Action. The attacker rolls on the Omni Table, adding the Skill Rating for the weapon or attack form being employed. The defender's Skill Rating is used as a negative modifier.

RANGED ATTACKS

A Ranged Attack attempts to hit an opponent from a distance. If the target is unaware of the attack or immobile, DoD is based on the target's range and availability (size, visibility, cover, etc.). If the defender is actively trying to dodge or evade, DoD is based on range and availability plus the defender's modified defensive Combat Skill or Attribute Rating. Penalties for range and availability are cumulative, and as follows:

- ☞ Target is within half the effective range: no penalty
- ☞ Target is beyond half the effective range: -5
- ☞ Target is beyond the effective range: -10
- ☞ Target is 2 times beyond the effective range: -20
- ☞ Target is moving: -3, plus an additional -1 per point of target's Speed Rating
- ☞ Target is protected by cover: -1 per 10% cover
- ☞ Target is smaller than man-sized: -1 to -10
- ☞ Target is larger than man-sized: bonus of +1 to +10

GRAPPLING ATTACKS

A Grappling Attack is any attempt to grab, restrain, or throw an opponent through the use of strength, leverage, or special weapons. Grappling Attacks are handled as per Close Attacks. However, a defender who has been grabbed or restrained may take no further actions until he makes a successful Omni Table roll using his Strength Rating (doubled), Brawling -3, or Martial Arts skill -3. If the defender's escape attempt is unsuccessful, on the next turn the attacker can either throw or choke the defender without the need for a second attack roll. A thrown defender can be hurled up to 2 meters away (+1 meter per +3 STR), and/or body slammed (DR 3 +STR). Choking causes 4 DR per round until the defender escapes or is rendered unconscious.

Grappling Attacks cannot be used against multiple targets. A single target can be both grabbed and choked or grabbed and thrown in the same turn, at a -5 penalty for the extra action. While engaged in a Grappling Attack, the attacker has a -5 penalty to his defensive skill rating and the victim has an effective 0 defensive skill rating.

SUBDUAL ATTACKS

A Subdual Attack is an attempt to knock-out an opponent by non-lethal means. This Tactic requires the use of a blunt weapon (such as a club, staff, mace, punch, kick, etc.), and can be used as part of any attack. Damage from a Subdual Attack is tallied the same as for other forms of attack. However, if a subdual attack causes an opponent to be reduced to 0 HP, the victim is merely rendered unconscious for 1–20 rounds. Hit Points lost as a result of a Subdual attack are restored shortly after the victim regains consciousness (1–10 minutes, or with a successful CON roll against Difficulty 10, per the GM's ruling).

DEFENSE

An opponent who does not have the initiative or who willingly surrenders the initiative can elect to either Dodge or Parry an impending attack. To do so, the defender must declare the Intent to defend before the opponent rolls. The defender rolls on the Omni Table, adding their defensive skill rating and subtracting the attacker's skill rating. Read the Omni Table for the outcome of the defensive Tactic. Note that in the case of a full or critical defensive success, there is no need for the attacker to roll to hit.

DODGE

Dodging is a defensive maneuver that moves the character out of harm's way. This may be as simple a maneuver as ducking, or as complex as a back-flip. Dodging is effective against close, ranged, and grappling attacks. Any of the following Skills or Attributes can be used for a dodge:

- ☞ Evade Skill Rating
- ☞ Acrobatics Skill Rating at -5
- ☞ Defensive Martial Arts Skill Rating
- ☞ Dexterity Rating or Combat Rating (as per rules for substituting Attributes for Skills)

PARRY

A parry is a defensive maneuver that interrupts an attack by putting something in the attacker's path, such as a shield or weapon. Shields are designed expressly for this purpose, and give defenders who have a shield a +2 bonus when used for Parrying (or +1 for individuals who don't have Parry skill and are attempting this tactic). This maneuver is known as a Shield-Parry. Any of the following Skills or Attributes can be used as the modifier for a parry:

- ☞ Parry Skill Rating
- ☞ Weapon Skill Rating at -5
- ☞ Defensive Martial Arts Skill Rating.
- ☞ Brawling (no penalty if parrying a Brawling attack; penalty of -5 if parrying a weapon attack)
- ☞ Combat Rating (substitution)

Ranged Attacks can also be parried, but at an increased DoD (penalty of -5 to -10). Attacks by exceptionally large and powerful opponents that overwhelm the defender cannot be parried.



MOVEMENT

ADVANCE

An Advance is an attempt to close with an opponent at half-maximum Movement Rate or less. This tactic allows the individual to attack or defend while moving without penalty. It is also possible to use this tactic to Advance under cover, making it more difficult for opponents to target the advancing individual with Ranged Attacks (q.v.). A high-speed Advance is called a Charge. This tactic allows the individual to move up to his maximum Movement Rate, though at the expense of any attempts at defense. Attacking while Charging is possible, at a penalty of -3 for Close Attacks and -5 for Ranged Attacks. When making Close Attacks while Charging, add the character's Speed to the damage rating, as well as Strength.

RETREAT

A retreat is an orderly attempt to disengage from an attack. The retreating opponent can move up to half her normal Movement Rate per round while continuing to fight or defend without penalty.

FLEE

Fleeing is an attempt to disengage from an attack without regard for considerations of defense or attack. A fleeing opponent can move up to his full Movement Rate per round, but may not attack or defend while doing so. Attempting to flee while engaged in Close Combat of any type exposes the fleeing opponent to one Unopposed attack from each opponent within range. A successful dodge or parry will allow an individual to flee on the following round without being exposed to a Close Attack.

If a Fleeing character is being pursued, both the character and pursuer(s) must make Attribute Rolls vs. their respective Speed Ratings once for each round of pursuit.

Compare Omni Table die rolls and Speed Ratings to see if the Fleeing individual escapes or gets caught, using the following guidelines:

- ☞ Mishap: stumble and fall; you're injured and cannot continue next round.
- ☞ Failure: stumble and fall; you can get up and continue next round.
- ☞ Partial Success: move up to half your maximum Movement Rate.
- ☞ Full Success: move up to your maximum Movement Rate.
- ☞ Critical Success: max Movement Rate plus an additional 50' on opponent.

Note: for Mishaps and Failures during aerial or aquatic pursuits, substitute stumbles for collisions, unfavorable wind/water currents, and/or crashes as applicable.

STUNTS

A Stunt is any type of unconventional maneuver attempted during the course of Combat. This tactic includes such flamboyant maneuvers as leaping from high places, vaulting over opponents, etc. It also covers "dirty tricks," like tripping, throwing dirt in an opponent's eyes, and so on. Any applicable Skill or Attribute can be used as a modifier for a Stunt; though most actions of this sort carry a stiff penalty for DoD (GM's ruling applies in all cases). Characters that possess Martial Arts, Acrobatics, and certain Performing Skills generally fare better at Stunts than those who do not have such specialized abilities.

In certain circumstances, a Stunt can be combined with another tactic without incurring a penalty. For example, leaping over a bar counter and kicking an enemy can be accomplished in one action, and need not entail any added penalty. However, leaping over a rail, swinging from a chandelier, and kicking an enemy who was across the room would count as an additional action, resulting in the standard -5 penalty.

It's always up to the GM to determine what the DoD is for any given stunt.

AIMED SHOTS

An aimed shot is an Attack intended to hit a very specific target and/or cause a specific effect. A Ranged Attack intended to cut a ship's sail, disable a moving automobile, or knock a weapon from an opponent's hand, is an Aimed Shot. So is a Close Attack intended to disarm an opponent by striking his hand, or a Shield Parry used to deflect a missile in a specific direction. The ability to temporarily stun or subdue an opponent with a single blow, a staple of the action-adventure genre, can also be accomplished with an Aimed Shot.

Aimed Shots are handled much like other Combat Tactics, the main difference being that maneuvers of this sort usually carry a pretty severe penalty for DoD— not surprising, given the fact that an Aimed Shot is by its nature much more difficult to accomplish than a standard attack. A result of Success or Critical Success is required to achieve the intended effect; for Aimed Shots, an Omni Table result of Partial Success is the same as Failure.

Aimed Shots can also be used to hit the small parts of an opponent that are not covered by their armor, and thus ignore its Protection Rating. The additional DoD penalty for this tactic is equal to the total PR of the armor worn. For example, to strike through a seam in Full Plate Armor (PR 7) the attacker would take an additional -7 to his or her attack roll.

FIREARMS & AUTOMATIC WEAPONS

High rate of fire guns and automatic weapons – whether they fire slugs, bullets or lasers – are handled differently than single shot ranged weapons such as bows, crossbows, and slings. Firearms like handguns, sub-machine guns and assault rifles can fire at a much higher rate of fire than muskets and bows. In all Omni System™ games, the multiple action rule is applied differently to rapid-fire firearms. Characters are able to fire a number of shots per round up to the listed rate of fire (RoF) of the weapon used, representing a single action. These shots must be fired at a single target. In the case of shotguns and similar area effect weapons, shots must be fired into a single 10-foot target area. If a character changes targets, the multiple action rule applies.

Automatic weapons can obviously fire more than 2, 3, or even 10 bullets in a single round; however this is abstracted in that it is assumed a large number of bullets are being fired but only the number up to the RoF will possibly strike a target. For the purposes of tracking the amount of ammunition used, the actual number of bullets fired by an automatic weapon is equal to 3 times the RoF.

For the purposes of determining the damage done, consult the Omni Table

- ☞ Failure: the attack misses completely
- ☞ Partial Success: does standard DR of weapon
- ☞ Full Success: multiply DR by the Rate of Fire
- ☞ Critical Success: multiply DR by the Rate of Fire; uses half as much ammo

SPRAYING AN AREA

Sometimes there may be a need to spray an area in the hopes of hitting multiple targets. The Hero determines the area in meters he wants to shoot into and takes that as a penalty to his roll. Everyone in the area has a DOD equal to his modified skill total to evade the attack. If the attack is successful, those who fail to evade are hit by a single round of ammo. Normal rate of fire rules apply for the expenditure of ammo.

HIT POINTS

The average number of Hit Points (HP) that an individual possesses is determined by social class. This total is modified, one time only for beginning characters, by adding or subtracting a number of points equal to the individual's Constitution Rating.

CRITICAL WOUNDS

Any attack made with the intent to kill or injure that yields a Critical Success will cause a Critical Wound. Assuming the victim has not been reduced to zero or less HP he must make a roll vs. his CON Rating (minus the DR of the attack) to determine the extent of the injury:

- ☞ Critical Success/Success: victim can continue without penalty.
- ☞ Partial Success: victim can continue, but suffers a penalty of -5 on all die rolls until the Critical Wound damage is healed.
- ☞ Failure/Mishap: victim is incapacitated and rendered immobile, regardless of Hit Point total. No further actions can be taken until the Critical Wound damage is healed. For minor NPCs, a critical hit can cause instant death or KO (GM's ruling).

DEATH & DYING

Those reduced to zero or less Hit Points are rendered unconscious and on the verge of death. The GM should immediately roll on the Omni Table, using the victim's Constitution Rating and current Hit Points as modifiers. The total will yield one of the following results:

- ☞ Mishap: barring a miracle of some sort, the victim's career has come to an untimely end. If the victim was a PC, the player can create a new character.
- ☞ Failure: the victim must make a CON roll every minute at a cumulative penalty of -1 per minute. A result of failure or worse on any of these CON rolls results in death. A result of partial success or better, and the victim gets to live for another minute.
- ☞ Partial Success: the victim will recover, but suffers permanent injury. Possibilities include scars, a 1-point reduction of one of the victim's Attributes, amnesia, or a disability appropriate to the "near-death experience" (GM's ruling).
- ☞ Full or Critical Success: the victim will recover completely and suffer no permanent damage. These rules should be reserved only for PCs or important NPCs. Any other individual reduced to 0 HP or less can be considered dead at once.

HEALING

The average individual or creature heals 5 Hit Points per day, plus one additional point per +1 CON. This assumes reasonably good conditions and treatment as well as no strenuous activity. Note that specific injuries such as broken bones may take longer to heal.

Individuals with negative CON heal at the rate of 5 HP per day, minus one point per -1 CON (minimum 1 HP per day). Individuals who have suffered a Critical Wound, permanent injury, or close brush with death may require a period of convalescence. If the victim receives immediate healing, he may be fully recovered after just a few hours of sleep. Otherwise, recovery time could range from a day or two to a week to even longer. The time required is up to the GM, based on the nature and extent of the victim's injuries.



THE PANTHALASSA

The Panthalassa (meaning the “cosmic all-sea”), or Slipspace as it is known by traders, is an extra-dimensional area that allows ships to travel quickly between the stars via Æthereal currents; traditionally, this Æther is believed to be the breath of the Gods themselves. Most mariners liken the Panthalassa to the open oceans or rivers of a planet with currents, waves, and tides, but unlike sailing on the surface of an ocean, the Panthalassa has different strata that allow for different types of movement.

Travel in Panthalassa is usually achieved with what is called a Slipsail, made from a special material that allows it to capture and accelerate the Æther, taking advantage of the Ætheric nature of Slipspace. A ship traveling in the Panthalassa primarily uses this Slipsail. The Æther blows into the sail and pushes against it, causing the vessel to move. Without the sail a ship would have to rely either solely on its Sub-Light drives or the actual Slip current and move at the slower “real space” rate.

Slipspace is a realm of rolling Ætheric clouds and sweeping Æthereal tides, but many things exist in Slipspace beyond the sloshing sound of Ætheric “wind.”

Many who aren’t acquainted with the Panthalassa ask the same questions:

WHAT ARE SLIPSAILS?

When entering Slipspace, a ship fires large cables with small Ætheric force screen emitters. Once activated the screens light up with the charge of Ætheric energy and propel the ship forward. These sails are mere energy projections, and if the emitter is damaged it may no longer function properly. Ships without a Slipsail, or with a malfunctioning Slipsail, may travel on Slipspace drives alone; however, movement is decreased by half and maneuverability by 75%.

In combat, captains often target an enemy ship’s Slipsails to disable their ability to flee. However, Slipspace sail emitters are fairly small (one meter in diameter) and difficult to target with ship-board weapons. Most boarding parties will thus try to capture the engine room, bridge, and Slipspace sail projectors and arrays to quickly cripple the ship.

WHAT DOES THE PANTHALASSA LOOK LIKE?

The Panthalassa looks like a mass of dark-violet rolling clouds in an Æthereal planetary atmosphere. Every so often a crackle of lighting illuminates the area, but it is generally harmless (at least in the upper reaches of Slipspace). The “clouds” of Æther are in constant motion, moving in the direction of the current they happen to be in. The higher you are in Slipspace the more light there is to see (even though there is no actual sun) and the lower you go the more foreboding and darker it becomes. There is no sun to light the realm, and many scientists and scholars believe that the light comes from the starlight of real space above, in much the same way as real oceans are lit.

The Panthalassa is warm like a spring night, and is not a vacuum. A Hellene can stand outside unencumbered by a vacuum suit and breathe and behave normally on his ship (although some complain of a slightly musty odor and a heavy, humid feel in the air). Most cruise liners have open pool and recreation areas that are available for use when in Slipspace.

CAN YOU ENTER THE PANTHALASSA ON A PLANET?

Ætheric weapons (which are often fired planetside) and Slipspace drives work with the same basic technology, but on different scales. Ætheric weapons disrupt magnetic fields slightly as they inflict damage or shield a user from harm, and the gravity wave around the user is small and unnoticeable. However, a Slipspace engine creates tears in real space and causes a huge localized gravity distortion that can harm everything in the area including the ship and its occupants if it is fired while moored on a planet. Most ships do not activate their Slipspace drives until well outside the gravity well of planetary bodies, for fear of destroying themselves.

Ships that do activate their Slipspace engines on a planet do the Slipspace Drive rating x30 damage to everything within their Slipspace drive rating x 100 meters radius around the ship’s drive area. Only items protected by Ætheric shields will be protected from the damage (this does not include the ship, even if it is so shielded).

WHAT IS THE WEATHER LIKE?

The breezes that blow in the Panthalassa are warm but become colder the lower you go until the air is like a howling arctic wind, freezing exposed skin.

ARE THERE WHIRLPOOLS?

In the rarest instances captains have encountered whirlpools in the Panthalassa. The whirlpools are violent aberrations that spit fire, lightning, and poisonous gas out while sucking a ship in. Ships sucked in are thrown into real space in a random location in the universe. Captains have reported being thrown 20 to 30 parsecs off course but longer journeys are possible depending on the size of the whirlpool. Ship captains say that the journey lasts only a few seconds and is incredibly violent.

ARE THERE PLANETS?

Debris from old wrecks and ruined planetoids litter Slipspace and it is not uncommon to see a drifting island of rock as one travels. On some of these planetoids twisted plant life can be seen, and even animals are sighted on some of the planetoids in the upper reaches. Scholars believe these to be the remnants of planets sunk in the far past.

ARE THERE FLORA AND FAUNA?

The animals are generally nothing more than shades, and the trees and other plant life found there neither grow nor die, locked in an eternal limbo. Those marooned in Slipspace have tried to survive on these planetoids, but the fruit is bland and tasteless, and the animal flesh is ashy and bitter. Such food can sustain a person indefinitely, but only barely, and prolonged indulgence leaves the imbiber with a sunken, ashen complexion.

Some scholars believe that large planetoids exist in Slipspace far below, and that these are home to the Harpy and the Lamia. Scholars suggest that deep in the nether regions of the Panthalassa lies one such dark island named Thule, a place where the air is thick and cold and the light from above never shines.

CAVE OF THE ATHODITE

ABOUT ADVENTURES

Each adventure begins with a brief synopsis that lays out the Who, What, and Where of the scenario (at times more specifically than others), as well as a series of rumors and gossip — some of these rumors are true and some are false. This is followed by a three-part breakdown of major events, presenting a hook to pull players in, a series of three-act conflicts and resolutions, and then any suggested rewards. Finally, each adventure closes with notes about NPCs and foes, general commentary, and optional plot threads.

SYNOPSIS

When: Æ 2100

Who: Lamia, Phasma, Harpies

Where: A planetoid in the Panthalassa

What: For several days now, the players have been aboard the Triumphant Icarus, a ship bound for Sparta. As is always the case with interstellar journeys, the ship has been traveling through Slipspace. A few hours ago, picking up a distress call, the captain made the decision to descend into lower Strata to find its source. There, the ship unfortunately ran straight into a major Slipspace storm, and was forced to make an emergency landing on a planetoid — perhaps unsurprisingly, the planetoid appears to be a sort of ship graveyard, with many ships having wrecked on the surface previously, no doubt because of the same storm.

GOSSIP AND RUMORS:

- ☞ • Athodite is a legendary growth rumored to be found in caves on planetoids that drift deep in Slipspace.
- ☞ • Athodite is very valuable and rare; a single specimen can fetch many thousands of drachmas.
- ☞ • Athodite is beautiful, and is said to have healing properties. Some say that it has life-giving powers.
- ☞ • Athodite does give eternal life, but it is an eternal life of agony and pain as a tormented shade.
- ☞ • Athodite is the name of a beautiful woman, whose kiss will cure any ill — but erase memories.
- ☞ • Athodite does not and cannot exist, because flowers cannot grow in Slipspace.

ADVICE:

Keep the Heroes moving, and keep them aware of the fact that they are Heroes, and expected to take risks and be Heroic. If things seem to lag, have more Harpies attack them along the way to spice things up; if they have an easy time of it, add more creatures. Challenge them. They are Heroes, after all!

ACT I

Hook:

The Heroes debark from the Triumphant Icarus to stretch their legs — repairs will take a while. Looking around, they notice that the landscape of this planetoid is overturned in places, in particular around the ship, where black roots have become exposed. In almost all directions, nothing can be seen but barren landscape, along with more of the black roots, and occasional pieces of crashed ships. Aft of the ship, however, can be seen a row of low crags jutting from the ground; the ship flew in low over this crag coming in, narrowly avoiding the same fate as another ship, which slammed into the hills on the far side. The air is — as everywhere in Slipspace — thin and breathable, but strangely musty and humid.

Captain Graesonis emerges from the ship and sighs. No doubt, this is where the distress beacon had come from, though he can't tell where now — the ship's sensors are out. He also mentions that the repairs will take a while, and adds a further bit of bad news — the ship is in need of Promethium, the fuel that powers the engines. While the ship could certainly limp along after some repairs, it will take twice as long to get to Sparta, unless more Promethium is located. He suggests looking in the crashed ship in the nearby hills — his crew must remain here, but surely the Heroes will be willing to venture forth, being the Heroes that they are.

If asked, the Captain says that he knows nothing of the black roots, but mentions that they appear to lead back towards the hill. He will also mention that if the Heroes find a cave in the hill, they should be on the lookout for Athodite, which is found in caves and looks like a flower (other crewmembers and Heroes might have heard other things about Athodite — see above). While looking there for Promethium anyway, the Heroes might also wish to find some of this Athodite, if they can.

CONFLICT:

It takes about an hour to reach the hills, and when they are about halfway there, the players come across a particularly dense tangle of black roots, knotted together overhead in what seems to be some sort of artificial manner. Particularly perceptive Heroes might say that it looks nestlike, and a closer look will verify that the weaving is definitely not natural — Hellene skin has been tied to the roots in places, bits of cast-off armor and weaponry woven together with bone, sinew and rope, to create an obvious aerie for some creature. The most perceptive Heroes will notice what appear to be several Hellene faces stitched into the nest.

Unless the group is being quiet for some reason, it is at this point that the Harpies will attack (see description on following pages). The four Harpies have a definite taste for living flesh, and in particular that of Hellenes, and will focus their efforts on any Hellenes nearby. They are semi-intelligent, but driven to the sort of stupid rage that can only emerge from creatures who are near starvation. Their tactics are simple — divebomb and repeatedly attack, focusing their efforts on one Hero at a time, until all are dead or driven off. The Harpies will cease their attacks if they make a kill — thereafter flocking around the corpse to feast and flay its skin off, fluttering away thereafter if they are driven away — or if the entire party makes a run for the hills. When they grow within 100 meters of the cave they will find there (see below), the Harpies will give up the chase and return to their aerie.

Assuming all the Harpies are killed, Heroes who search the nest area will discover assorted weapons and armor (nothing more valuable than what they already carry) as well as several small, deep red plants on the ground below the nest. The plants have a sickly sweet smell, but if all the Harpy droppings are cleared away, the plant will smell better. If anyone tries to taste it, they will discover that it has a meaty, mushroom-like taste that is not at all unpleasant, and quite different from all other plant life normally found in Slipspace.

RESOLUTION:

Having either defeated the Harpies or run away (rather un-Heroically, losing 1 Glory each), the party will discover itself outside of a dark cave that runs straight into the hillside. The hills are rather steep, and climbing over them to get to the ship on the other side will likely prove difficult. The cave seems a better option, especially since the Heroes can see light at the end of the tunnel.

Assuming they enter the cave, go to Act II, A. If they skip the cave and try to climb, allow them to do so. When they are halfway up the side, the hillside will collapse, and they will find themselves in Act II regardless (albeit further along the tunnel – see Act II, B). If by some extraordinary chance they avoid falling, or think up some clever way to get over or around the impassable hills, do not railroad them – just put them in Act III.

ACT II

CONFLICT:

(A) The Heroes enter the tunnel, and just inside they encounter several desiccated corpses, buried up to their heads in loose soil. Some of the bodies are completely overgrown and covered with the roots, and more of the red plants. If exhumed and examined, the party will discover that a complex root network runs through the entire body of each corpse, with a large black taproot right where their heart would have been found.

The tunnel narrows as it goes along, although it slopes upward and light can definitely be seen at the far end, where it presumably comes out on the other side of the hill. Numerous corpses of former sailors can be found here, in the same condition as those seen near the cave mouth. Some appear to have died fighting; others seem to have set up camps here, with evidence of campfires if the Heroes look hard enough. Closer inspection reveals that the sailors have uniforms that predate the modern era, with some of them wearing tattered remnants of clothing worn centuries ago. Ships have been crashing on this planetoid for quite some time, it seems.

Assuming they press on, the Heroes enter a portion of the tunnel that widens out in all directions...

(B) The Heroes find themselves inside an obviously artificial cavern, which appears to have been dug from the soil long ago. Curious mineral formations cover the walls and ceiling, some of them resembling petrified flowers or creatures. Remnants of old Hellene ships brace the ceiling, and platforms underneath the soil below rattle and creak as the Heroes walk through the room. There are fewer corpses here; several lie in a corner, where

black roots have erupted from a gap in the paneling, leaving them filled with black roots and entirely desiccated. One other body hangs limply from atop a small platform built into one side of the room, approximately three meters above the floor. Some of the black roots appear to have tried to reach the corpse, but have been unsuccessful. The corpse appears quite old.

If the players approach the pillar, the Phasma of the sailor whose corpse it is will appear (see description on following pages). If the players attack him, or attempt to defile or rummage through any of the bodies, he will attack in return. If spoken to, he will reveal that he was aboard a ship that crashed here a long time ago, and that he and some of the survivors attempted to build a sanctuary here; with ample food supplies, they could have lasted for months, and having found surprisingly fertile soil and a source of fresh water – both unheard of in Slipspace – they were convinced they could make a go at living here, until they were rescued.

Unfortunately, their digging disturbed the black root, which made short work of most of the crew. He, the lone survivor, opted to clamber up on a platform, where he died slowly and painfully of thirst and starvation. The roots can move, but not quickly, and as long as one keeps moving, they can avoid being exsanguinated. He recommends avoiding sleep.

He has been here so long that he has forgotten his name, and the name of his ship, and exactly what year it was that he arrived here. He does however remember that he had a daughter, and he will reveal the location of a locket that he wishes to give to her, if she still lives. The locket can be found in a corner of the room, inside a steel lockbox, along with 150 drachma, a small knife, a large chunk of stone (acting as a sort of paperweight for other items in the box), some journal entries on crumbling paper (impossible to read) and an old map (which would place the ship's launch at least four centuries ago). If confronted with this news, the Phasma will remain impassive; once the lockbox is found, his only concern is that the Heroes do what they can to give him a decent Hellene burial, somewhere other than on this foul planetoid. This will obviously require getting his body down from the pillar in some fashion.

RESOLUTION:

Assuming that they speak with the Phasma, and manage to get his lockbox and his body from the pillar, the Phasma will thank the Heroes, and warn them that his ship – which crashed on the other side of the hill – is overrun with the black root, as well as some other strange creatures; if Harpies are described to him, he will say that they might indeed be Harpies, but he is not sure. He will also indicate that his ship likely has some Promethium left. In fact, he believes that the heat from the engines might very well be keeping the strange black rooted plant alive. If asked, the Phasma does not know what Athodite is, and cannot say if the red plants or their black roots are related to it. He does confirm that the black roots steal blood from their victims, pumping it back towards the central bud of the flower, which is probably inside the engines of the ship, where it is warmest.

If attacked, the Phasma will fight until killed, and the Heroes will be on their own.

ACT III

CONFLICT:

On the far side of the ridge, at the narrow end of the tunnel, is a transport ship, having plowed a deep, miles-long furrow into the ground when it crashed here, nose and bridge flattened and crumpled against the hillside. Thick black roots snake along all sides of the ship and through its halls, with numerous blood-red flowers blooming here and there. There is nothing of value within or around the ship, everything having been used up long ago.

Digging into the shattered, flattened remnants of the bridge is difficult but possible. If they manage it, the Heroes will discover – perhaps unsurprisingly – that the distress beacon is indeed still active, although only sporadically. It is easily shut off or destroyed by anyone with some knowledge of Slipspace or ship travel. Promethium (assuming they remembered to look for it) will be found in the ship's engine room, at the back.

The corridors of the ship are passable, but overgrown with the thick black roots and red flowers. As the Heroes progress past them and reach the engine room, they will suddenly see the roots shift, and will psychically hear screams of pain and terror as fluid flows anew through the roots. Perceptive Heroes will realize that these screams are coming from the crew of the Triumphant Icarus. No doubt the roots have begun to burrow into the ship (or at least to pick off survivors). Inside the engine room is a thick black root, leading directly to a giant blood-red blossom dripping with fresh blood, which runs in rivulets down its petals. Its root system has wrapped around the engine, which is providing an immense amount of warmth and moisture, which has caused the plant to flourish.

To get the Promethium, the Heroes must destroy the plant. This seems simple enough – the plant does not defend itself, and it can be gradually hacked to pieces. However, as they slice through, blood spatters and drips everywhere – the blood of their crew. Horror! But this is the least horrible thing the Heroes will have to face. For once they start cutting, they will hear a terrible keening wail, as if a dozen small children were crying off-key. And then, in a frenzy, they will see a dozen Lamia skittering across the ceiling, attracted by the smell of blood (see description on following pages).

The Lamia will attack the Heroes immediately, using a swarming tactic where many of them attack a single target at once – they do not pair off, one-on-one. They will focus efforts on whoever is the bloodiest (from battle, or hacking away at the black root), and will not stop until every last one of them is dead. Throughout the battle, the black rooted plant will flail and thrash, not attacking but simply reacting to overstimulation. It is complete chaos.

RESOLUTION:

When (if) the Heroes kill the Lamia and hack the plant to bits, they will be able to safely harvest the remaining Promethium. Once taken, the engines will cool down and – presumably – the plant will die a quick death, withering and graying like all other plants in Slipspace. If the plant is killed quickly (GM discretion), the Heroes will return to their ship to discover that only a few stray crew members were killed, and that the captain was able to fight off the roots well enough. If the Heroes seem to dawdle, or try not to kill the plant for some reason, they will return to find the crew dead, and the ship missing. A few minutes

later, they will see the ship swoop in low and land once again – the captain will have taken off to look for them, realizing that it is unsafe to roost here any longer.

In either case, the Promethium can be quickly added to the ship's stocks (even en route), and the Heroes and the Triumphant Icarus can leave the hellish planet behind.

If they present the captain with any of the black root or red plants, or describe it more fully, the captain will say that it is not Athodite. Athodite is a mineral formation that looks like a flower, but it is not a flower itself. If the Heroes have the lockbox, they will discover that the rock inside – which is vaguely flower-shaped – is in fact a chunk of Athodite.

REWARDS:

Glory: 10

Metousia: 5

Experience Points: 10

GM INFORMATION

SKILL RATINGS FOR CREATURES

In HELLAS, creatures use a simplified system for determining their abilities. In place of the assortment of Skills that PCs and NPCs possess, creatures are rated according to the overall Ability Level, which is used as an Omni Table modifier for almost every situation. Additionally, Constitution Ratings have already been added to Hit Point totals, and Strength Ratings have been factored into Damage Ratings. Creatures do not have Combat Ratings or Dynamism Ratings, since all fighting or Dynamism abilities are based on Ability Level.

WEAKNESS

Some adversaries have noted weaknesses. These can be determined by the Heroes if they make a Lore roll. The DoD of knowing the information is listed as a number in parentheses.

NPCs:

CAPTAIN GRAESONIS

INT	+0	PER	+0
WILL	+0	CHA	+0
STR	+0	DEX	+0
CON	+0	SPD	+0

Ability Level: 2-7

Attacks/Damage: Per weapon employed

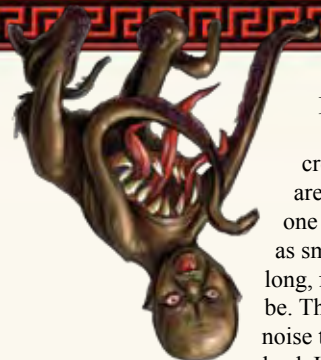
Armor: None

Hit Points: 20

Hero Points: 1

Skills of Note: Navigation+10, Pilot +10

Equipment: Dagger 5 DR, Torch Pistol 10 DR



LAMIA

Lamia are a race of blood-drinking, four-limbed creatures found in the nether regions of Slipspace, where they are bred and herded by Atlanteans in numbers ranging from one to several dozen per cluster. Approximately the same size as small cats, they resemble nothing so much as infant girls with long, fleshy-colored tentacles where their limbs would normally be. Their distorted faces are capable only of a keening wail, a noise they make from the instant they spot a foe until that foe is dead. Upon spotting a target, they will converge in numbers and

attack as one, clambering up onto their foe, latching on with the suckers on their tentacles, and biting with the large mouth that runs down the center of their chest, lapping up blood with multiple tongues. They keened and whine as they attack and latch on and bite with the mouth that runs down the center of their chest.

The lamia are quick and difficult to hit, and are able to climb walls and other surfaces. They have been known to enter ships and climb into the ventilation systems or other conduits, where they will hide and sleep until they are awakened by noise or hunger.

INT	+0	PER	+0
WILL	+4	CHA	-6
STR	+0	DEX	+6
CON	-3	SPD	+8

Ability Level: 2-8

Attacks/Damage: Rending bite 5DR

Armor: None

Hit Points: 16

Hero Points: 0

Special Abilities

Keening Cry: The cry of a lamia will drive men mad. Lamia can yell and affect everyone in the area. If successful in an opposed WIL roll, the opponent suffers a penalty of -2 from all actions. This is an automatic action and does not suffer a multi-action penalty

Fast Reaction: The lamia can react quickly. It may add a +2 bonus to any initiative

Festering Wound: The bite of the lamia will fester and rot if not seen to with proper medical care. Wounds need twice as much healing as a normal wound

Wall Climbing: The lamia can stick to almost any solid surface and moves at a normal rate, even when climbing straight up or upside-down

Weakness: (-3) Although lamia make a considerable amount of noise in combat they themselves hate loud noises. If they encounter loud noises the lamia must make a WIL roll versus the noisemaker's intimidation skill. If they fail the roll they lose an action each round and suffer a multi-action penalty because of the distraction

Glory 5

PHASMA

These are otherworldly spirits encountered in Slipspace when travelers stray too deep into the Æther. The phasma are believed to be the spirits of the lost who sailed too long or too deep into the swirling depths of the Panthalassa. Some phasma are benign and helpful but most want nothing more than to destroy anything living. Although most phasma are encountered in Slipspace some stow away aboard a passing ship and find their way into the normal space.

INT	+1	PER	+2
WILL	+4	CHA	+0
STR	+1	DEX	+0
CON	+0	SPD	+1

Ability Level: 5-20

Attacks/Damage: Drain DR 7 + Ability Level

Armor: None

Hit Points: 45

Hero Points: 1-10

Special Abilities

Drain: The phasma's touch drains DR7+ Ability level from any successful attack. Normal armor does not affect the attack and Æther shields only protect for half.

Panthalassa Freedom: The phasma travel in Slipspace at incredible speeds flying at SPD +20

Deathly Chill: The phasma emit a 2m radius of chilling cold around body. Those in the radius will feel the cold even if properly protected. The chill will reduce all dice actions by ability level if the Hero does not make a CON roll difficulty -3

Ghost Form: The phasma may become intangible and move through solid objects. The phasma may walk along any surface, allowing them to walk up walls and onto ceilings.

While in this form the phasma is immune to normal attacks except from Æther weapons and Dynamism powers. The phasma may only use the ghost form 4 times a day

Life Sense: A phasma may see the life force of a living being even through walls no thicker than half a meter

Prophecy: Non-aggressive phasma may tell a living being an aspect of his future. The phasma only asks for a sacrifice of blood in return for its services. If asked, the phasma will tell Heroes an aspect of their destiny and how to achieve it

Weakness: (-4) Natural wood fires or the fire created from pitch. The fire will do 20 DR if touched against the body of a phasma even if they are in ghost form

Glory 200

HARPY

The harpies were allies of the Atlanteans during the first Atlantean war. When the war ended, the harpies fled into the void of the Panthalassa looking for their masters' world.

The harpies have made the turbulent void of Slipspace their home, living among craggy rocks and subsisting on the wild Æther found in the fast-moving realm. Their bodies seem naturally adapted for a life in this inter-dimensional domain—they are short and stocky, with sturdy clawed legs for clutching debris, long humanoid arms with five-fingered hands for using tools and weapons, and feathery wings that they adorn with small bones and other trinkets from fallen foes.

Harpies live in clutches of between 5 and 20, each led by a dominant female. When threatened or hungry they will attack without fear, utilizing primitive but effective tactics based upon the concept of separating their foes from one another, surrounding them individually, and then swarming the weakest individuals. They are, however, intelligent creatures, and when led by an Erinyes or other Atlantean they are capable of more-advanced tactics.

Harpies have since been the bane of travelers in Slipspace and have rejoined their masters now that the Atlanteans have returned.

INT	+0	PER	+0
WILL	+4	CHA	-6
STR	+0	DEX	+6
CON	-3	SPD	+10(Fly) / +3

Ability Level: 2–10

Attacks/Damage: Per weapon employed, Claws DR5

Armor: As per Armor worn

Hit Points: 18

Hero Points: 2

Special Abilities

Claws: 5 DR

Dive Bomb: The Harpy may use a charging attack doing damage as per the charging rules

Glory 5

Equipment: War Club 10 DR or Javelin 8 DR, Net or Whip 4 DR



HELLAS

WRITTEN BY

MICHAEL L. FIEGEL

JERRY D. GRAYSON

**ADDITIONAL WRITING, CONCEPT AND
IDEAS BY**

Colin "Omni Oracle" Chapman

ADVENTURE WRITING BY

Michael L. Fiegel

EDITING

Jennifer Schoonover

ART

Nathan Rosario, Chris Waller, Bradley Bleeker, Renee Grayson,
Jerry D. Grayson, Daniel Garcia, Clea Grayson, Joe Slucher

LAYOUT

Michael L. Fiegel

INSPIRATION

Mr.T, Ice Pirates, Flash Gordon, and Galaxina

HELLAS: WORLDS OF SUN AND STONE

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