FALLING STARS

Roleplaying & Tactical Game System

Data Burst: NPC Codex

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ANTAGONISTS

*«I believe you have a word for them in your language... Legion, and they **are** many»*

-Psy'Rillion Observer to UPCN Captain

FERALS

The Ferals are what remains of the crew of a long-lost generation ship, sent out into the stars in hopes of finding fertile new worlds to colonize. An accident aboard the ship caused a radiation leak to flood the ship with mutating energy that the crew had no choice but to endure. Over an impossibly short period of time, they changed into near-animals, accustomed to living and hunting in total darkness, and surviving upon the flesh of those not so far gone as themselves.

This new breed of creatures lives in a pack social structure with one Alpha Leader that drives the pack by issuing orders to the Pack Alphas, who then make the less-powerful Betas carry out the directives.

Ferals have a simple but effective language of their own, consisting mostly of grunts, growls, and squeals.

Feral Betas cannot be communicated with telepathically, and Alphas (and Alpha Leaders) will only ever transmit thoughts about dominance, demonstration of strength, and acquisition of power and food for themselves, and their pack.

Each pack consists of one Alpha Leader plus one Alpha for every ten Betas.

FERAL BETA BATTLE TACTICS AND INFORMATION:

Usually preferring surprise attacks, the Feral Betas attempt to jump on their targets and claw and bite them to death. They will use their Berserk Attack to immediately engage an enemy.

They try to avoid any sources of light if possible, but they are not hurt by it, nor does it reduce their efficacy at fighting. If a player successfully breaks free of an Entangling Feral Beta, or if the Feral Beta falls to half health, they immediately try to retreat.

However, if hunting in a group of 5 or more, all Feral Betas will fight until at least half their number is dead, then use the previous rules applied to each individual as to when they flee.

Feral Beta

Attributes

INT	APT	PER	STR	AGI	APP
6 (-1)	11 (0)	6 (-1)	16 (+1)	21 (+2)	6 (-1)

Physical Health: 30
Mental Health: 10

Soak: 0
Action Points: 4

Bonuses:

- Resist Mental: 0.
- Resist Physical: 0.
- Initiative: 1.
- Strike: 2.
- Guard: 1.
- Dodge: 3.
- Intercept: 1.

Weapons/Equipment:

- Claws: 12 Physical Damage.
- Bite: 15 Physical Damage.

Skills/Abilities:

- **Increased Metabolic Rate.**
- **EMF Sense.**
- **Berserk Attack**: The Feral Beta may perform the combat technique Entangle at no action point cost, and, if successful, may then immediately make two additional attacks at a regular cost of action points. Soak applies to both of these additional attacks. This attack may be not used against already Entangled targets.
- **Prowl** at Rank 2
- **Perception** at Rank 1

FERAL ALPHA LEADER BATTLE TACTICS AND INFORMATION

The Feral Alpha Leader is a beast. His initial tactic is to try and hit anything and everything with his I-Beam. The I-Beam's length means he doesn't have to be adjacent to people, but he also tries to use his Blunt Weapon Mastery Rank 2 attack (hitting everything within 5 feet/1.5 meters) as often as possible. The leader will be aggressive with his attacks, and will target whoever attacked him most recently, or whoever is closest. The leader will not attempt to use cover of any kind, and will not attempt any sneaking or stealth tactics.

Feral Alpha Leader

Attributes

INT	APT	PER	STR	AGI	APP
11 (0)	11 (0)	8 (-1)	30 (+3)	26 (+3)	6 (-1)

Physical Health: 100
Mental Health: 30

Soak: 15
Action Points: 7

Bonuses:

- Resist Mental: 0.
- Resist Physical: 1.
- Initiative: 1.
- Strike: 2.
- Guard: 3.
- Dodge: 3.
- Intercept: 1.

Weapons/Equipment:

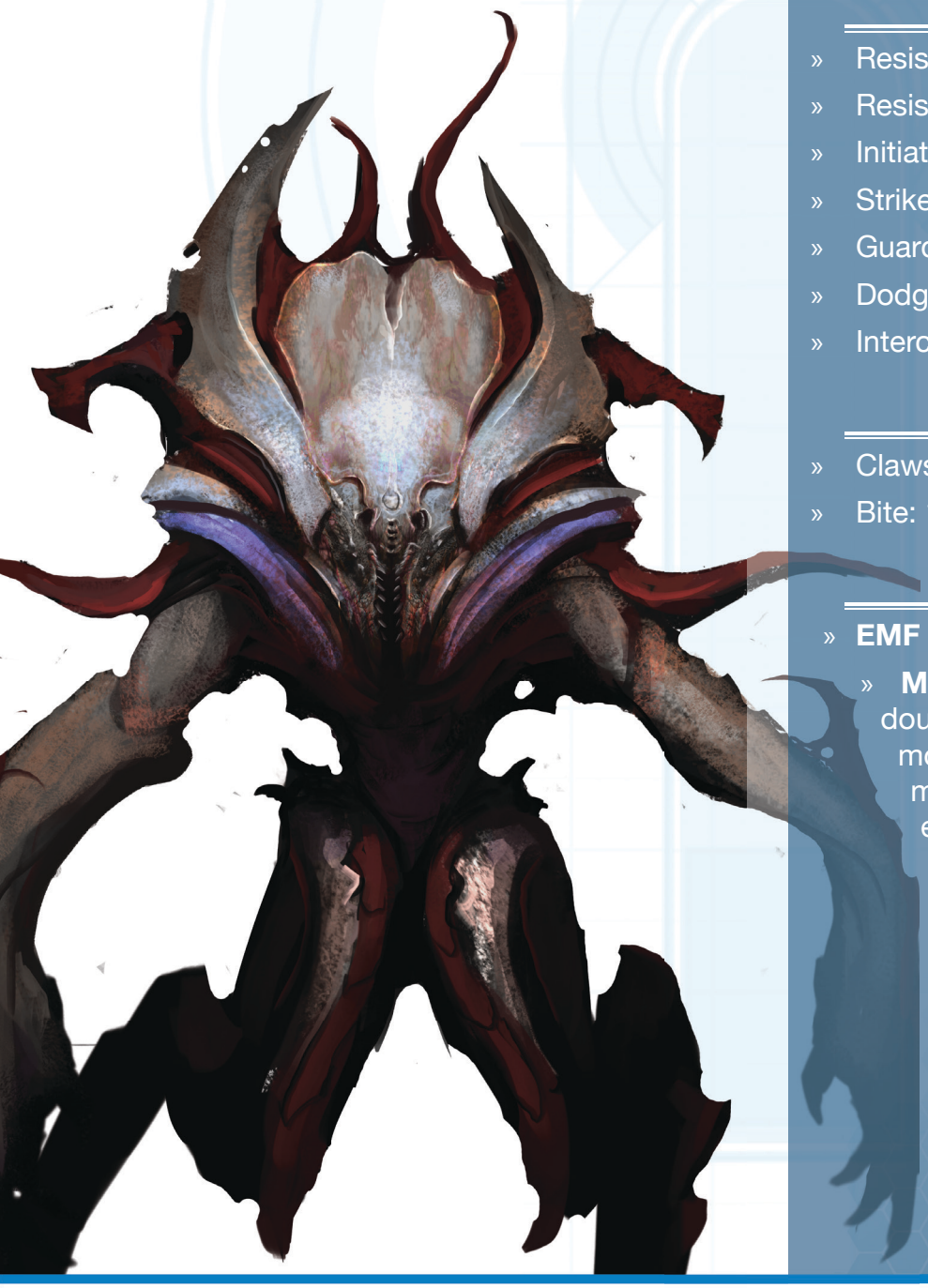
- **I-Beam:** 30 Physical Damage, Range: 10 feet.
- **Punch:** 15 Physical Damage, Melee Range.
- **Bite:** 15 Physical Damage, Melee Range.

Skills/Abilities:

- **Increased Metabolic Rate.**
- **EMF Sense.**
- **Blunt Weapon Mastery** at Rank 3.
- **Mutated Regeneration:** By spending all of its Action Points (must be the first action it takes in the Round) the Feral Alpha leader may gain an additional 10 Soak and regains 10 Physical Health per Turn until the end of the Round. It can take no other actions while it is regenerating.

FERAL ALPHA BATTLE TACTICS AND INFORMATION:

The Feral Alphas will attack whichever target the leader is not attacking, instead trying to acquire their own individual prey. They will use their Mutated Rage Ability as their next action after the first time they take any damage. The regular Alphas may attempt to perform a sneak attack, and get behind characters, but only if the opportunity presents itself, they do not actively seek out this positioning.



Feral Alpha

Attributes

INT	APT	PER	STR	AGI	APP
8 (-1)	11 (0)	8 (-1)	21 (+2)	21 (+2)	6 (-1)

Physical Health: 60
Mental Health: 10

Soak: 15
Action Points: 4

Bonuses:

- Resist Mental: 0.
- Resist Physical: 1.
- Initiative: 1.
- Strike: 2.
- Guard: 1.
- Dodge: 2.
- Intercept: 1.

Weapons/Equipment:

- Claws: 15 Physical Damage.
- Bite: 15 Physical Damage.

Skills/Abilities:

- **EMF Sense.**
- **Mutated Rage:** Once per Encounter, double the speed the Feral Alpha can move. When using this ability, all melee Damage is doubled until the end of the Round. At the end of the Round in which a Feral Alpha used this ability, it deals 10 Armor Piercing Damage to itself (Soak does not apply to this damage).

AIS AND AUTOMATED DEFENSES

Automated defenses are a very real and ever-present threat in the galaxy. There is far too much out there in the way of valuables, be it information, objects, people, or something else, for live people to keep watch on it all. Because of this, automated systems have become commonplace and tend to react with very little in the way of discretion. These systems are programmed to identify allies by a combination of complex facial, walking gait, and other visual recognition, as well as RFID scanners with database connections. Those that meet their criteria for 'friend' do not get shot at, while those that don't, are usually shot without warning.

Because of this, areas protected by turrets are typically well marked so that innocents do not wander into their protected areas, but this is by no means a legal mandate. The only real governance concerning these systems is that they are never employed in areas that might be structurally, or environmentally compromised by their operation.

Being computer controlled, however, means that turrets are hackable, either by direct physical interface (Computer Hacking Target usually in the area of 20, but GM's may use their discretion), or via a connected Tech-Net Terminal (Computer Hacking Target usually in the area of 25, again, GM discretion is advised).

SIMPLE AI BATTLE TACTICS AND INFORMATION:

Artificial Intelligences are everywhere. In environmental computers, security systems, even coffee makers. However, most are tasked with very specific areas of operation and do not interact with, or give trouble to hackers entering their domains.

However, some have been purposefully tasked with duties to look for just such incursions, and when they find people trying to enter or control their protected systems, they respond and actively work to try and stop the interlopers.

Simple AI

Attributes

INT	APT	PER	STR	AGI	APP
25 (2)	25 (2)	5 (-1)	N/A	N/A	N/A

Physical Health: N/A
Mental Health: 75

Soak: 5
Action Points: 2

Bonuses:

» Initiative: 3.

Programs

» **Lockout at Rank 2**

» (Forces target to pass a Hacking skill check against a Target 20 to use their own computer, Cost: 10)

» **Rotating Encryption at Rank 2**

» Accessing data/systems on target computer requires a Hacking roll against a target of 17. Cost: 10)

» **Signal Tracer at Rank 2**

» (Tracks hacker to physical location on a Hacking roll of 21 or better. Takes 3 Rounds after successful roll. Cost: 10)

Skills/Abilities:

» **Persuasion at Rank 3**

» **Computer Operation at Rank 3**

» **Computer Hacking at Rank 2**

TURRETS BATTLE TACTICS AND INFORMATION:

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Machine-Gun Turrets

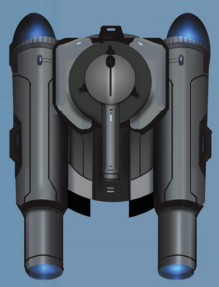
- Physical Health: 40.
- Soak: 2.
- Action Points: 3.
- Strike: +2.
- Damage: 25 Physical Damage per burst.
- Payload: Essentially unlimited.

Machine-Gun Turrets fire bursts at the cost of 1 Action Point.

Machine-Gun Turrets can swivel 45 degrees left, right, up, and down, allowing them to cover a narrow area in front of them and not much else.

Plasma Turrets

- Physical Health: 35.
- Soak: 5.
- Action Points: 2.
- Strike: +2.
- Damage: 30 Physical Damage per burst.
- Payload: Essentially unlimited.



Plasma Turrets can swivel 45 degrees left, right, up, and down, allowing them to cover a narrow area in front of them and not much else.

PRIVATEERS

There have always been those who would rather prey upon others for their sustenance, and the enlightened future is no exception. As a result, pirates are a very real threat in the galaxy. Most pirate organizations consist of nothing more than a ship with a few like-minded individuals aboard, all willing to do dastardly deeds to support their own hedonistic lifestyles. These privateer vessels tend to roam the outskirts of human space, looking for smaller ships to prey upon. Independent shippers, colonists, and survey vessels are the most likely targets for these groups as they tend to avoid larger or better-protected vessels. They don't want to work too hard for their spoils, after all.

Sometimes, however, there are those of higher ambition, who will build entire fleets of vessels and become leaders of entire pirate nations, directing coordinated excursions into heavily defended shipping lanes to secure larger, more valuable prizes.

Privateer (Sub-Machine-gun)

Attributes

INT	APT	PER	STR	AGI	APP
16 (+1)	15 (0)	11 (0)	11 (0)	11 (0)	11 (0)

Physical Health: 33
Mental Health: 44

Soak: 2
Action Points: 3

Bonuses:

- Resist Mental: 0.
- Resist Physical: 0.
- Initiative: 0.
- Strike: 0.
- Guard: 0.
- Dodge: 0.
- Intercept: 0.

Weapons/Equipment:

- **10 mm handgun** (Range: 100 ft. Damage: 10 Physical Damage, Payload: 15)
- **10 mm Assault Rifle** (Range: 250 ft. Damage: 10/round or 25/burst Physical Damage, Payload: 50 rounds or 5 bursts)

Skills/Abilities:

- **Perception at Rank 1**

Privateer Hacker (Lockout)

Attributes

INT	APT	PER	STR	AGI	APP
16 (+1)	15 (0)	11 (0)	11 (0)	11 (0)	11 (0)

Physical Health: 33
Mental Health: 44

Soak: 2
Action Points: 3

Bonuses:

- Resist Mental: 0.
- Resist Physical: 0.
- Initiative: 0.
- Strike: 0.
- Guard: 0.
- Dodge: 0.
- Intercept: 0.

Programs

- **Lockout at Rank1** (Forces target to pass a Hacking skill check against a Target 16 to use their own computer, Cost: 10)

Skills/Abilities:

- **Perception at Rank 1**
- **Computer Operation at Rank 3**
- **Computer Hacking at Rank 3**

PRIVATEER BATTLE TACTICS AND INFORMATION:

Privateers tend to work in roughly-coordinated groups with individuals tending to lookout for themselves before any of their companions. They will generally support and augment one another's capabilities in a fight, but only when the battle is truly going their way. The moment the tide turns against them, or might possibly turn against them, these brigands will start thinking of nobody but themselves, looking for ways out, throwing one another in front of their enemies, and trying to locate any loose loot or valuables they can find while they make a hasty retreat. There is little to no honor amongst these pirates, with the only true rule they all adhere to being that they never take more than their share once the booty is returned to their ship and tallied up. Of course, they may try to hide some booty so it isn't counted, but once it is counted they all abide by the split.

UPCN PERSONNEL

The standard, enlisted UPCN crewmen are more or less average Joes who have signed up with the navy to explore the galaxy, help people, learn new skills, see the frontier, or any number of other reasons. The one thing they all have in common, is their training, which tends to be thorough and include much more in the way of tactical thinking, situational awareness, and emergency response.

UPCN crewmen will flee when appropriate, but they are more likely to hold out to the last possible moment, waiting for help to arrive, before doing so. They work well in coordinated groups, cover one another, and respond instantly to changes in the situation, especially when the voice of a commanding officer gives new orders.

UPCN PERSONNEL BATTLE TACTICS AND INFORMATION

UPCN personnel work like a well-honed machine in the field of combat and the face of adversity. Their training equips them to deal with the strange, unusual, and extremely dangerous as a matter of course. UPCN personnel respond instantly to orders from higher ranking officers, coordinate fire efficiently, and cover one another's movements, creating overlapping fields of fire and using cover with efficiency.

UPCN soldiers fight until the very edge, fleeing only if they are in eminent danger of death, unless innocents are on the line, in which case they will willingly lay down their lives to protect those that cannot protect themselves. They will not, however, leave their own in harm's way under any but the most extenuating of circumstances.

UPCN Ship's Crewmen (Pistol)

Attributes

INT	APT	PER	STR	AGI	APP
15 (0)	13 (0)	11 (0)	11 (0)	16 (+1)	11 (0)

Physical Health: 38
Mental Health: 39

Soak: 5
Action Points: 4

Bonuses:

- Resist Mental: 0.
- Resist Physical: 0.
- Initiative: 0.
- Strike: 3.
- Guard: 3.
- Dodge: 3.
- Intercept: 3.

Weapons/Equipment

- **10 mm handgun** (Range: 100 ft. Damage: 10 Physical Damage, Payload: 15)

Skills/Abilities:

- **Perception at Rank 2**
- **Combat Proficiency: Hand to Hand at Rank 2**

UPCN Ship's Captain

Attributes

INT	APT	PER	STR	AGI	APP
31 (+4)	26 (+3)	21 (+2)	11 (0)	13 (0)	11 (0)

Physical Health: 47
Mental Health: 88

Soak: 1
Action Points: 6

Bonuses:

- Resist Mental: 3.
- Resist Physical: 0.
- Initiative: 5.
- Strike: 8 (Pistol), 7 (Hand to Hand).
- Guard: 6.
- Dodge: 6.
- Intercept: 6.

Weapons/Equipment

- **2x UPAS-EM03 Auto-Pistol** (Range: 100', Payload: 20, Damage: 13 (Single), 18 (Burst))

Skills/Abilities:

- **Language: Standard at Native**
- **Language: Psy'Ryllion at Rank 4**
- **Computer Operation at Rank 4**
- **Pilot: Terrestrial at Rank 4**
- **Pilot: Spacecraft at Rank 4**
- **Combat Proficiency and Mastery: Pistol at Rank 5 (Draw 2 pistols for no Action Points, 2 Pistols one target no penalty, can 'cleave to another target if she kills/ disables the current one, double range with bonuses)**
- **Combat Proficiency: Hand to Hand at Rank 4**
- **Combat Proficiency: Defense at Rank 3**
- **Perception at Rank 5**

UPCN Executive Officer

Attributes

INT	APT	PER	STR	AGI	APP
26 (+3)	31 (+4)	11 (0)	21 (+2)	21 (+2)	18 (+1)

Physical Health: 75
Mental Health: 80

Soak: 3
Action Points: 5

Bonuses:

- Resist Mental: 2.
- Resist Physical: 1.
- Initiative: 3.
- Strike: 7 (Pistol), 6 (Hand to Hand).
- Guard: 6.
- Dodge: 6.
- Intercept: 6.

Weapons/Equipment

- **UPAS-EM03 Auto-Pistol** (Range: 100', Payload: 20, Damage: 14 (Single), 19 (Burst)

Skills/Abilities:

- **Language: Standard at Native**
- **Language: Psy'Ryllion at Rank 1**
- **Computer Operation at Rank 3**
- **Pilot: Spacecraft at Rank 3**
- **Combat Proficiency: Pistol at Rank 3**
- **Combat Proficiency: Hand to Hand at Rank 2**
- **Combat Proficiency: Defense at Rank 2**
- **Perception at Rank 3**

PSY'RILLIONS

Psy'Ryllions are enigmatic at best, and while they all appear to be of similar mind in regard to their outlook on the universe, they are all individuals with their own outlooks, designs, and goals. Most will try to avoid conflict when possible, but will not hesitate to use violence when the situation calls for it.

That said, there are some 'bad eggs' in any population and it is always possible that players will run across just that. GM's use discretion here, since it is more likely that any Psy'Ryllion antagonists are operating with knowledge and designs well outside player character understanding, rather than out of malice. The difference may be trivial to players, but it can also make for much more interesting plot threads.

Most Psy'Ryllions will not be found without at least light Psy'Ryllion armor and a sidearm, while many that travel extensively will have medium armor and a carbine, in addition to their sidearm.

Psy'Rillion Officer

Attributes

INT	APT	PER	STR	AGI	APP
35 (+4)	31 (+3)	11 (0)	26 (+3)	36 (+4)	16 (+1)

Physical Health: 78
Mental Health: 77

Soak: 10
Action Points: 6

Bonuses:

- Resist Mental: 3.
- Resist Physical: 3.
- Initiative: 3.
- Strike: 8 Ranged.
- Guard: 6.
- Dodge: 6.
- Intercept: 6.

Weapons/Equipment

- **Psy'Ryllion Sidearm** (Range: 150 ft. Damage: 15 Physical Damage, Payload: 40)
- **Psy'Ryllion Battle Rifle** (Range: 200 ft. Damage: 15 Physical Damage per single shot, 30 per burst)
- **Psy'Ryllion Heavy Grenades (2)** (Range: 45 ft. with 10 ft. Blast Radius Damage: 25 Physical Damage)

Skills/Abilities:

- **Language: Psy'Ryllion at Native**
- **Language: Standard at Rank 5**
- **Computer Operation at Rank 4**
- **Pilot: Terrestrial at Rank 4**
- **Pilot: Spacecraft at Rank 2**
- **Combat Proficiency: Pistol at Rank 4**
- **Combat Proficiency: Rifle at Rank 3**
- **Combat Proficiency: Hand to Hand at Rank 3**
- **Combat Proficiency: Defense at Rank 3**
- **Combat Mastery: Unified Hand at Rank 2** (Hammer Fist: causes the target to be Stunned. Cost: 2 Action Points, Elbow: Imposes a penalty of -2 to Strike on the target's next attack. Cost: 2 Action Points)
- **Telekinesis at Rank 5** (Can move 750 pounds up to 75 feet away. Does 14 Physical Damage per telekinetic strike at the cost of 1 Mental Health per strike.)

Psy'Rillion Shipmen

Attributes

INT	APT	PER	STR	AGI	APP
16 (+1)	16 (+1)	11 (0)	16 (+1)	16 (+1)	11 (0)

Physical Health: 55
Mental Health: 50

Soak: 5
Action Points: 4

Bonuses:

- Resist Mental: 1.
- Resist Physical: 1.
- Initiative: 1.
- Strike: 1 (3 with pistol).
- Guard: 2.
- Dodge: 2.
- Intercept: 2.

Weapons/Equipment

- **Psy'Ryllion Sidearm** (Range: 150 ft. Damage: 10 Physical Damage, Payload: 40)

Skills/Abilities:

- **Perception at Rank 2**
- **Combat Proficiency: Pistol at Rank 2**
- **Combat Proficiency: Defense Rank 1**
- **Telekinesis at Rank 1** (Range 60 ft. Damage 10 Physical Health, can manipulate 50 pounds)

Psy'Rillion Guard (Carbine)

Attributes

INT	APT	PER	STR	AGI	APP
16 (+1)	16 (+1)	11 (0)	21 (+2)	21 (+2)	11 (0)

Physical Health: 75
Mental Health: 50

Soak: 5
Action Points: 4

Bonuses:

- Resist Mental: 1.
- Resist Physical: 2.
- Initiative: 1.
- Strike: 2 (5 with pistol and carbine).
- Guard: 4.
- Dodge: 4.
- Intercept: 4.

Weapons/Equipment

- **Psy'Ryllion Sidearm** (Range: 150 ft. Damage: 10 Physical Damage, Payload: 40)
- **Psy'Ryllion Carbine** (Range 200 ft. Damage: 10 Physical Damage per shot, 20 per burst. Payload: 60 single, 20 bursts)

Skills/Abilities:

- **Perception at Rank 2**
- **Combat Proficiency: Pistol at Rank 2**
- **Combat Proficiency: Rifle at Rank 2**
- **Combat Proficiency: Defense Rank 2**
- **Telekinesis at Rank 2** (Range 70 ft. Damage 10 Physical Health, can manipulate 75 pounds)
- **Telekinetic Barrier at Rank 1** (5 foot hemisphere with Soak: 1 and Physical Health: 20, Cost: 10, Duration: 1 Round or until dismissed/destroyed)

PSY'RILLION BATTLE TACTICS AND INFORMATION:

Psy'Ryllions approach combat as they do all other things in life, with the application of cold, calculated intent. These aliens follow the orders of their officers without question in the field of battle and if they are ordered to die for whatever cause is under contestation, they will do so, knowing that their lives will make a difference for their people. Anything less would be illogical, and that is not the Psy'Ryllion way.

Psy'Ryllions will cover one another and advance up the battlefield with ruthless efficiency, using psychic powers and technology as levers with which to unseat their enemies and strike fear into their hearts. While they themselves are not prone to emotional outbursts or loss of control, they fully understand that other species are not always in such control of themselves and will use that knowledge to their advantage.

They often use tactics designed to invoke fear, panic, and chaos with the single intent of reducing opposition to nothing more than disorganized chaos. Similarly however, they are not given over to the sorts of emotions that lead to a need for vengeance, or victory at any cost.

If it becomes obvious that their objective cannot be attained with the resources they have in the field, their leadership will order an organized retreat and they will reorganize, collect reinforcements, develop a new plan, and attempt to take their objective again. Likewise, they will not pursue adversaries who are not between them and their objective, unless they actively try to prevent the achievement of said objective. Nor will they chase down those who have wronged them in search of revenge or 'balance'.

Psy'ryllions do not seek balance, or justice, or any other such poetic nonsense. They merely seek to accomplish their ends and will not abide others opposing their way with violence

PRIVATE CONTRACTORS

As with any society, there are those who answer the call to protect, even if they don't feel the best way to do so is by joining the military or corporate structure. When average people and things need protecting, it is average people with average lives who more often than not answer the call. These individuals are usually employed by small businesses or colonies to keep an eye out for trouble, ward off stray animals or people, assist with basic security concerns and so on. They are lightly armed, lightly trained, and vary in their degree of dedication to the job, although most mean well.

Most such individuals will not lay their lives on the line for their work, preferring to escape when mortal peril becomes obvious. Most will then seek help/reinforcements, but some may just scamper away and not give the situation any more thought.

Facility Guard (Sub-Machine-gun)

Attributes

INT	APT	PER	STR	AGI	APP
11 (0)	11 (0)	11 (0)	11 (0)	16 (+1)	11 (0)

Physical Health: 38
Mental Health: 33

Soak: 6
Action Points: 3

Bonuses:

- Resist Mental: 0.
- Resist Physical: 0.
- Initiative: 0.
- Strike: 2.
- Guard: 2.
- Dodge: 2.
- Intercept: 2.

Weapons/Equipment

- **10 mm handgun** (Range: 100 ft. Damage: 10 Physical Damage, Payload: 15)
- **10mm Sub-Machine Gun** (Range: 200 ft. Damage: 10/round or 20/burst Physical Damage, Payload: 30 rounds or 5 bursts)

Skills/Abilities:

- **Perception at Rank 1**

Freelance Gun

Attributes

INT	APT	PER	STR	AGI	APP
36 (+5)	31 (+4)	26 (+3)	15 (0)	21 (+2)	31 (+4)

Physical Health: 80
Mental Health: 105

Soak: 1
Action Points: 7

Bonuses:

- Resist Mental: 4.
- Resist Physical: 3.
- Initiative: 4.
- Strike: 8 (Pistol), 7 (Hand to Hand).
- Guard: 6.
- Dodge: 6.
- Intercept: 6.

Weapons/Equipment

- **Chimera Revolver** (Range: 100', Payload: 6, Damage: 19)

Skills/Abilities:

- **Language: Standard at Native**
- **Language: Psy'Ryllion at Rank 5**
- **Language: Hacker at Rank 5**
- **Language: Chinese at Rank 5**
- **Language: French at Rank 5**
- **Computer Operation at Rank 4**
- **Pilot: Terrestrial at Rank 3**
- **Pilot: Spacecraft at Rank 3**
- **Combat Proficiency: Pistol at Rank 5**
- **Combat Proficiency: Defense at Rank 2**
- **Perception at Rank 5**
- **Persuasion at Rank 5**
- **Seduction at Rank 5**

PRIVATE CONTRACTORS BATTLE TACTICS AND INFORMATION

Most private contractors are just average folks who have chosen to take up arms either for money, or for some sense of duty. As such, these individuals tend to be of one of two minds. Either they will stick to the task at hand until the bitter end, or they will turn and run the moment things stop going their way.

Roll percentiles (1D100) for each contractor involved in the conflict once trouble begins. 01-60 means they will bail out the moment the going gets rough or either of their Health values is reduced by more than half. 61-00 means they will stay ink the fight until they are either rendered unconscious or have only 10% of either of their Health pools remaining. Similarly, the contractors who stay in the fight until the bitter end, are actually very likely to lay down their lives to protect innocents should the need arise.

During the fight, these mercenary warriors will take direction well, stick together until their individual breaking points, and coordinate their efforts as best as private citizens with minimal military training can.

QUICK REFERENCE

ACTION POINTS

The measure of how quickly a character can act. All characters have at least 3 Action Points (unless stunned or otherwise incapacitated). Characters/NPCs spend these Action Points to perform Actions. Each Action performed will consume one or more Action Points based upon their speed of execution, complexity, or any number of other conditions.

ACTION TYPES

Action Type represents the various forms or varieties of actions that a character can perform on their Turn. Characters can perform one Long Action or two Short Actions per Turn. They can perform as many Open Actions per Turn as they want, within reason (GMs, use common sense and a sense of fair play here).

Long Action

Long Actions are actions that take a moment to setup and/or perform with any skill or accuracy. Only one Long Action can be performed in a given player's Turn because of the time necessary to properly execute the Action.

Move

A Long Move action allows a character to move as much as they want, up to their entire amount of Action Points, in a single Turn.

Attack

A Long Attack allows the character to attack a single target as many times as they want, potentially consuming all of their Action Points in a single, sustained attack on an individual target. If they change targets, or incapacitate/kill the original target of the Long Attack, or simply decide to stop attacking, then the character's Turn is over and any remaining Action Points can be used later in the Round. Any attack action that consumes more than one Action Point is considered to be a Long Attack (Firing bursts, rocket launchers, leap kicks, etc.)

Short Action

Short Actions are actions that can be executed well on the fly, or 'shooting from the hip'. They typically are much less complex and thought out than Long Actions and as a result, two Short Actions can be performed by a character in each of their Turns.

Move

A single, short movement, consuming no more than one Action Point.

Attack

A single, short attack that consumes no more than one Action Point.

Skill

An attempt to use a skill to pick a lock, hack a computer, sneak up on someone, look for clues (Perception Check), etc. Each attempt to use a skill consumes one Action Point and counts as a single Short Action.

Drawing/Switching Weapon(s)

Unless a character has a skill or ability that overrides this Action Type, drawing a weapon to use, or swapping weapons while in combat counts as a Short Action and consumes one Action Point.

Open Action

Actions that require little or no direct focus or concentration on the part of the character are considered to be Open Actions and can be performed freely and at no cost during combat.

These types of actions would include turning around while moving, tossing an item to a companion, shouting a warning, etc. Open Actions do not generally consume Action Points and have no real restrictions on how many can be performed during combat – within reason. That said, GMs can certainly apply limitations or an Action Point cost as may be appropriate to any given situation.

COMBAT ACTIONS

Combat Actions can be broken up into two categories, Active and Reactive. Active Actions are used to act upon another character or object by a character whose turn it is in the Initiative order and Reactive Actions are used in response to Active Actions and can be used out of Initiative order.

Active Actions

Strike

An attempt to shoot or otherwise attack a target. A character's roll to Strike is effectively a dynamic Target Number that is set in face to face rolls against their targets, who must meet or beat that Target Number in order to successfully avoid/defend against the attack.

Cost: one or more Action Points, depending upon the strike used.

Note: Attacking one or more opponents while using multiple weapons is done at a penalty of -10 to Strike, unless the Dual Weapons skill is in use.

Skill

Using some skill, such as Computer Hacking, Acrobatics, etc.

Cost: One Action Point

Move

Physically relocate yourself to somewhere else.

Cost: A character can move a number of squares on the map equal to their Agility attribute divided by 2 (rounding down) for each Action Point they expend.

Reload

The act of removing and replacing a magazine, cartridge, or other spent ammunition from a weapon.

Cost: one or more Action Points, depending on the weapon in question.

Reactive Actions

Guard

Attempt to block, trap, or redirect an incoming attack or action. In order to successfully Guard against an Attack, the Guarding character must meet or exceed the Target Number set by the attacker's roll to Strike.

Cost: 1 Action Point

Dodge

Attempt to physically move out of the way of some attack or action. In order to Dodge an Attack, the character must roll equal to or higher than the Target Number set by the attacker's roll to Strike.

A successful Dodge means the character avoids all damage from the attack, while a Critical Success while attempting to Dodge means the character avoids all damage and is able to immediately move up to half their normal movement at no additional Action Point cost.

Cost: 2 Action Points

Intercept

An attempt to get between an attack meant for someone else and the target of that attack. In order to Intercept an Attack, the character must roll equal to or higher than the Target Number set by the attacker's roll to Strike.

A Critical Success on an Intercept results in the intercepting character preventing the original target from being hit and only taking Half Damage themself. A Critical Failure means the intercepting character takes full damage and is Knocked Down.

Cost: 2 Action Points

Counterattack

If a player is being attacked, a player may decide to take the hit head on, for the chance to strike back against their opponent.

Cost: 2 Action Points

COMBAT

Combat revolves around Characters/NPCs taking Actions in a series of Turns and Rounds until the encounter is over. These actions are taken in an order determined by an Initiative roll made by each Character/NPC. To take an Action, Characters/NPCs spend Action Points.

Rounds

A round is 20 seconds or 1/3 of a minute in the game world (they're usually much longer in the 'real world' since players may spend time contemplating and then describing their intentions). In game terms, a round lasts until all characters, both Players and NPCs, have used up all of their Action Points and can take no more Actions.

Once that happens, if there is still conflict to be resolved, then everyone rolls for Initiative again and combat moves on into the next round. In this manner it is not unusual for extremely quick characters to continue taking actions after everyone else is out of Action Points. A Round is made up of multiple Turns.

Turns

A simple mechanic to facilitate combat, a Turn is 'one trip around the table'. Beginning with whomever rolls the highest initiative, and then moving on to the next highest, then the next, and so on, until everyone has had a chance to take action. Then the Turn is over and the next one begins.

Initiative

Initiative is determined by rolling 2D10 and adding either your Mental or Physical Attribute Pool Bonus (Player's choice), plus any other applicable bonuses, Initiative is used to determine what order players take their Active Turns in.

When rolling for Initiative, a Critical Success means the character in question automatically goes first and a Critical Failure means they go last. In the event of multiple Critical Success or Failures, they should be ordered in priority by the value of the Roll (i.e.: A critical 20 would go before a Critical 18, etc.). Any ties should be resolved by going in order of Agility Scores, highest first, then ability Attribute score, and if still tied, Players always go before NPCs. If Players are tied for rolls and have the same Agility Attribute Score, then they may decide amongst themselves who will go first.

In Practice combat happens in four basic steps:

- **Step 1:** All parties roll to determine initiative
- **Step 2:** The character with the highest Initiative roll announces their Action(s) and rolls for success (if they are attacking, this would be a roll to Strike, if they are hacking it might be a roll to get to the closest Tech-Net terminal, etc.)
- **Step 3:** If the character is acting on/against someone else, then the target gets a chance to take an Action themselves by rolling to Guard, Dodge, Intercept, or even to counterattack the person who leveled the attack against them.
- **Step 4:** The GM describes the outcome of the above based upon the dice rolls of the players. If an attack was made and not defended against, then a damage roll would be made to resolve the Action (or possibly two damage rolls in the event of a counterattack). If it was some other Action taken, then the GM describes what effect(s) it had.