

ALIEN ANGELS

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Dedicated to: Donald Fagen who, quite without meaning to, gave me the idea.

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FROM STARGATE AND THE OUTER WORLDS

The Basics

Since the earliest days of space travel it has been one of Man's fondest dreams to discover life beyond our Solar system – especially if that life is drop-dead gorgeous. *Alien Angels* is a game wherein that dream comes true, albeit in an unexpected manner.

Imagine a world much like the real world. People have the same struggles, natural disasters threaten many and political turmoil is rampant. Now add one extra ingredient; extraterrestrials are real. They walk the Earth in human guise, living and working alongside us, with no one knowing who and what they are. But this invasion differs from B-movie alien attacks in two important respects. One, these aliens have come not to conquer but to move in. No ships will fill the skies, and no death rays will incinerate all who oppose the newcomers from the stars. This war is one of quiet infiltration. Second, all of these invaders are young females. The reason for this provides the central conflict of the game.

Ancient History

Millions of years ago the first species to achieve sapience arose on a distant planet. No one alive today knows where that planet was or what its inhabitants called it. The starfaring peoples of today call the natives of that unknown world the Prime.

The people of modern Earth wonder if they are alone in the galaxy, but things were different for the Prime; they knew that they were alone. With an entire galaxy to themselves they felt free to plant colonies on every suitable world that they could reach. Within 50,000 years of achieving space travel the Prime's territory occupied most of the galaxy. By this time the First People had developed technologies so advanced that they would appear magical even by the standards of 21st century Earth.

The sheer number of Prime colonies combined with the inexorable march of time eventually created a problem. Genetic drift began to create subspecies within the Prime species. By the end of recorded Prime history there were 837 separate races, most of which were unable to breed with most of the others or with the parent race. Pure-strain Prime were relatively few and confined to a handful of core worlds. Before long colonies developed distinct cultures and separate racial identities. Many worlds became disillusioned with the central government and demanded independence. The Prime tried to use military force to hold their empire together. Thus began a two-century-long war.

The combined might of the colonies proved to be too much for the Prime. In desperation they built an android army to counter the colonist's numerical advantage, but this only slowed the enemy's advance. With the androids to buy them time the First People played one more trump. They used their awesome

genetic science to create a genocide virus. The Prime knew that even their expertise couldn't make something that would reliably kill off whole species. Instead they planned on killing roughly half of each infected species – the male half. With no males the colonists would soon fall victim to natural attrition. The plan would take nearly two of the Prime's superhumanly long lifetimes to bear fruit, but the First People were patient. The Prime used cloaked ships to introduce the virus into the colony worlds' water supplies and settled in to wait.

By the time the colonists had determined the origin of the virus they had already lost a quarter of their men. Finding a cure – or even an effective treatment – was beyond them. The Prime had kept the best technology in the core worlds and left the colonies with science that was varying degrees of substandard. In revenge the colonists launched a massive strike on the core worlds using weapons of mass destruction. The capital planets were rendered uninhabitable in a single night, and only one ship (crewed entirely by androids) escaped. The androids vowed revenge for their fallen masters and disappeared into the depths of space.

With victory achieved the colonists turned their full attention to the virus problem. They sent scout ships to scour the galaxy in hopes that a cure would be found. After the last males died they kept their species going for quite some time by using frozen sperm, but they knew that this was only a temporary measure. Once the sperm samples ran out they were doomed to extinction unless they could find a way to keep male children alive. None of the scouts found a cure – but after almost 300 years one of them found something better. They found a world with a population of primitive beings who resembled the Prime. They found a race that, after extensive testing, proved to be naturally immune to the genocide virus. They found a pool of males who, by some cosmic providence, were genetically compatible with a very few of the colonial races. In short, they found Earth.

The Modern Era

The first research vessels arrived on Earth during the early 1950's. Underestimating Terran detection technology combined with failure to provide the first ships with adequate cloaking devices inspired the UFO craze of that era (not to mention a rash of bad, but sometimes prophetic, alien invasion movies). The researchers quickly established that Terrans were descended directly from the Prime; Earth was likely a "lost colony" established by survivors of a crashed long-range explorer ship.

The researchers learned and catalogued Earth's major languages (the better to monitor communications) and recorded the customs of many cultures. Their most important work was collecting sperm samples from human males to supplement the dwindling stores back home. They accomplished this by capturing and sedating a human male and then using a specially designed instrument to stimulate the subject's prostate gland, thus resulting in ejaculation. With sperm collected by means of the anal probe the aliens hoped to bear sons who could survive the plague.

Unfortunately for the colonists their activities on Earth attracted unwanted attention. The surviving androids, after 300 years, had secretly built up their numbers enough to be a threat. They found Earth by following colonial ships there and quickly learned the nature of the natives. The androids hailed Terrans as the heirs to the Prime and extended their protection to the fledgling race. The androids knew that primitive humans weren't yet ready to accept the open presence of their mechanical protectors, so they operated in secret. The machines concentrated on foiling colonial operations whenever they could. A series of skirmishes and commando raids during the 1960's ended in stalemate; neither side now had enough military power or population for a sustained war, and open conflict in the Solar system risked destroying the race that both sides wanted to protect. They signed a treaty in which the colonists promised to stay out of the Solar system and the androids promised not to interfere with contact between Terrans and colonials outside of the Solar system.

Neither side honors the treaty completely. The androids continually try to delay Earth's development of interstellar travel using bureaucratic manipulation, economic chaos and, when necessary, outright sabotage. The machines hope that the delay will be long enough for the colonists to die out. The aliens are aware of the androids' strategy and fear that it may work, so they send covert operatives to Earth in the guise of Terran women. Most are there to collect sperm samples to send home, but others have been sent for the express purpose of finding human mates and having hybrid offspring. Still others have "gone native." They no longer want any part of the war; they'd be perfectly happy to find the right man, settle down and have babies. Of course, meeting Mr. Right is a lot more complicated when one has an imperfect grasp of the language and culture. It's even harder when one isn't quite human – at least, not the local variety. And there's no mood killer like having vengeful androids barge in right when the evening is taking an intimate turn. Life on Earth isn't easy for alien girls, but it beats being a childless spinster back home.

For Those Who Are New to This Stuff

Alien Angels is mostly written from the assumption that the reader is familiar with both role-playing games and science fiction. This brief glossary is for the benefit of those who are not.

Alien (also *extraterrestrial* or *e.t.*): a creature, usually but not necessarily intelligent, that is not from Earth.

Android: an artificial person, usually humanoid in shape. Androids can be either mechanical or synthetic.

Character: a fictional person who exists only within the minds of the players. A character controlled by a player is a *player character* (PC) while a character controlled by the gamemaster (see below) is a *non-player character* (NPC).

Dice: simple (and, it turns out, ancient) method of adjudicating random chance. The familiar six-sided die (d6) is the instrument used in most non-rpg dice games today. *Alien Angels* uses only 10-sided dice (d10).

Energy Weapon (also *directed-energy weapon* or *ray gun*): a weapon that projects energy at the target in some form other than the kinetic energy of a projectile. Modern tasers and stun guns are precursors to energy weapons. Laser guns are often depicted in SF, but weaponized lasers aren't really practical (they take too long to heat the target up, for one thing). Portable microwave projectors and particle accelerators hold more promise. A flamethrower is actually a primitive energy weapon.

Gamemaster (GM): the person in charge of the game. The GM describes the in-game scene, speaks the dialogue for and controls the actions of all NPCs and adjudicates the rules.

Interstellar Travel: travel between star systems. In most science fiction this involves some method of *faster-than-light* (FTL) propulsion. A *starfaring* culture has technology advanced enough to allow interstellar travel.

Player: a person who controls and speaks the dialogue for one of the PCs. *Alien Angels* works best with 2-5 players.

Psychic: refers to unusual powers of the mind. This includes but is not limited to *telepathy* (the ability to read minds and mentally communicate), *extrasensory perception* (ESP; the ability to receive information through means other than the five senses) and *telekinesis* (mental manipulation of physical objects).

Role-playing Game (rpg): basically a game of "let's pretend" with written rules. Players create characters and cooperate in telling a story in which those characters are the protagonists. Playing an rpg is mainly a matter of acting without getting up and moving around.

Sapience: the quality of having human-level or higher intelligence. The term is often confused with *sentience*, which is the quality of being consciously aware of one's environment and one's own existence. On Earth in the real world all animals are sentient to some degree, but only humans are provably sapient.

Skill: an ability that is developed through training and practice.

Terran: a human from Earth. As of 2005 this has been the accepted term in print science fiction for well over 20 years; *Earthling* is outmoded, and *Earther* is normally used as a slur.

Trait: an innate ability that almost everyone has. Using a Trait doesn't require any training, but using it effectively might.

MIXING WITH THE POPULATION

In order to play *Alien Angels* one must first make a character. For this the player must make a few decisions. The choices themselves are simple, but their consequences can be far-reaching, so choose with care. The seven choices are concept, race, traits, skills, resources, powers and flavor.

CONCEPT

The character concept is a very broad definition of who the character is and what she does. It's not meant to be limiting; any given character can deviate from the textbook version of her concept as the player sees fit. A concept is merely a tool for helping the player to decide what kind of person a character is going to be. Making a character is much easier if the player has a clear concept in mind. The concept will be the player's guide when selecting skills, resources and powers later in the character creation process.

Below is a list of character concepts. This list isn't all-inclusive; GMs and players are free to create additional concepts according to the needs of their individual campaigns.

Artist

You are a maker of beautiful things, or perhaps a doer of beautiful deeds. You may be dark and brooding, bright and bubbly or somewhere in between. Either way you live to create. You also thrive on attention; you need an audience like other people need air.

Primary Traits: social

Preferred Skills: at least one creative skill is mandatory; many artists have several. Interaction skills are also useful.

Crafter

You love to make things. Your work may be pretty or not, but it is always *useful*. You're concerned with function before form, and you often take that same approach to other aspects of your life – it certainly affects the way you dress, and you choose your opinions for practicality rather than fitting in.

Primary Traits: mental

Preferred Skills: craft and/or technical skills are a must; most have at least two.

Expert

Knowledge is power, and you aim to be the most powerful person around. For you there is no pleasure greater than learning... except perhaps sharing what you've learned. You've worked hard to collect all the information that you have, and you often wish that others valued it as much as you do.

Primary Traits: mental

Preferred Skills: knowledge and language skills are this type's main stock in trade. Many have technical skills as well.

Explorer

Wherever it is, you or someone like you probably got there first. You laugh at hardship and sneer at danger, at least outwardly. Inwardly you are one of the most cautious people you know. This is because getting there first doesn't count unless you get home to tell about it.

Primary Traits: physical

Preferred Skills: this type can't do without the Survival and Navigation skills. Languages and nature-based knowledge are quite useful, and most also have combat skills.

Leader

You are in charge, and you'll make sure that everyone else knows it. Others may have more skill or ability, but you deserve to lead because of your innate superiority. You're not necessarily a better person, but you're definitely the best one for the job.

Primary Traits: social

Preferred Skills: interaction skills are absolutely required. Those who lead in business need some knowledge of finance and/or administration, while military leaders should know Tactics and Strategy.

Scoundrel

Let others work for a living; you prefer to live by your wits. A quick mind, a winning smile and sex appeal are worth more than hard labor any day. Combine these with light fingers and fast feet and you're well suited to live off of other people's labor.

Primary Traits: social

Preferred Skills: interaction skills are the main tools of the scoundrel, but physical skills are useful for a quick escape. Those who practice thievery usually know some technical skills as well.

Seeker

What seems cryptic to others is elementary to you. Whatever your specialty – ancient civilizations, forensic medicine, law, etc. – you can find out almost anything given enough time and the right tools. Unlike the expert you are more concerned with discovering knowledge than with applying it.

Primary Traits: mental

Preferred Skills: Investigation and Research are the main skills for this type, and most seekers acquire a bit of knowledge during their careers.

Warrior

You have hardened your body – and, more importantly, your heart – for battle. You are more dangerous without weapons than most people are with them. Whether you live to fight or hate the very thought of it you fight to win.

Primary Traits: physical

Preferred Skills: combat skills are key for this type. The smart ones will also learn some Tactics and Survival.

Worker

You revel in the feel of honest labor well done. You might be a simple rustic or a highly trained technician, but you'll never be too high-and-mighty to get your hands dirty. You'd rather do something yourself than let someone else do it, because you know that you'll do it right.

Primary Traits: physical

Preferred Skills: workers know craft and technical skills mainly for maintenance and repair rather than creation (which is the work of the crafter). The best workers have knowledge that applies to their materials.

RACE

Race is one of the most important aspects of character creation. The term race is normally used in gaming to denote different species, but *Alien Angels* uses the correct meaning of the term; a subdivision of a species. All of the sapient beings in this setting, with the notable exception of androids, are of the same species (*Homo sapiens*, though only Terrans use that term). Androids are constructed to look like humans, so while they aren't truly a race of human they occupy a similar place in terms of game mechanics.

There are 12 races in *Alien Angels*. Each race, except where the rules state otherwise, has a bonus category (a category of Traits where the maximum is six instead of the usual five), a bonus Trait (which has +1 to the starting value, not to exceed the maximum), an advantage and a disadvantage.

All 12 races are humanoid in appearance, but aliens may have visible differences from the Terran norm. All aliens also have behavioral differences from the Terran norm. This is expressed by an extra Trait called Weirdness. Weirdness is rated 1-5 like other Traits, with Weirdness/1 signifying the odd behavior that aliens are prone to. Higher levels of Weirdness represent actual physical differences. Each race has a different Weirdness value. The exact effects of Weirdness will be covered in the chapter on game mechanics. Suffice to say that the weirder an alien is, the harder it is for her to interact with Terrans.

All alien characters are female; there are no males left in the colonies. Androids are technically sexless but can appear to be male or female. Terrans and hybrids may be of either sex.

Aborasti (ah-bore-AH-stee)

The Aborasti aren't famed for their brainpower, but their muscle power more than makes up for it. They are one of the few races that didn't come about naturally; the Prime created them as laborers. Aborasti are usually quiet and unassuming (as their taskmasters wanted them to be), but they are fiercely loyal to friends and family and will fight to the death to protect a child – any child. Aborasti have light skin with a slight bluish cast and short gray hair. Their eyes are always gray or dark blue.

Bonus Category: physical

Bonus Trait: Brawn

Advantage: the stocky bodies of the Aborasti have astounding endurance. They can hold their breath for (Toughness x 5) minutes and can survive unharmed in

extremes of cold that would kill an unprotected Terran inside of an hour. An Aborasti subtracts one level from all cold-based damage had has -1 to the difficulty when resisting cold-based effects.

Disadvantage: Aborasti characters must take mental as the tertiary Trait category and cannot raise the Brains or Grace Traits beyond 3. They may never learn the Cloaking or Mind Control powers. All Aborasti must begin play with the Swimming skill; they love water and can often swim before they can walk.

Weirdness: 2

Android

Androids who are stationed on Earth look perfectly human; only their lack of emotion gives them away. The one feeling that they have is their programmed loathing for the colonials. Androids come in three basic models – combat/labor, technician and diplomat/entertainer. Each model can serve a range of functions requiring Traits that that particular type excels in.

Androids instinctively hate the enemies of the Prime (and therefore of Terrans), so they don't make good PCs in an alien-centered game. A game that focuses on fighting the aliens is a much better venue for android PCs.

Bonus Category: any; physical for combat/labor models, mental for technicians or social for diplomats and entertainers

Bonus Trait: any one Trait within the bonus category

Advantage: androids are totally immune to disease and poison, and they have no need for food, water, air or sleep. They do have to recharge periodically, but they have developed adapters that allow them to use wall sockets.

Disadvantage: androids cannot heal when damaged; they must be repaired. All but the simplest repairs require that someone else do the work – androids can only perform basic maintenance and simple limb repairs on themselves. Repairing an android is only possible for someone who is familiar with starfaring technology. Androids may not have powers that are designated as psychic.

Weirdness: 1

D'deri (deh-DARE-ee)

D'deri are petite with yellowish skin and blond, brown or black hair. Their eye colors range from deep yellow to brown. The D'deri never took part in the war as combatants; they acted as medics and support personnel instead. This is because of their culture's great love of life. D'deri are warm and nurturing by nature, no doubt due to the empathic sensitivity that allows them to experience the suffering of others.

Bonus Category: social

Bonus Trait: Warmth

Advantage: the D'deri excel at medicine. They reduce the difficulty of all roles for diagnosis, healing or medical scans by one. Any medical treatment given by a D'deri also heals one additional level of damage.

Disadvantage: D'deri culture is basically pacifist. They abhor violence and will never cause unnecessary suffering to another sentient creature if they can help it. A D'deri must succeed on a Nerve/8 check to be able to initiate combat or

inflict pain on another being. No skill may be used with this roll. All D'deri must have the Telepathy power.

Weirdness: 2

Elang (EE-lang)

The Elang are one of the most unusual looking races in the galaxy, but they tend to be exotically alluring rather than repulsive. They have dark gray skin and straight black hair. Elang eyes lack irises and have slit pupils. In human form they adopt a medium brown skin tone. Many other races fear the Elang because of the Dark Ones' potent mental powers. The Elang accept this fear as their due – it was after all they who led the colonies to victory over the Prime. That the victory was so costly was hardly the Elang's fault.

Bonus Category: social

Bonus Trait: Looks

Advantage: all Elang have the Mind Control power and are exceptionally gifted in using it. An Elang may add one extra success to any use of Mind Control that generates at least one success normally.

Disadvantage: Elang find it difficult to appreciate – and therefore read – the feelings of others. They may never have Telepathy and add +1 to the difficulty of any Savvy roll to determine another person's feelings or motivations.

Weirdness: 5

Hybrid

Many aliens have succeeded in bearing half-human children. A hybrid looks like a human with traces of the mother's natural appearance. In cases where the mother race is very close to the Terran norm a hybrid may look entirely like the mother's race. Hybrids are raised on Earth and therefore lack the social problems that are common to aliens. Hybrids do have the enhanced Traits of their parent races and are able to learn any powers that their mothers could.

Bonus Category: same as mother's race

Bonus Trait: same as mother's race

Advantage: hybrids are genetically compatible with Terrans, the mother's race and any race with which the mother's race is compatible. Because of this extraordinary fertility hybrids are never killed during conflicts between aliens. They are far more valuable as breeding stock or bargaining chips. Of course, this advantage only applies if the aliens know that the character is a hybrid.

Disadvantage: androids hate hybrids even more than they hate aliens; the machines see half-breeds as impurities in the blood of the Prime. Androids will attack a hybrid in preference to all other targets unless there is a clear and immediate greater threat.

Weirdness: a hybrid's Weirdness rating is equal to that of the mother's race –2 (minimum = 1). This is purely physical; hybrids are always raised as Terrans.

Jodra (JAHD-rah)

Jodra are widely regarded as one of the most beautiful human races. They have pinkish Caucasian-like skin tones with shiny, almost metallic seeming

hair of blue, green or purple. Eyes are usually the same color as the hair. Jodra don't fully understand the concept of monogamy because their society has always been polyamorous (Jodra seem to lack the emotion of jealousy). Jodra society is matrilineal anyway, so paternity isn't much of an issue. Most Jodra who have had children on Earth are single mothers, and they're perfectly happy that way.

Bonus Category: physical

Bonus Trait: Grace

Advantage: Jodra secrete a powerful psychoactive chemical from their sweat glands. This potent aphrodisiac may sway any human of the opposite sex who inhales the scent. The victim must make a Nerve roll with a difficulty equal to (2 + Jodra's Looks). Failure plunges the victim into the grip of full sexual arousal. A Jodra only secretes this chemical when she wants to unless she herself is sexually aroused, in which case she can't help sending out this signal.

Disadvantage: Jodra have no qualms about approaching men who are "taken," which doesn't endear them to other women. A Jodra character has +1 to all social interaction difficulties with non-Jodra women. This penalty increases to +2 if the Jodra is currently flirting with or has recently approached the subject's man.

Weirdness: 2

Kharnashai (KAR-neh-shy)

The Kharnashai were among the front-line warriors in the war with the Prime. They tend to be tall and well muscled with ruddy complexions. Kharnashai have black spots peppered over much of their skin. Their hair is typically red, red-blond or auburn and their eyes are red. The most disturbing quality of Kharnashai is the two sets of fangs, one each in the upper and lower jaw. Kharnashai are easygoing and affectionate when among friends and loved ones, but they are vicious when dealing with their enemies.

Bonus Category: physical

Bonus Trait: Toughness

Advantage: Kharnashai fangs are fully functional. They inflict an additional level of damage with a successful bite. If they wish they can also inject poison through their fangs. The victim must succeed on a Toughness/7 roll or be paralyzed for (10 - victim's Toughness) minutes. Because they are venomous creatures themselves Kharnashai subtract one from the difficulty of any roll to resist poison.

Disadvantage: Kharnashai have no talent for Mind Control and cannot learn Telepathy or Telempathy past level 3. They must also ingest a special mix of vitamins and minerals every day in order to maintain their venom. They can obtain the necessary ingredients from a health food store with a Savvy/6 roll.

Weirdness: 3

Morathid (more-AH-thid)

Morathids are the race most commonly seen as technicians on colonial ships. They are short (rarely more than 5' 4") with round hairless heads and large blue, green or gray eyes. Most Morathids are genuinely friendly but not especially outgoing; they prefer to be approached instead of doing the

approaching. Among themselves they always make introductions via Telepathy to avoid the risk of intruding in another's space. Morathids can't bear the thought of physical conflict, but they will engage in mental combat if provoked.

Bonus Category: mental

Bonus Trait: Hands

Advantage: Morathids are gifted with machines; they add one success to any technical skill roll that generates at least one success naturally and can perform technical operations (building and repairing) in half the normal time.

Disadvantage: Morathids are not physical beings; they must always take physical as the tertiary Trait category. They have maximum ratings of 3 in Brawn and Toughness and 4 in Grace. A Morathid cannot learn any physical power to a rating higher than 3.

Weirdness: 2

Nasiraiim (nah-seer-EYE-im)

The Nasiraiim are something of a contradiction. They are highly class conscious, but they're never pretentious. They work out hierarchical conflicts by means of humor. Sarcasm, wisecracks and practical jokes are all part of their arsenal. Because these attacks can occur at any time and come from anyone (at least back home on Nasirai) the Nasiraiim are all a little bit paranoid. Nasiraiim have light brown skin with darker brown stripes perpendicular to the long axis of the body. Their hair is the same color as the stripes. Eye color is yellow or orange.

Bonus Category: mental

Bonus Trait: Savvy

Advantage: Nasiraiim have perfected the art of getting into and out of places quickly. Once per scene a Nasiraiim character may declare a Teleport action and not have to spend an action to do it (the character can use an action to attack and then teleport out of range with the free action, for example). All Nasiraiim must begin play with the Teleport power.

Disadvantage: Nasiraiim are uncomfortable when clear chain of command has not been established. When in such a situation a Nasiraiim must succeed on a Nerve/8 roll to avoid engaging in humorous antics. GMs and players should keep in mind that Nasiraiim use humor to establish dominance; whatever jokes the character uses should be formulated to make the teller look superior to the target. If the player fails the Nerve check the character will continue joking until everyone else present acknowledges her dominance or somebody puts her in her place. The Nasiraiim have learned that Terran males react badly to this behavior (most men don't stick around long enough for sex after being repeatedly insulted), so the difficulty of the Nerve roll drops to 6 if the only available target is a Terran male.

Weirdness: 3

Shau'ru (SHAO-roo)

The sleek and beautiful Shau'ru are, with the Elang, one of the leading races of the colonies. They are tall with dark brown skin and wavy black hair.

Their eyes seem to lack irises and pupils (in fact, the pupils are very small and the irises are almost the same shade as the sclera, which is pale gold) and are faintly luminous. The Shau'ru were matriarchal even before the plague, and many of them look forward to a return to the old ways wherein a woman's social status is the only limit on how many men she can keep.

Bonus Category: mental

Bonus Trait: Brains

Advantage: the Shau'ru are the most technologically advanced of the colonial races. They have pioneered the use of "ghost-tech" machinery that exists partly in hyperspace. Any Tech resource that a Shau'ru carries on her person is concealed beyond hope of detection (except by another Shau'ru), and any Personal Space or Vessel resource that she has is treated as being one size larger than the value that was paid for.

Disadvantage: Shau'ru are extremely sensitive to cold (Shau'naket is a hot world). They have -1 Toughness for the purpose of resisting the adverse effects of cold, and any cold-based attack that hits does an additional level of damage. This applies even if the character successfully resists the attack; the Shau'ru would still take one level of damage. Only an attack that misses altogether does no damage.

Weirdness: 3

Terran

Earth humans have incredible variety in their appearance and capabilities. They are also the only known race that can breed with all of the alien types currently on Earth. This gives individual Terrans great value to most aliens. Androids value Terrans even more highly, often to the point of reverence.

Bonus Category: none

Bonus Trait: any

Advantage: Terrans are the prize that the aliens and androids are fighting over. Aliens are severely censured by their superiors for taking the life of a Terran, and repeat offenders are permanently removed from Earth duty. Androids are even more solicitous; no android will ever intentionally kill a Terran. Any android who kills a Terran accidentally will self-destruct out of remorse unless convinced that the killing was justified (i.e. the victim was a danger to other Terrans). This advantage means that aliens and androids will tend to use nonlethal weapons and avoid collateral damage when Terrans are around.

Disadvantage: Terrans have not yet evolved to the point of developing boosted Traits, nor can they learn powers of any kind.

Weirdness: 0

Xlennakur (SHLEH-nah-koor)

All of the other colonials acknowledge their debt to the Xlennakur, but no one really trusts them. The Xlennakur served as spies and saboteurs in the war with the Prime. The problem is that some of them served on the wrong side. There are even rumors that some of them continue to work as double agents in the pay of the androids to this day. On Xlennak part of one's wealth is measured

in secrets, so the Nightwalkers make a point of keeping a few things hidden even from their closest friends. Xlennakur have chalk-white skin, bone-straight black or white hair and deep black eyes with no visible whites. They are not always tall but all of them are thin.

Bonus Category: social

Bonus Trait: Nerve

Advantage: Xlennakur can see in near-total darkness and have limited ability for echolocation (navigation by sound). They suffer no penalties for operating in darkness. They also add one success to any Stealth roll that generates successes normally; Xlennakur are naturally sneaky.

Disadvantage: Xlennakur are compulsive about keeping secrets. A Nightwalker character may never tell everything that she knows about any situation to anyone unless failing to disclose fully would harm her own interests. People pick up on this pretty quickly. Other people tend to assume that a Xlennakur is lying – or at least withholding information – even when she tells the whole truth, and will respond to her accordingly.

Weirdness: 4

TRAITS

Choosing Traits is easy compared to the last section. There are three Trait categories: physical, mental and social. The player must choose one category to be primary and one to be secondary. The remaining category is tertiary. The choice of primary category should be consistent with the concept chosen in step one. Each category has three Traits under it, as seen on the chart below.

Physical	Mental	Social
Brawn (muscle power)	Brains (reasoning and memory)	Looks (beauty and charisma)
Grace (agility and speed)	Hands (manual dexterity)	Nerve (courage and willpower)
Toughness (physical resistance)	Savvy (alertness and suspicion)	Warmth (empathy and friendliness)

Once the categories have been prioritized the player may choose specific Traits. Distribute 10 points among the Traits in the primary category, 8 among the Traits in the secondary category and six among the tertiary Traits. Apply any racial modifiers. When finished every Trait must have a rating of at least one, Traits within the bonus category may have ratings up to six and all other Traits may be up to five (with the exceptions noted in the race descriptions).

Example: Rob decides to make a character with the Scoundrel concept. This concept has social as the primary Trait category, so Rob chooses a race that excels in social skills. He chooses a D'deri. Rob prioritizes the Trait categories as follows: primary = social (as per the concept), secondary = mental, tertiary = physical.

With 10 points for social Traits Rob takes the values of Looks 4, Nerve 3 and Warmth 3. He raises Warmth to 4 because of the racial modifier for D'deri. Because social is the bonus category for D'deri all of these Traits can be raised to 6 later.

Rob assigns his 8 points for mental Traits as follows: Brains 3, Hands 2, Savvy 3. The maximum for each of these Traits is 5.

The tertiary Trait category has only 6 points to spend, so Rob decides to spend them evenly to get Brawn 2, Grace 2 and Toughness 2. These Traits also top out at 5.

If Rob's character had been a hybrid whose mother was D'deri the process would've been exactly the same.

That's it. Assigning Traits is that easy. The chart below shows the relative levels of the various Trait values.

Trait Level	Description
1	Inferior
2	Below Average
3	Average
4	Above Average
5	Superior
6	Superhuman

Wounds

Every character has two wound pools that derive from Traits. Stun Points represent the ability to withstand mental and emotional stress, fatigue and minor injury. Life Points represent how much severe injury the character can take. Stun Points = Nerve + Toughness + 1 while Life Points = Brawn + Toughness + 1. When Stun = 0 the character falls unconscious. Falling to zero Life Points is more serious; the character is mortally wounded and will die in Toughness minutes without medical attention.

SKILLS

Every character will have received some training before play. Starting skills represent this training. Each player character begins with 12 levels worth of skills. In addition to these 12 points each character gets one free Language skill at level 2 (which is enough for fluency). The skill ratings range from 0-4 with the ratings defined according to the chart below:

Skill Rating	Definition
0	Untrained
1	Novice
2	Trained
3	Expert
4	Master

The player may purchase whatever skills he wants the character to have, but it's a good idea to spend at least half of the skill points on skills that the concept recommends.

Combat Skills

- Demolitions: the knowledge of how to construct and place explosives.
- Dodge: getting out of the way of an attack.
- Melee Combat: using a close-combat weapon. Each weapon – or set of weapons that use the same basic technique – requires a separate skill.
- Mind Bending: attacking and defending in psychic combat.
- Ranged Combat: use of a weapon that strikes at a distance. As with Melee Combat, each weapon or group of similar weapons uses a separate skill.
- Resistance: using innate Toughness to withstand damage.
- Unarmed Combat: fighting without weapons. This is basically two skills; styles that emphasize grappling and styles that emphasize striking.

Creative Skills

- Art: creating objects of beauty. Each medium (painting, sculpture, etc.) is a separate skill.
- Craft: creating objects of utility, which can be beautiful if the creator also has Art skill. Each medium (i.e. woodwork or pottery) is a separate skill.
- Performance: staging actions with aesthetic appeal. Each art form (acting, singing, playing an instrument, and so on) is a separate skill.

Information Skills

- Investigation: looking for clues – and knowing where to look.
- Knowledge: having information on a particular subject. Each subject (i.e. mythology, physics, finance or botany) requires a separate skill.
- Language: the ability to speak a language.
- Navigation: finding one's way from point A to point B. Navigating on land, in the air, at sea and in space all require separate skills.
- Research: finding information in recorded sources (books, databases, etc.).
- Strategy/Tactics: being able to predict an enemy's movements based on known motives or extrapolate an enemy's motives based on observed movements. Strategy is for large units acting over long periods while Tactics is for small units operating in the short term.

Interaction Skills

- Interrogation: asking questions in such a way that the subject doesn't know exactly how much information he has given away.
- Intimidation: scaring people into doing what one wants them to do.
- Leadership: inspiring followers and comrades.
- Persuasion: using charm to earn someone's trust and agreement.
- Seduction: using sex appeal to compromise the subject's judgment.
- Subterfuge: using verbal smokescreens to confuse the subject; lying.

- Taming: handling animals.

Physical Skills

- Climbing: scaling vertical surfaces with or without equipment.
- Escape: getting out of bonds and grapples.
- Jumping: maximizing leaping height and distance.
- Running: maximizing sprinting speed or marathon endurance.
- Stealth: hiding and moving quietly.
- Survival: finding food, water and shelter in the wilderness.
- Swimming: moving confidently in the water.

Technical Skills

- Chemistry: being able to identify, synthesize and safely work with chemicals.
- Computers: operating and programming computers.
- Concealment: hiding objects via camouflage or sleight-of-hand.
- Electronics: working with electrical circuitry.
- Engineering: working with large-scale machinery.
- Lock Picking: the ability to open locks without having the proper authorization. Combination locks, key locks and electronic locks all require separate skills.
- Mechanics: working with mechanical, hydraulic and pneumatic devices.
- Medicine: diagnosing and treating illnesses and injuries.
- Microtronics: working with small-scale machinery.
- Optronics: working with optical (light-based) circuitry.
- Phaseonics: working with ghost-tech machinery.
- Vehicle: operating a vehicle, especially under adverse conditions. Each type of vehicle – or group of vehicles that use the same basic technique – requires a separate skill.

Example: Going back to the example of Rob's D'deri Scoundrel, Rob decides quickly how to spend his 12 skill points. He takes six points – half of the total – to give the character expert skill in both Persuasion and Seduction. He then spends two points each into Stealth and Computers for trained levels in those skills. Finally Rob spends one point each for novice levels in Language: English and Running. Rob takes French as the free Language/2. Rob's character is an expert con artist and courtesan who can hide well, do some hacking, run away from trouble and speak fluent French. With Language: English/1 the character speaks enough English to have a heavy French accent (which, in the United States, will probably make seduction easier).

RESOURCES

Every character has resources to call upon in times of trouble. A starting character has six levels of Resources. Some resources (Cash and all social resources) are freely available to all PCs. Lab, Library and Personal Space above level 2, Tech and Vessel are all alien-specific resources. Terran and hybrid characters cannot take these at character creation without a really good

background story (which a smart GM will insist on getting in writing – it's harder for the story to change unexpectedly that way). Terrans and androids don't need Mask, but some hybrids might.

Many resources can be combined with each other. Lab, Library, Personal Space and Vessel can easily combine while Network and Significant Other can both be part of Cover. Combined resources are easier to access and protect – one only needs one trip to get to two or more resources – but are also easier to lose (one loss takes out at least two resources). The player accepts the risk with the reward when choosing this option.

Physical Resources

- **Cash:** money, and lots of it. You subtract your level of Cash from the difficulty of buying something in game (see the money mechanics in the rules chapter). The value of this resource decreases by one each time that you use it during the same month of game time.
- **Lab:** equipment with which to make and analyze things. A Lab/1 is good enough to perform routine scientific or medical work. Lab/2 is enough for forensic medicine or police investigations. Lab/3 is equal to high-end government labs. Lab/4 is the lowest level that can work on alien tech and Lab/5 is hot stuff even by alien standards. Each level of Lab above what is needed for the operation reduces the difficulty of any one roll to perform that operation by one. You must specify what kind of lab it is when you buy this resource (medical, scientific or technical).
- **Library:** more information than you can keep in your head. Each level of Library holds information equal to five levels of Knowledge skill. Either you or the GM can specify what Knowledge is available in the Library when you take this resource.
- **Personal Space:** a secure location in which to hide or work. A Personal Space has two ratings; one for size and one for security. The security rating gets added to the difficulty of any attempt to find or enter the space. The size rating denotes how big the space is (1 = the size of a typical bedroom, 2 = as big as an average apartment, 3 = a small single-family house, 4 = a medium-sized office block*). The value of Personal Space increases by +1 if it is mobile. The security and size ratings must add up to the total value of the resource minus the mobility modifier, and the total rating cannot exceed five (exception: see the Shau'ru advantage). You must put at least one point into each rating.
- **Tech:** way cool alien gadgets. An easy way to create Tech is to put a power on a gadget; the Tech can perform one, and only one, function of the power at a level equal to the level of the Tech (for example, Tech/3 could perform any one level 3 function of a power). GMs and players are encouraged to get creative when designing new Tech.
- **Vessel:** how you got to Earth in the first place, or at least how you got down from orbit. Every Vessel has three ratings that range from 1-3; size, range and cloak. Size 1 = 1-2 seats or comfortably sleep one, 2 = 4-6 seats or comfortably sleep three, 3 = 10-12 seats or comfortably sleep six. Range 1 =

planetary (you can travel the world, get into orbit or go to the moon), 2 = interplanetary (you can go anywhere within a single star system), 3 = interstellar (you can travel to different star systems). You add *twice* the cloak rating to the difficulty of any attempt to detect the ship while the cloaking device is active. You must put at least one point into each rating, and the total rating cannot exceed the total value of the resource (exception: see the Shau'ru advantage).

*This level is only available to Shau'ru.

Social Resources

- **Contacts:** people who can find things out for you. A level 1 Contact is only good for general information (equivalent to Knowledge/3), a level 2 can get restricted information like sealed court records and a level 3 can get classified information like the real location of Area 51. You may call on a Contact once per game, +1 per value of the resource over its level (a level 5 Contact can get you level 3 information three times per game, for example).
- **Cover:** the people and records that back up your made-up history. Aliens have to have this, Terrans and hybrids can have it (witness protection program, anyone?). Any attempt to pierce the deception has a difficulty of 4 + the level of this resource.
- **Mask:** you have equipment or drugs that allow you to temporarily pass for Terran. Each level of this resource negates one level of Weirdness for as long as the Mask remains on. Mask only covers physical Weirdness, however, so the Weirdness/1 that comes from cultural differences can't be covered this way. A Mask must usually be renewed daily. If the value of the Mask exceeds the value of the Weirdness that it covers the Mask lasts longer according to how much it exceeds the Weirdness by (one additional day per +1 over the value of Weirdness).
- **Network:** a group of people who sometimes lend you their expertise. When you need the help of someone with a certain skill, roll a number of dice equal to the level of this resource (difficulty = 10 minus your Warmth). The number of successes is the level of skill available (maximum = 4). You may only call upon this resource once per game.
- **Papers:** you have the legal right to perform some official function; each type of function (police, legal, clergy, etc.) requires a separate set of Papers. You may abuse your official powers a number of times per game session equal to the level of this resource.
- **Significant Other:** a lover or spouse who will do big favors for you (possibly including helping you bring a half-alien child into the world). A Significant Other at level 1 will allow himself to be inconvenienced, level 2 will do whatever you ask as long as no laws are broken and no one gets hurt, level 3 will break the law in small ways or risk minor injury, level 4 will commit felonies or risk major injury and a level 5 is willing to kill or die for you.

POWERS

Evolution – more often the work of eugenics than natural selection – has gifted aliens with some extraordinary powers. Hybrids inherit some of this power, and androids can duplicate much of it using the technology within their bodies. Each character may select three levels of powers. A power is rated level 1-5 with five being the most potent ability.

Any character may trade in one level of power for two levels of resources or six levels of skill. Terrans *must* trade in their powers in this manner. Androids cannot have psychic powers, and many aliens are restricted from having certain powers or gaining certain powers beyond a preset level.

Physical Powers

- Acceleration: the ability to move at increased speed.
- Cloaking: avoiding detection by various senses.
- Phasing: the ability to partially enter hyperspace, thereby becoming nonsolid.
- Regeneration: quickly recovering from wounds.
- Telekinesis: moving objects by will alone.
- Teleportation: going from point A to point C without passing through point B.

Psychic Powers

- Cyberpathy: mentally communicating with and controlling computers.
- ESP: sensing at great distances.
- Insight: sensing the future or the past.
- Mind Control: controlling others' actions and memories.
- Telempathy: sensing and influencing emotions.
- Telepathy: mental communication and illusion casting.

Example: Rob looks over the list of powers and decides that his D'deri Scoundrel would benefit from being quite good at Telempathy (a power that a D'deri has to take anyway). Rob chooses two levels of Telempathy and one level of Telepathy.

FLAVOR

This is the easiest part of character creation. This is where the player decides on the character's height, weight, hair and eye color, age, sex and (if it wasn't already chosen during concept) name. For alien characters the player should choose both a real name and an Earth alias. Once all of this information is chosen and entered on the character sheet the character is ready for play.

Example: Rob wants his character to stand out but not to be too outlandish (sneaking around might require blending in at some point). He sets the character's height at 5' 8" – above-average height for a woman but not freakishly tall – and sets her weight at 120 pounds (she's slim but in no danger of being mistaken for a starving supermodel). Her hair is blond and her eyes are hazel; both are within the natural range for a D'deri. Her actual age is 31 but that's practically a teenager by alien standards; she looks about 19. As an alien the character must be female. Rob chooses the Earth name of Diana Mars –

Diana because it's similar to the character's D'deri name Darana and Mars because it's a good inside joke. Rob is now ready to play Alien Angels!

WHEN THE STATIC CLEARS

The rules for *Alien Angels* are designed to be fast and easy. They don't have the level of complexity that allows for a high degree of realism. Being user-friendly was given higher priority. When using these rules the first rule of rpgs definitely applies – if a rule doesn't work for your campaign or gaming group, change it.

TASK RESOLUTION

A task resolution roll is called for whenever a character does something that has a significant chance of failure and which can have important effects on the plot. If the action is too easy for failure to be an issue or doesn't have any real plot effects, don't bother to roll.

Task resolution involves a roll of 10-sided dice (d10s). The player and GM agree on which Trait applies to the task (Hands for anything involving hand-eye coordination, Grace for full-body movements, Brains for intelligence and problem solving, Looks for charm and persuasion, and so on). The player rolls a number of dice equal to the Trait value. The standard difficulty is 7 for most tasks, but the GM may apply modifiers as appropriate to the situation (consult the chart below).

Difficulty	Modifier
Ridiculously Easy	-3
Very Easy	-2
Easy	-1
Standard	+0
Difficult	+1
Very Difficult	+2
Near Impossible	+3

Having a skill appropriate to the task makes the job easier. Subtract the level of skill from the modified difficulty to get the final difficulty. The player rolls the dice after determining the final difficulty. Any result that is equal to or higher than the difficulty counts as a success.

The degree of success is a function of how many successes come up. More successes can mean that a task is completed faster or to a greater degree of excellence. If the task is information gathering the degree of success can decide how much data the character gets. The GM should adjudicate this based on what the character was trying for and what is dramatically appropriate for the current scene.

Example: Cindy's character Junai is looking for love at a rave. Her scanner has detected a genetically compatible young man within 30 yards, and she's closing in. She spots her guy onstage playing guitar and likes what she sees. Junai doesn't want to mess this up, so she observes her target for several minutes to determine what approach would work best. The GM rules that

Warmth will be the Trait for this challenge since Junai is trying to learn something about a person's feelings and motives. Cindy argues that Knowledge: Psychology would also apply, and the GM agrees. Junai has Warmth/3 and Knowledge: Psychology/1. Cindy rolls 3d10 against a difficulty of 6 and gets 4, 7 and 7. Two successes is enough to tell Junai that this guy prefers his women shy and demure rather than brazen. Junai switches gears from "reform school hottie" to "girl next door," and the hunt is on.

Critical Success and Failure

If a character is rolling more than one die there is a possibility of critical success or failure. This works just like a normal success or failure except that the GM will add additional special effects as befits the current scene. A critical failure while gathering information may yield a false clue while a critical success in combat can result in extra damage. The GM should be creative with these effects; drama is more important than game mechanics in this case. The one hard and fast rule with critical effects is that a critical failure should never, in and of itself, result in the immediate death of a PC.

Social Interaction

Social conflict works like any other task except for determining the difficulty. The base difficulty of a social interaction task equals the Trait that the target is using to defend + 4. Savvy defends against deception and seduction while Nerve defends against intimidation and attacks on the ego. A target who has a skill that applies to the challenge can at least partially negate the aggressor's skill.

Example: Junai is trying to bluff her way past a security guard. She is trying to convince the guard that she's with the band and that her phony backstage pass is legit. The GM decides that this takes a lot of Nerve. Junai has Nerve/4 and Subterfuge/2, so she can lie convincingly. The guard has Savvy/3 and has no Investigation skill – he's just a rent-a-cop, not the real deal. The base difficulty is 7, -2 for Junai's skill = 5. Cindy rolls four d10s and gets 3, 5, 8 and 10. With three successes she can sashay past the guard after only a brief exchange.

If the guard had known Investigation/1 he could have negated one level of Junai's Subterfuge. She would then have rolled against a difficulty of 6 and only gotten two successes. She would still have gotten past him, but it would have taken longer.

Combat

Combat works a lot like social interaction except for the Traits and skills used. If the target is actively dodging the attack the defending Trait is Grace. If the target is relying on fortitude to resist the damage the defending Trait is Toughness. The Dodge skill applies to actively avoiding attacks while the Resistance skill aids using Toughness. An attack that scores no successes after being dodged misses completely and has no effect. An attack that scores no

successes after being resisted still hits the target – it won't do damage (exception: see the Shau'ru disadvantage) but may still have secondary effects. Dodging takes an action, but resisting does not.

A combat round is about five seconds of real time. Each character may take one action during a combat round unless the Acceleration power is in play. Acceleration/2 gives a character a second action and Acceleration/4 grants a third. One action spent on movement takes the character Grace x 5 yards. Acceleration/1 raises this to Grace x 10 yards, Acceleration/3 raises it to Graces x 20 yards and Acceleration/5 increases the distance to Grace x 40 yards. Each success on a Running roll adds 10 yards to the final distance. Making a Running roll does not require an action.

Powers always go first in the order of combat. In case of a tie the character with the higher Savvy goes first. If they're still tied the actions are considered simultaneous. Ranged attacks go next, with ties resolved in the same manner. Melee attacks go last, and the character with the higher Grace goes first.

The attacker may use whatever skill applies to the attack form currently in use. The number of successes is the amount of damage that the attack does. Damage usually comes off of Stun Points first and bleeds over into Life Points when Stun equals zero, but especially lethal attacks go directly to Life Points.

Weapons

Weapons make combat a lot more deadly. A comprehensive list of all the weapons that exist in the real world – let alone adding in fictional weapons that fit the game – would take far too much space for one book. Instead these rules give a simple system for simulating almost any weapon.

Every weapon has ratings in Accuracy and Lethality. Subtract Accuracy from the difficulty when attacking with that weapon and add Lethality to the number of successes generated by an attack that generates at least one success normally. A weapon with the suffix "L" in its Lethality does damage directly to Life Points instead of having to go through Stun Points first. The chart below gives a quick and dirty system for computing the Accuracy and Lethality ratings for any weapon that PCs will need in a typical game.

Weapon Quality	Accuracy	Lethality
Short/one-handed melee	+0	+0
Medium/one-handed melee	+1	+0
Long/two-handed melee	+2	+1*
Edged melee/missile	+0	+1
Heavy melee**	-1	L
One-handed shooter	+0	+1
Two-handed shooter	+1*	+2
Firearm/laser/sonic weapon	+0	+1
Scatter effect/autofire***	+2	+1
Heat/electrical weapon	+0	+2
Particle beam weapon	+0	L

*This bonus only applies when the weapon is actually wielded with two hands.
**This weapon cannot be used effectively with one hand unless the wielder has Brawn/5+. A person with Brawn/2 or less can't use it at all.
***Scatter effect only applies when shot rounds are in use; shotguns loaded with slug rounds only benefit from the Lethality bonus.

Figuring the ratings for a weapon is simply a matter of taking all of the qualities that apply and adding up the Accuracy and Lethality bonuses from each. This system can create balanced statistics for far more different weapons than one book could ever contain.

Examples: a saber is a medium/one-handed edged weapon. The size and edged qualities add up to Accuracy/1, Lethality/1. A tetsubo (feudal Japanese war club) is a heavy, two-handed melee weapon. The size and weight qualities add up to Accuracy/1, Lethality/1L. A crossbow is a two-handed shooter edged missile weapon. The combined type bonuses yield Accuracy/1, Lethality/3. A .50 caliber machinegun is a two-handed shooter firearm with autofire capacity. This gives it Accuracy/3, Lethality/4.

Ranged weapons also have an ammunition capacity. This is generally one for missile weapons and grenade launchers, six for revolvers, 12 for pistols, 30 for rifles and machineguns, 20 for energy pistols and 50 for energy rifles. Weapons with greater capacity are unusual equipment and may require special permission from the GM if player characters want to own them.

Armor

Armor is quite simple in *Alien Angels*. All armor is rated light, medium or heavy. Light armor adds +1 to the wearer's Toughness. Medium armor subtracts one success from the damage done by a successful attack but reduces the wearer's Grace by one. Heavy armor combines the benefits and penalties of light and medium armor and halves the wearer's movement speed.

Combat Example

Junai leaves the rave wearing a satisfied grin after collecting a sperm sample the old-fashioned way. As she passes a row of parked cars her scanner beeps out a warning. She turns in time to see two Men in Black getting out of a black sedan. Junai ducks into an alley to avoid them, but the MiBs follow her in. She has no choice but to fight.

Round 1: One of the MiBs pulls out a blazer pistol and opens fire. Junai wisely decides to dodge. The shooter has Hands/4 and Ranged Combat: Energy Pistol/2 versus Junai's Grace 4 and Dodge/3. Junai's Grace sets the difficulty at 8 and her Dodge completely negates the MiB's skill. The GM rolls 4d10 and gets 2, 6, 6 and 7. The attack is a clean miss but Junai has expended her action for the turn. The other MiB uses his action to close to melee range with Junai.

Round 2: The first MiB fires another shot with the blazer pistol while the second tries to flank Junai and punch her out. Junai isn't dodging either of them.

Both must roll against a base difficulty of 7 because Junai has Toughness/3. The shooter's skill reduces this to 5 while the puncher's Unarmed Combat/3 reduces it to 4. But Junai trumps them by using a power, so she goes first. She uses Telekinesis to try to lift the puncher and use him as a shield. Junai uses Savvy/3 and Ranged Combat: Telekinesis/2. The target is completely caught off guard, so he can only resist with his Toughness/4. He has no applicable skill. Junai rolls 3d10 against a difficulty of 6 ($4 + 4 - 2$) and gets 7, 8 and 9. She not only interposes the MiB between herself and the shooter but manages to get him out of melee range before he can hit her. The other MiB opens fire with the blazer and rolls 6, 7, 8 and 10. Four successes, and the blazer adds three more for a total of seven. Ouch! Good thing for Junai that the damage has to get past her shield before getting to her; the MiB soaks up the heat ray and takes seven points of damage. He falls to the ground as Junai releases her mental grip.

Round 3: The MiB gets ready to take another shot, but Junai uses a power and preempts him again. She lets fly with a telekinetic bolt. The MiB resists with Toughness/4 and Resistance/3. Junai is rolling against difficulty 8, and the MiB's Resistance completely negates her skill. The player rolls and gets 10, 10 and 10 – a critical success! The GM thinks fast and relates how Junai's TK bolt blasts the MiB clear out of the alley and into the path of an oncoming truck. Junai is of the "fight smarter, not harder" school, so she takes this opportunity to beat feet. A woman in her (hopefully) delicate condition shouldn't be fighting, anyway.

Some powers allow for mental combat. This works just like physical combat except that Brains is the attack Trait. The defender uses the higher of Savvy or Nerve if actively resisting the attack or the lower of the two if caught by surprise or passively resisting. Mind Bending skill aids both attack and defense.

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

Characters in *Alien Angels* progress as a result of their adventures. They can improve their Traits, learn new skills and powers and acquire or improve resources. Traits, skills and powers can only improve one level at a time (from 2 to 3 or 3 to 4, but never from 2 to 4, for instance). Resources can improve by multiple levels at once but only if the character has done something in game to justify the new resource.

Characters gain experience – which is measured in Character Points – at the end of each game session. The base award is 1 CP; a character who appeared in the game and participated in any of the action should never get less than that. The GM should award a bonus of 1 CP for each of the following: character achieved a mission goal, character achieved a personal goal, character contributed to another character achieving a goal, the goal achieved was major, excellent role-playing, in-character actions or dialogue that entertained the group. This makes possible a potential award of 9 CP for one game. That shouldn't happen often; giving out too much experience can cause PCs to become too powerful too quickly, and that makes it hard for the GM to present them with suitable challenges. An average award of 2-3 CP should be fine, with occasional bonanzas of 4+ CP presented as rewards for especially tough games.

The chart below gives the CP costs for improving/acquiring Traits, skills, resources and powers. All purchases are subject to GM approval.

Development	CP Cost
Trait/skill	Equal to the new level
Resource	3 per level
Power	6 per level

SHREDDING TIME

ANTAGONISTS AND INNOCENT BYSTANDERS

The aliens don't have many enemies on Earth, but they have some really bad ones. The most pressing problem is the need for secrecy; the success of the mission requires that humans remain unaware of the alien presence. The backlash if Terrans found out that they're being exploited in an alien breeding scheme would destroy all hope of future friendly relations. Terran governments and investigators – and even ordinary citizens – are an ever-present threat.

The primary enemy of the colonials is, of course, the androids. The machines have hundreds of secret bases on Earth and on the Moon. Their listening posts are always alert for signs of alien incursions. Any lone alien that the androids catch on Earth will surely be killed.

By far the greatest threat that the aliens face is the prospect of their two enemies joining forces. Unfortunately for the colonies this merger is already underway. A few androids have infiltrated Terran government agencies and established bureaus of paranormal investigation. Android technology combined with Terran manpower is a frighteningly effective force. The most dangerous operatives are the dreaded Men in Black, androids who wield both government authority and extraterrestrial technology. MiBs always operate in pairs and are equipped with at least one alien weapon. Their cold exteriors hide an unparalleled thirst for revenge – only the most dedicated androids are chosen for such assignments – and their official powers allow them broad powers that other agents can't match. The only constraint on the Men in Black is that they must operate under the same cloak of secrecy under which the aliens hide.

Average Terran (frat boy)

Brawn/3	Brains/3	Looks/3
Grace/2	Hands/3	Nerve/2
Toughness/3	Savvy/2	Warmth/2

Typical Skills: Computers/1, Jumping/2, Knowledge: Sports Trivia/3, Mechanics/2, Resistance/1, Running/2, Vehicle/1 (car or motorcycle)

Common Equipment: pocket items, athletic shoes, medium-quality vehicle with hand tools onboard, six-pack of beer

Average Terran (coed)

Brawn/2	Brains/3	Looks/3
Grace/3	Hands/3	Nerve/2
Toughness/2	Savvy/3	Warmth/3

Typical Skills: Computers/2, Knowledge: Current Events/2, Performance: Dance/1, Persuasion/3, Research/2, Seduction/1, Vehicle/1 (car)

Common Equipment: pocket items, laptop computer, healthy snacks, water bottle, pepper spray

Average Terran (cop)

Brawn/4	Brains/4	Looks/3
Grace/3	Hands/3	Nerve/4
Toughness/4	Savvy/4	Warmth/2

Typical Skills: Dodge/1, Interrogation/1, Intimidation/2, Investigation/3, Knowledge: Law/1, Ranged Weapon: Pistol/3, Ranged Weapon: Shotgun/1, Resistance/1, Running/1, Unarmed Combat/2, Vehicle/2 (car)

Common Equipment: police issue pistol, nightstick, handcuffs, police cruiser with two-way radio and shotgun

Android Technician

Brawn/3	Brains/3	Looks/2
Grace/3	Hands/4	Nerve/3
Toughness/3	Savvy/4	Warmth/2

Typical Skills: Chemistry/1, Computers/2, Electronics/3, Engineering/2, Mechanics/2, Microtronics/2

Common Equipment: alien tools, scanner

Android Scientist

Brawn/1	Brains/6	Looks/2
Grace/2	Hands/5	Nerve/4
Toughness/2	Savvy/5	Warmth/1

Typical Skills: Computers/2, Knowledge/3 (three different sciences), Phaseonics/1, Research/3

Common Equipment: alien laptop, personal force field

Man in Black

Brawn/4	Brains/4	Looks/2
Grace/3	Hands/4	Nerve/4
Toughness/4	Savvy/3	Warmth/1

Typical Skills: Computers/2, Demolitions/1, Electronics/2, Concealment/2, Dodge/2, Investigation/4, Mechanics/2, Ranged Weapon (one at 2), Resistance/3, Running/2, Stealth/3, Unarmed Combat/3, Vehicle/2 (helicopter), Vehicle/3 (car)

Common Equipment: S.H.A.D.E.S., armored business suit, concealable energy weapon

EQUIPMENT

The following items are not a comprehensive list of equipment available in *Alien Angels*; such a list is outside the scope of this book. This is merely a sampling of items that are available from the Tech resource. The GM should use these as guidelines for creating other items.

Blazer Pistol (Tech/3)

This small and easily concealable energy weapon is a favorite of both the Men in Black and the Kharnashai. It is a one-handed heat energy shooter (Accuracy/0, Lethality/3) with a 20-shot capacity.

Personal Armor/Nega-Tensor Integument Energy Shield (Tech/2)

This item began as a novelty among the Nasiraiim, but its effectiveness created a demand for regular production models. A pair of P.A.N.T.I.E.S. is a personal force field generator in the shape of – wait for it – a pair of panties. The low-level shield acts as light armor and can be worn under even the lightest of ordinary clothing (or under no clothing at all; it still works). The internal power cell is good for about 12 hours of continuous use and takes six hours to recharge from house current.

Scanner (Tech/4)

The scanner is a common item issued to alien operatives. It has the ability to scan the environment within a radius of about 100 yards and alert the user to whatever it has been set to scan for. In search mode it can detect other aliens or genetically compatible males. In alarm mode it can detect potential threats such as concealed weapons. Having an active scanner gives the user a Savvy roll at difficulty 6 whenever something that the scanner is set to detect comes within range. The internal power supply is good for about six hours and takes two hours to recharge from house current.

Sense-Heightening Alien Detection Eyeware System (Tech/1)

This staple item of the MiBs uses advanced scanning technology to detect the minute differences between the bioelectric fields of aliens and those of Terrans. The wearer gets a Savvy roll at difficulty 8 to tell at a glance if someone is an alien. S.H.A.D.E.S. are also issued to human operatives who have learned the true nature of the androids and have joined the cause.

Somatically-Powered Eyeware Computer System (Tech/1)

The Morathids developed this extremely useful item; it's why most of them wear glasses. A pair of S.P.E.C.S. puts the computing power of a high-end laptop into a pair of glasses. The head-up display projects images onto the inside of the lenses and audio comes through the earpieces. The system runs off of the wearer's body heat.

LAST LIGHT OF THE TRIPLE SUN

I did this project for the Ronnies, a 24-hour RPG contest sponsored by Ron Edwards of *Sorcerer* fame. I freely admit that I did it for the challenge – I’m not normally competitive, but these things bring out the worst in me (or the best, depending on your point of view). The contest was a “game chef” style deal in which contestants were given four ingredients – suburban, hatred, girlfriend and rat – and turned loose to create a role-playing game in 24 hours using two and only two of those ingredients. If the ingredients that I used aren’t apparent after reading this document, I have failed as a writer.

Here I am at the end of my 24 hours, and the game isn’t quite finished. It still needs full descriptions of how the powers work, and I’d really like to add some more examples and explanations of Tech. And once again, I run out of time before making the character sheet. But the meat-and-potatoes is there; it’s playable if anyone wants to try it out. I’d appreciate it if you told me how it went. I can be reached at thunderdog_sa@yahoo.com with any comments and critiques that you care to grace me with.

I’d like to close with some acknowledgements of my inspiration. First, some movies that are notable in the alien invasion subgenre. *The Astronaut’s Wife* (1999), *I Married a Monster from Outer Space* (1958) and *Mars Needs Women* (1967) are all very similar to *Alien Angels* except that it’s women whom the aliens are exploiting. *Earthgirls Are Easy* (1988) is a more lighthearted take on the same theme. *The Queen of Outer Space* (1958) is an infamously bad SF take on the manless society. It was also the inspiration for the title sequence in 1987’s *Amazon Women on the Moon*. I took the idea of the man-killing plague from the webcomic *Angels 2200* by Peter Haynes and Nathaniel Savio. If you have never read this, go to www.angels2200.com and do so as soon as you’re finished here. Finally, I must cite the song “Tomorrow’s Girls” by Donald Fagen (*Kamakiriad*, 1993, Reprise Records). It was this song that gave me the framework ideas on which I built the setting of *Alien Angels*. Thank you, Mr. Fagen – I couldn’t have done it without you.