OPTIONAL RULES

No matter what route you choose, you'll sooner or later end up on Gateway Station.
—Heeyinn Galatar, Wanderer

STOP PIRACY!
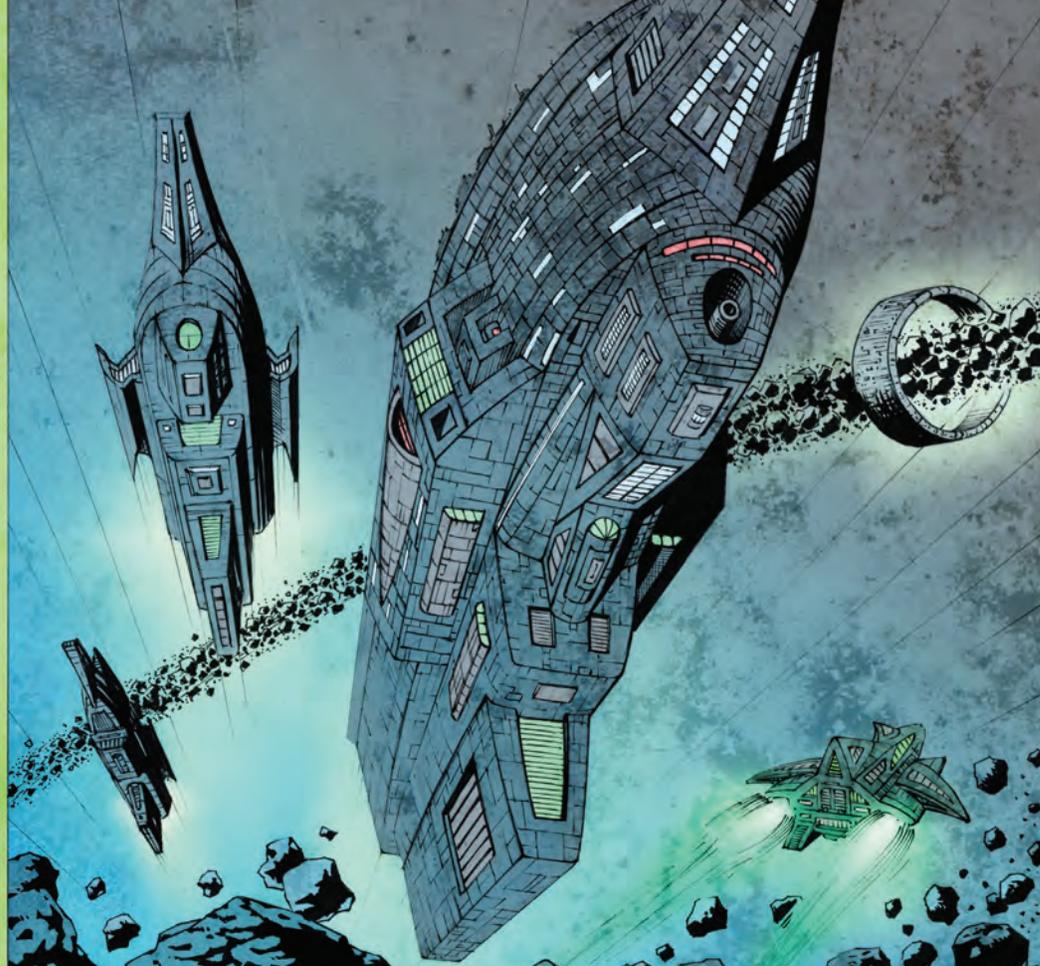
YOU ARE THE PROTECTORATE

The protectorate's propaganda is found in many places, even beyond Gateway Station.

The following rules and clarifications are optional, and were designed to enhance your game. Make sure everyone at the table agrees before introducing them!

SUBSPECIES ABILITY TAGS

Each character has a special ability or feature specific to his subspecies. These are used as Tags (see p.14), and unique to each subspecies.

- **Sharp Claws (Gor):** You can use the long and sharp nails as a weapon in combat.

- **Perceptive (Haryani):** You are astute and observant by nature.

- **Thick-skinned (Hokai):** Your skin is extremely thick and serves as natural armor.

- **Skilled (Human):** You gain an extra skill (see below) during character creation.

- **Competitive (Kiruan):** You adrenaline grants you a bonus die when in competitive situations.

- **Low-light Vision (Raé):** You can see at much lower light levels than humans.

- **Created (Shanrazi):** You gain an extra Edge during character creation.

- **Synthetic (Synth):** Choose a free body mod (see p.109) during character creation.

- **Jump (Yol):** You can jump several meters without effort.

- **Mystic Energy Source (Zerog):** You can use your own life force to activate powers and cast spells outside a mystic field.

Use these instead of the Tags listed in Subspecies section on p.13. You can still use those tags as stereotypical examples, of course.

SKILLS

To use skills in your game, you need to redefine what Edges and Flaws represent. Instead of things your character is good or bad at, use the following definitions:

- **Edge** describes a natural gift or quality of your character. Examples: *Astute, Confident, Courageous, Creative, Disciplined, Eloquent, Energetic, Intuitive, Passionate, Patient, Persuasive, Reasonable, Resourceful, Spontaneous, Sympathetic*

- Your **Flaw** describes your character's most prominent shortcoming. Examples: *Amoral, Aloof, Fanatical, Immature, Insulting, Intense, Lazy, Jealous, Judgmental, Malcontent, Mocking, Reactionary, Rude, Suspicious, Vengeful*

Mundane abilities you have learned are expressed via **Skills**. You must invest time, effort, and money into acquiring them. Skills are used like Tags, granting you an advantage when performing a specific action. The rules assume that all player characters know how to do things Vagrants do, including flying ships and wielding weapons. You can opt out of such basic abilities by making it a Flaw, or make yourself better by taking appropriate skills. Skills can even the odds a little, but will not match trained characters against experienced mystics.

CHOOSING SKILLS

During character creation, choose a number of skills depending on your Order of Mastery (Prentice: 2, Initiate: 3, Veteran: 4, Master: 5). Skills are independent from your Path, but should reflect your character's background and history.

Any mundane ability or field of knowledge can be trained and learned as a skill. Some examples include *Acting, Acrobatics, Bureaucracy, Disguise, Haggling, History, Investigation, Piloting, Protectorate Tactics,* and so on.

You can learn new skills by investing time, training, and 3 Character Points.

DRIVES

When it comes to creating Drives for your character, it is your responsibility as a player to pick goals you want to meet in the game, and it is the gamemaster's responsibility to let that happen.

Working towards and fulfilling your goals will result in an extra experience award (see below). Picking Drives that can be resolved in a session or two aren't a good idea, because they are bound to have little or no impact on the game.

> **Discuss everyone's Drives in the group and make sure they fit into the game you want to play!**

ORDER OF TURNS DURING A CONFLICT

To speed up the flow of action during a conflict, you may decide to implement a "baton-pass" style of determining the order of turns. The character or adversary that initiated the conflict goes first, then chooses who will go next. That person (or the gamemaster) takes their turn, then, in turn, chooses who will follow them. This process is followed until all participants have taken their turn, then the next round begins with the participant that acted last in the first round choosing who will act first in the second round. Combat continues in this *"I go, then I decide who goes; they go, then they decide who goes"* style until the combat is resolved.

INTERPRETING THE RESULTS

Here is a handy table to clarify how the results of bonus and penalty dice are interpreted:

Roll	Modifier
■ (1-4 on a single bonus or penalty die)	No effect.
+ (5-6 on a single bonus die)	You can adjust the result of your main die up by +1, turning any *"No"* result into a *"Yes"* result.
+ + (5-6 on two bonus dice)	As +, but add a beneficial *"and…"* statement to your result.
− (5-6 on a single penalty die)	You must adjust the result from your main die down by one, provided it turns a *"Yes"* result into a *"No"* result. If you already scored a *"No"* result, it simply stays the same.
− − (5-6 on two penalty dice)	As −, but your result gets worse by adding an *"and…"* statement.

WOUNDS VS WOUND SLOTS

In the Equinox Storygame Guide, we use the term Wounds for both the Condition slots available to your character as well as for taking injuries. This can be a bit confusing. To clarify, "Receiving a Wound" refers to taking an injury—you'll note the injury down as a Condition and mark it as a Wound.

GROUP ROLLS

Instead of rolling for yourself, you can also utilize the dice mechanics to roll for your entire group (see p.18). The question is asked for the entire group and represents a group effort. For example, "Can we escape this holding cell?", "Can we set a trap for the shanrazi warband?", "Can we survive the onslaught of the enforcer bots?" One character of the group is picked as the group leader—he is the one who rolls the dice.

The difference to regular beat-the-odds rolls is that bonuses and penalties (see **Modifiers,** p.24) utilize Group Tags as well as the role and task each member performs in the group for the task in question. Karma spent on a group roll must come from the group's Karma Pool.

Toxine and her companions Zero and Shayan have freed themselves from their holding cell and want to escape the prison station they have been put in: "Can we escape the prison station?" Toxine acts as the group's leader, rolling the dice. When counting bonuses and penalties, the gamemaster states that they have to overcome twice their number of armed guards for two penalty dice. The group takes into account their Group Tag Resourceful for a bonus die—because they believe they can use the weapons of any fallen guards during their escape. Taking two Karma Points from their Group's Karma Pool grants them two additional bonus dice. Toxine scores a "Yes, but...", so they escape at a cost—which is noted down as a Wound for each of them.

EXPERIENCE & ADVANCEMENT

Instead of one, your character now gets an average of two Character Points (CP) per session. Character Points are rewarded as follows:

ADVENTURE PROGRESS

Each character contributing to bring the story forward in a significant way gains 1 CP at the end of the session (roughly 3-4 hours of game time, as outlined on p.131).

INDIVIDUAL PROGRESS

Whenever your actions relating to your Drives have added to the story in a significant way, you gain 1 CP at the end of the session. Your actions and character development will eventually cause your Drives to become irrelevant. For example, you may have achieved the vengeance you have been seeking, you have finally found your lost relatives, have learned the secrets, or found that legendary relic. When this happens, you will need to change or alter your Drives to make them relevant again. This is highly individual, but rewards you 1 extra CP at the end of the session.

ALTERNATIVE THREAT RATINGS FOR CREATURES & ADVERSARIES

The alternative Threat Ratings on the next page state how dangerous a creature or adversary is compared to the Order of Mastery of the player character confronting it directly. If the Order listed is higher, apply a penalty die for each level of difference. If it is lower, apply bonus dice to the beat-the-odds rolls of the player character fighting the creature. Tags also apply as usual.

Gryger is a Prentice Soldier facing an Exterminator Golem. The Threat Rating of the golem is listed as Veteran, so Gryger gains two penalty dice to any roll made when facing the creature in combat.

MYSTIC CREATURES

- **Energy Swarm:** Initiate
- **Spirit Exterminator Golem:** Veteran
- **Mind Moss:** Prentice
- **Rats:** Prentice
- **Scider:** Prentice
- **Star Shark:** Veteran
- **Wall Runner:** Initiate

SPIRITS

- **Gremlin:** Initiate
- **Summoned Spirit:** One lower than the summoner's Order
- **Bound Essential Spirit:** Any
- **Hybrid Spirit Core:** Prentice
- **Aurora:** Veteran

DEMONS

- **Pestbringer:** Initiate
- **Cultus:** Master
- **Puppet Master:** Veteran

DEMONSPAWN

- **Bane:** Initiate
- **Decayer:** Prentice
- **Mauler:** Veteran
- **Swallower:** Initiate

CREDITS

www.equinox-rpg.com
www.vagrantworkshop.com