

# **CRASS EFFECT**

**A**



**GAME**

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# Crash Course in Mass Effect for the GM

The Mass Effect setting is “Space Opera”. Multiple alien races mostly getting along, a fairly optimistic outlook despite occasional setbacks. Think a cross between Star Trek and Babylon 5, with a bit of grit thrown in to stop it being too sickly sweet...

## Setting in a nutshell:

- **Main races:**
  - **Asari:** Oldest surviving space-faring race. First to discover the Citadel. Blue-skinned, all-“female” humanoid race with the ability to join their nervous system with any species via touch, enabling reproduction, mind-reading and the like. Average lifespan is over 1,000 years.
  - **Hanar:** Resembling Earth's jellyfish, hanar use unknown means to float when not in water, “standing” maybe 7 feet tall (mostly tentacle). Hanar are excessively polite when speaking, and they have strong religious beliefs regarding the Protheans, whom they refer to as "the Enkindlers".
  - **Salarians:** Amphibious, slender humanoids. Second to find the Citadel. Established the citadel Council with the asari. Very fast metabolism and minds, making them short-lived intellectual prodigies (average lifespan is about 40 years). They developed the genophage used to end the Krogan Rebellions.
  - **Turians:** Militaristic reptilian humanoids with metallic skin (protects them from the radiation of their homeworld's sun) and a distinct flange harmonic to their voices. Largest military fleet in the galaxy. They deployed the genophage that ended the Krogan Rebellions.
  - **Krogan:** Once a Council race, until the Krogan Rebellions forced the near-sterilisation of their race by the genophage. Massive reptilian humanoids, very strong and resilient. Faced with extinction, most are fatalistic and enjoy little else but fighting.
  - **Batarians:** Four-eyed humanoids. Once a Council race, until human colonial competition and disgust at their tradition of slavery resulted in them shutting down their Citadel embassy. Mostly isolationist, those encountered are usually slavers, mercenaries or terrorists.
  - **Quarians:** Humanoids. Once a council race. They created the geth as machine labour, but they became sentient and drove the quarians from their homeworlds, for which the Council took away their embassy. Now they wander the galaxy in a Migrant Fleet, seen as vagrants by most. No immune system forces them to wear environmental suits their whole lives. As a result almost nobody knows just what they look like.
  - **Geth:** Artificial Intelligences created by quarians, which then turned on their creators and drove them from their home worlds. Most encountered are uploaded into humanoid combat frames, though multi-limbed tank constructs have been seen. Until the attack on Eden Prime, no geth had been seen outside their holdings in the quarians' old empire (the Perseus Veil) in centuries.
  - **Keepers:** An odd little race of multi-limbed creatures, about the size of a large dog. They are unique to the Citadel and were there when the asari first discovered it. They don't speak or interact with other races at all. All they do is maintain the Citadel, carry out repairs, occasionally moving furniture or building/dismantling things according to some pattern. Violence against the Keepers or interfering with them in any way is punished harshly by Citadel Law.

## **Short history of recent events:**

- Humanity is new to the galaxy. They encountered the turians in 2157, there was a brief war as humanity was trying to explore mass relays that were forbidden under galactic law, and when the Council intervened humanity was introduced to the galactic community.
- Most technology is based on the “mass effect” of Element Zero (aka “Eezo”), which can raise or lower the mass of an area of space when treated correctly.
- Most people believe an extinct race, the Protheans, created the mass relays which allow instant travel between distant stars, and the Citadel. The Protheans became extinct about 50,000 years ago. Nobody knows why.
- The Citadel is a massive space station, home to over 13 million people before the geth attack. Almost every race and culture is represented there. It serves as the galaxy's political and cultural nexus. Most civilisations have an embassy there.
- In early 2183, the geth attacked the human colony Eden Prime, setting in motion a chain of events that culminated in the Battle For The citadel. A human in the Alliance Fleet, Commander Shepherd, became the first human Spectre (Special Tactics and Recon, Citadel operatives above all law but that of the Council's) and was instrumental in defeating the geth attack.
- About 6 months after the Battle of the Citadel, Commander Shepherd's ship, the Normandy, was attacked by unknown assailants and destroyed. Most of the crew, and Commander Shepherd him/herself (your choice!), were killed. It is now late 2184.

## Summary of System:

This game uses the new World of Darkness system, with some slight variations. People familiar with nWoD should check the bits on shields and special powers on pages 7-8.

Characters have a certain number of dots in an attribute and a skill.

**Basic Rolls:** Players roll a number of D10s equal to the number of dots in both the relevant attribute and relevant skill. Each die that comes up 8 or higher counts as a success. If a 10 (0 on most D10) is rolled, it explodes (it counts as a success and is rolled again, potentially adding 2 or even more successes) The more successes, the better the task was performed. 1 success is usually enough for simple tasks. More difficult tasks require more successes. Eg. Lifting a car would require 7 or 8 successes, impossible for all but the strongest characters.

Apply penalties to the number of dice rolled if the task being attempted is complicated by outside factors. So lifting a car while caught in a crossfire might cause a -3 penalty due to distraction and fear of getting shot (while they'd still need 7+successes!). Similar for being poisoned, terrified, suffering a broken limb etc.

In combat the amount of dice rolled is reduced by the Defense stat of the opponent, usually no more than 4-5, although faster or tougher opponents might have a higher Defense. Defense is listed on the character sheet of the players, and the stats section of each antagonist.

**Contested rolls:** Both parties roll the relevant dice pool (less penalties!), the highest number of successes wins.

Characters also have a **Willpower** stat. A point of willpower can be spent before any roll to:

Add a single automatic success to the roll

Add three dice to the roll

Willpower recovers completely after a good night's uninterrupted sleep.

Willpower is also rolled to avoid mental influences. For example if the players are threatened by a 5-tonne battledroid suddenly appearing and attacking, call for a willpower roll. Anyone who fails to get successes takes -3 to all their rolls while the droid is active. REMEMBER: Spending willpower means you have less dice for willpower rolls!

## Combat:

**Initiative:** Everyone rolls a D10 and adds their Initiative (Dex+Composure) to the result. Go in descending order.

**Surprise:** If anyone is caught by surprise they can make a Wits+Composure roll to catch it in time. If no successes are rolled, the person is cannot act in the first round and has NO Defense for that round apart from his armour.

**Attacking:** **Close combat:**  
Strength+Brawl for unarmed, Strength+Melee for armed.  
**Ranged combat:**  
Dex+Firearms for guns, Dex+Athletics for thrown weapons.

In either case, the Damage rating of the weapon used is added to the dice rolled unless otherwise noted (See Rocket Launchers!). For Close Combat, the target's Defense and Armour ratings are subtracted from the dice pool, so a player would roll 5 less dice if trying to hit an enemy with Defense 3 and Armour 2.

Targets of Ranged attacks do NOT apply their Defense as a penalty to the attack roll. They must look for other ways to avoid being hit, such as finding cover or diving to the ground prone, which presents its own problems...

**Other factors:** **Aiming:**  
+1 to attack roll. Takes 1 turn. Maximum bonus is +3.  
**All-out Attack:**  
+2 with close combat attacks; Player loses Defense until his next turn.  
**Autofire:**  
Short burst: Uses 3 shots at ONE target. +1 to attack roll.  
Medium burst: Uses 10 shots at up to 3 targets, +2 to each attack roll, but -1 per roll for every target above the first.  
Full auto: Uses 20 shots at any number of targets. +3 to each attack roll, but -1 for every target above the first.  
**Cover/Going prone:**  
Prone targets are -2 to hit. Cover gives -1 for barely concealed targets, up to -3 for substantially concealed targets. Targets fully behind cover get extra armour depending on the substance. A wooden door might add 1 to armour, where a foot of concrete might add 4-5 Armour. GM's discretion.

**Dealing Damage:** Once the appropriate bonuses and penalties are resolved, the remaining dice are rolled. If the penalties would reduce the dice pool to 0 or less, the player still gets to roll a single "chance" die. Any successes are damage, and subtracted from the target's shields or health.

**Shields:** Players and some enemies have "kinetic barriers", or shields. These act like extra health levels against ranged attack. Unless otherwise stated by a special kind of attack, damage is always subtracted from shields first. Once depleted, health levels may then be reduced. Shields can be regenerated in combat if you manage to spend a round without getting hit and making an Intelligence + Computers roll, which restores [successes] levels of Shield.

## **Biotics Explained:**

The term biotics refers to powers that are accessed and augmented by using bio-amps, or users thereof. The effects are produced through biological manipulation of dark energy, through controlling the electrical impulses of the nervous system to create mass effect fields from Element Zero nodules in the biotic's body. Only Asari are natural biotics, all other species must undergo exposure to Element Zero, usually while still young or in the womb, which more often than not results in terminal cancer instead of biotic ability. The various powers available range from knocking adversaries over to lifting them helplessly into the air, creating barriers impervious to enemy fire, or even unleashing small gravitational vortices that draw in enemies and environmental debris.

Biotic powers are ineffective against shields. Their use on someone with a shield will do 1 damage to their shield, but has no other effect.

### **Throw/Pull:**

The biotic rolls Resolve + Composure and adds a number of automatic successes equal to the rating of the power used. The target difficulty is the Size of the target (5 for most humanoids, although smaller areas may be targeted for lower difficulty, for example using Push on an arm to throw the target's aim off, or Pulling off the armour plating of an YMIR battlemech)

If the successes rolled = target's Size, the target is knocked prone. Each extra success moves the target [Resolve] yards in the appropriate direction.

These powers do negligible actual damage, but clever use can send enemies flying off rooftops or slamming into walls or dangerous hazards. They also knock their targets prone.

### **Levitate:**

The biotic rolls Resolve+Composure and adds a number of automatic successes equal to their Levitate. Target difficulty is equal to the Size of the object being lifted. For each success over the target's Size, the target spends 1 round lifted off the ground, unable to move or attack.

Levitate can be used on the user to "fly". A biotic who uses Levitate takes no falling damage, and can multiply their jumping distance by the number of dots they possess in the skill. While it can be used on allies, it's much harder to control. Roll as if targeting an enemy. Successes above the ally's Size add to their own Athletics for the purposes of jumping, or subtract from falling damage.

### **Warp:**

The biotic rolls Resolve + Composure. This is a ranged attack, and normal penalties/bonuses apply. Armour soak is halved, rounding up, for [dots in Warp] rounds. If the target has no armour, it deals lethal damage equal to [dots in Warp].

Warp is particularly effective against biotic barriers. When Warp hits a target with a barrier, it removes [successesx2] levels of the barrier.

### **Barrier:**

The biotic rolls Resolve + Composure, adding their Barrier in automatic successes. Success results in a protective barrier with [successes] levels, to a maximum of the biotic's Resolve + Barrier.

## Tech Powers Explained:

Tech powers are accessed through a character's omni-tool. Omni-tools are handheld devices that combine a computer microframe, sensor analysis pack, and minifabricator. They are often implanted into the forearm where a holographic display allows a user to control them. Versatile and reliable, an omni-tool can be used to analyze and adjust the functionality of most standard equipment from a distance. Most people use them as a combination of PDA, communicator, remote control for household appliances etc. But more specialised and advanced models can be obtained which allow all manner of effects, such as overloading shielding systems, advanced decryption algorithms, or even firing supercooled or superheated sub-atomic particles at enemies.

Most tech powers are ineffective against shields and biotic barriers. Unless otherwise stated, using a tech power on a target with a shield or biotic barrier will remove 1 level of the barrier, with no further effect.

Overload works on shields, but not biotic barriers.

### Overload:

Roll Manipulation + Computers + Overload against target's Defense, as a ranged attack. Success removes [dots in Overload] levels of target's shield. Once shields are down, Overload has no further effect on organics. Successful use on synthetics without shields removes health levels at the same rate as shields.

### Incinerate:

Roll Manipulation + Computers + Incinerate against target's Defense as a ranged attack. Success removes [dots in Incinerate] armour soak from target first, then attacks health. If more successes than target's Stamina are rolled in a single use of this power, target catches fire and takes damage over time. Organic targets are liable to panic.

### Cryo Blast:

Roll Manipulation + Computers + Cryo Blast against target's Defense as a ranged attack. Success snap freezes the target for [dots in Cryo Blast] rounds. Frozen targets are immobile. They have no defense and armour soak is halved rounding down as the intense cold makes it brittle.

### Hack AI:

Roll Manipulation + Computers + Hack AI - Target's Size. The target will attack its former allies instead for a number of rounds equal to successes rolled.

Note: This power is only used in combat. Use Intelligence + Computers for hacking outside of combat situations.

### Tactical Cloak:

Roll Manipulation+Computers+Tactical Cloak. Successes add directly to difficulty to be noticed by others for [Tactical Cloak] rounds. If the user attacks while using Tactical Cloak and target is unaware, they add [Tactical Cloak] dice to their roll, as surprise attack damage.



## THE STORY SO FAR: What happened in previous games.

The players are professional criminals. They have done bad things for money. Industrial espionage, racketeering, extortion, assassination, you name it. Their boss was Korden Lynch, a human. He took over the bar Chora's Den in the Citadel after the previous owner, Fist, disappeared (something involving Commander Shepherd and a massive shootout, details are sparse).

Their last big job was to steal wreckage that fell from the flagship Sovereign when it was destroyed. As an advanced geth warship even wreckage would be priceless. They blazed a merry trail of destruction through the Citadel, fighting some geth remnant forces, a few C-Sec officers and a small company of Blue Suns mercenaries who were after the same prize. Lynch didn't mind the collateral damage so much, seeing as the wreckage would fetch such a huge price. But when some of the stolen hunks of ship suddenly reactivated, killed a whole bunch of Lynch's lieutenants and (when the players destroyed them) destroyed a large section of the station, Lynch was... Not so happy. And neither was the Citadel Council, who assigned a Spectre agent to hunt down those responsible. The players were as good as dead.

Lynch wasn't so dumb as to waste good talent, but the players were a liability right now and they had to get off the station and out of Citadel space. To that end he sent them to Omega, in the Terminus Systems. They were to meet a hanar there who specialised in making people disappear from the eyes of the law.

Alas for the players, the Blue Suns were not happy about the players botching a mission worth hundreds of millions of credits. Not long after the players met the hanar a sniper round took him out and they were suddenly on the run from a huge Blue Suns force intent on taking them alive. They managed to fight their way off the station and travel to the planet Illium to meet the only name given by the hanar before he died, a volus information broker named Naza Dal. Alas, Dal was visited by the Spectre hunting them, and had agreed to trap them. They took Dal hostage, and a massive shootout and shuttle chase through the skies of Illium ensued, culminating in the players getting caught between the Spectre's battlefleet and a large Blue suns task force. They escaped as the two groups fought for the right to hunt the players down.

Unfortunately for the players, The Spectre, named Tavion, survived the battle, managed to track them down over the following months and, through a mixture of subtle cunning and brute force, captured the entire group.

## GAME SYNOPSIS:

The turian Spectre, Tavion Kelarris, has captured the players. They have each committed enough crimes, however unwittingly, to earn execution several times over. Tavion quickly makes it clear that he's not going to kill them, however, and in fact wants them to do a job for him. In return, he'll see their criminal records are wiped clean, allow them a fresh start.

He wants them to investigate an incident that may be related to the death of Commander Shepherd. Shepherd wasn't always popular, but he/she was an exceptional Spectre and earned respect from some of his peers. He earned just as much hatred from his enemies, and some of them had been up to something in the months leading up to his/her death. Tavion is suspicious.

The players are sent back to Omega to speak with the boss, Aria T'Loak. Despite the trouble they caused last time they were there they unwittingly did her a favour so she offers them protection. She knows something about intercepted Alliance communications relating to orders for Commander Shepherd, which led the Normandy into the trap where it was destroyed. She gives them the name of a spy living on Omega, an elcor named Holth, who knows more. She stresses that killing him would not be wise.

Holth is alarmed to see them, and a fight ensues. When beaten and interrogated, he admits to receiving encoded Alliance transmissions and sending them on. He does not know who sends them or who he forwards them to, but he knows where the recipient's ship will be when Holth transmits the data. A little ambush results in capturing a batarian working for an old enemy of Shepherd's called Balak, a terrorist/slave raider with a big grudge against the deceased Commander. He'll tell them where Balak is now and where he's going. Communication with Tavion will result in a plan to pick him up by sabotaging his ship, separating him from his forces.

The players will head to the planet where Balak and his men are stationed, and attempt to disable his ship's ability to use the mass relays. A bar fight, some sneaking around a space port, a few persuasion or intimidation attempts, and the trap is set. Harry Nelson will meet one of his long-lost daughters, a slave tending the bar. She tells the players that Balak has a slave camp a few jumps away working on some huge archaeological dig site. The rest of Harry's family is part of that, along with hundreds of other slaves from various races. The Spectre Tavion insists that Balak's capture will have to wait until he leads the players to the dig site. Fortunately, the sabotage device also functions as a tracker...

Tavion will send the players to do recon on the planet while he raises an attack force. When they scan the surface they'll see the batarians are excavating a ship that looks just like Sovereign, the flagship of the geth attack on the Citadel. They are instructed to go in and stop whatever is happening.

There then follows a brief assault on the planet in an attempt to get inside the hull of the Raper, find and stop Balak, and destroy a shedload of Collectors before they reboot an intact Reaper.

# SCENE I: TAVION'S CRUISER

The players begin as prisoners: Tavion was sent after them several months previously after they committed major crimes in Citadel Space. They initially evaded him, but he recently picked up the last of them. They are bound in some clever mass-effect utilising manacles that just won't break, under constant (heavy) guard, no armour, no equipment, even their implanted omni-tools are being jammed. They're herded one by one into a room with a table. 5 seats on one side, 1 seat on the other. There are gun turrets in each corner of the room, and players have seen several heavy droid weapons platforms during their incarceration. Escape is not a smart option.

Soon after they arrive Tavion himself arrives. He's a turian; tall, knees bending backwards, lizard-like features, metallic skin, metallic flange-harmonic to his voice. Turians usually have tribal markings painted or tattooed on their faces. Tavion has none. People can roll Intelligence+Lore, difficulty 3 to know that such "bare-faced" individuals are considered shady or untrustworthy by other turians.

He sits, and gestures for the players to do the same if they haven't already. A small team of droid servants brings in food and drink, making special note of player characters with dextro-amino DNA (who generally die if they eat regular food). Remind the players that while they were fed in their cells, it was nothing so rich as this food., and their last meal was hours ago. Tavion grabs a loaf of some dark bread-like food and tears off a chunk, giving them a minute to dig in.

Finally he speaks. He's polite, but matter-of-fact. He has been chasing these criminals for a long time, and once or twice they almost killed him. He relays the following during the conversation:

- By now most criminals he's captured would have been executed and thrown out an airlock.
- While the players have indeed done some very terrible things, Tavion recognises that they have talent, drive, an ability to get things done despite the odds. Qualities of a Spectre.
- Rather than traditional justice, he has an offer for them: A single job, high risk, likely to kill at least some of them. The reward is a complete pardon- all charges dropped, records erased, new identities or faces, some starting cash, whatever they need to make a fresh start.
- The alternative is to get executed and thrown out the nearest airlock. Or possibly escape, and hope that they can find a surgeon capable of finding and extracting the multiple kill-switches Tavion had implanted while they were unconscious. "<cough> Your choice."

## The job:

- By now, the galaxy knows that Commander Shepherd died after the Normandy was destroyed by an unknown vessel.
- As the first human Spectre, Shepherd made a lot of enemies, but also won grudging respect off many existing Spectres. Tavion is one such individual, and has been investigating Shepherd's death.
- Most of his leads turned up nothing, but in such a way that he's sure someone is keeping him from finding out the truth. He is certain that several people with grudges against Shepherd had a hand in his death.
- The players are not Spectres, they can go places Tavion isn't welcome. One of his more promising leads has led him to Omega (where players of the last game went to hide from the law, only to accidentally start a massive intercorporate war), where the station's overlord Aria T'loak has made it known to him that she might know something.
- The players are going to go back to Omega and investigate this lead, and follow it to conclusion.
- If anyone has reservations about going back after their unfortunate history with the place, Tavion can assure them that Aria has guaranteed their safety. From her and her forces, at least.
- If pressed, Tavion can mention that forgiveness isn't something Aria does much, so he feels that there's something bothering her about this lead too, and wants someone to deal with it.

## SCENE 2: RETURN TO OMEGA

Once the players have agreed to work for Tavion and wrapped up their conversation, he says he'll provide them with their old equipment (upgraded slightly) and transport (also upgraded slightly, including a few extra stealth systems, and given a nice dark paint job to boot), and enough time to get a bit of training in after all that time in a cell. With a reminder to keep in touch, so he knows not to activate the kill-switches on the assumption that they've run away, he gives them 5,000c spending money each, and they're off.

On docking at Omega, they are welcomed by Aria's security, who make a show of remembering their last visit, but letting bygones be bygones because Aria said so and Rule #1 in Omega is "Don't fuck with Aria". Something nice and simple like one guard reading a datapad and saying "Sarge, ain't this the group that killed a bunch of the guys and blew up a loading bay last year?" to have the sergeant respond "Nah, you're thinking of some OTHER human/asari/krogan/salarian/quarian group with the exact same names and faces. Aria said so."

They don't HAVE to accept (and feel free to add in a little brawl with a half-dozen mercs on the way to Aria if they decline, stats on page 20) but they're offered an escort to the Afterlife bar/club, where Aria is waiting, as "We might have overlooked what you did last time you were here, but Blue Suns and Eclipse sure as shit haven't. If they recognise you, there'll be a fight."

Afterlife is seedy, dark, loud and dangerous-looking. Aria oversees all from the VIP lounge upstairs, where they're directed by the guards. Plenty of guards about up there, ensuring they don't get too close to her. They're invited to sit, and Aria closes the window shutters and activates a few devices here and there, one of which totally mutes the sound of the club outside. A decent Intelligence+Computers or similar roll would allow a player to surmise that these are all countermeasures against eavesdropping and surveillance.

She gets down to business. Aria is a beautiful asari, but surrounded by not-so-tall tales of her ruthlessness and power. She stole the whole station from a krogan battlemaster in a fight, she's taken out dozens of armed guards by herself. There's a reason Rule #1 is "Don't Fuck With Aria." :

- She's not mad about the damage they caused before. Blue Suns and Eclipse were getting a little too pushy up until the players caused a war between them, and the damage to both sides has blunted their influence on Omega nicely.
- The lead that Tavion is looking for relates to intercepted communications between Shepherd's ship and the human Alliance Navy. "You may have noticed, space is a big place. You don't just find your enemy by flying about. Someone was interested in Shepherd's movements. Someone was tracking him, via one of MY informants."
- Aria's informant is an elcor (massive four-legged guys with flat boring voices) named Holth. He's been trafficking information for various parties for years, is rather good at it, and Aria almost didn't notice him slipping up with this Alliance information.
- Aria gives them his address on the station, as well as bypass codes for his door and personal security measures.
- She also explicitly states that killing him would make her very unhappy. "Teach him a lesson, if that's what you want. It'll save me the trouble. But if Holth dies, you'll WISH I'd tracked you down for the damage you did to Omega last time."

Holth has a nice apartment on the far side of the station, there are plenty of transports to get the players about. Being elcor, and therefore huge and bulky, his apartment is flat and wide, with lots of space between things. He is paranoid, and has worked in a couple of security measures that Aria's codes DON'T unlock. The players can get the front door fine, but once inside a gun turret pops down from the ceiling and a group of 10 droids emerge from hidden panels in the walls. Holth himself will emerge from the back and charge the players. He's a bit slow, but very strong, and if he hits, will cause some additional damage from knockback.

Droid stats on page 20-21

Holth stats on page 23

Once his droids are taken care of, Holth will surrender. If the players can knock him out or otherwise checkmate him, he'll call them off. The players can then interrogate him.

Elcor have no accents and cannot vary their voices like most races do to convey emotion. Instead, they preface all their sentences with a description of the tone, while speaking in a very flat, deep monotone voice. For example, an angry elcor might say "Furious rage: Get out of my house." and a scared one might say "Desperate pleading: Please, do not kill me."

The players learn the following:

- He does indeed receive Alliance transmissions, before sending them on to someone else.
- He doesn't know who sends them or who he sends them to, but he has figured out where the receiver is when he gets the information.
- Holth sends the transmission on an extremely narrow beam at a strength guaranteed to only transmit over a couple of million miles. If his calculations are correct (and they are, if you want to let anyone roll for it), then he has exact coordinates for the receiver.
- Holth is due to send another information package tomorrow via the same method. If the players want to find the next link, they'll have to be hiding near those coordinates before the transmission goes out.
- He is very grateful that Aria wanted him kept alive.

The players will have some time to buy some equipment, heal up any injuries and such before heading out to intercept whoever this new informant is. The coordinates are way out in no man's land, no planets, moons, stations. Just a blue-green dust/gas cloud that dampens sensors, so obviously a good choice for someone who doesn't want to be noticed. It also helps to hide the players' ship, and their new stealth systems make it even harder to detect. They don't have to wait too long, Holth's timing was very accurate. A small shuttle drops out of lightspeed and sails into the cloud, taking up almost the exact position Holth predicted. It's easy enough to sneak up on the shuttle from behind and disable it (players could shoot the engines, or put on space suits, float over, smash the cockpit in and drag the suffocating body back before it dies. Let them figure out what to do).

- The target is a batarian (4-eyed humanoid, generally dislikes humans a lot), calling himself Nazzip.
- He says he works for another batarian called Balak, who had a grudge against Shepherd ever since some business with the human colony of Terra Nova (People who played Mass Effect might remember him from Bring Down The Sky, where Balak tried to crash an asteroid into the colony. Shepherd stopped him, but let him go in order to save hostages).
- Nazzip knows where Balak is, and offers coordinates in exchange for his life.
- If pushed (some sort of interrogation roll), Nazzip will admit he doesn't exactly work FOR Balak. Someone else is the brains behind Shepherd's death, but being smart, they kept themselves hidden, he reckons Balak has no clue who it is either.

## SCENE 3: FINDING BALAK

What the players do with/to Nazzip is up to them, but the coordinates they get are for a system way out in the back end of the Terminus systems, where civilisation mostly amounts to pirates and bandits taking refuge after raids on automated mining facilities on the few planets that have been surveyed.

According to Nazzip, there's a small outpost on an unnamed planet at the coordinates he's provided, where people stop, drink, refuel their ships, and head on, no questions asked. He says Balak should be there for a few more days, and he has a stake in the bar there anyway, the Biotic Varren, so he visits regularly, and someone usually knows where to find him.

At some point, the Spectre Tavion will look for an update. If the players fill him in, he'll be able to provide some assistance: He knows a few things about Balak, and can secure some equipment for a plan:

- Balak is a terrorist and slave trader, with a particular hatred for humans after the Skyllian Blitz and the massacre on Torfan resulted in major defeat for the batarian people.
- Last time anyone counted, Balak had a band of around 100 batarian followers. Probably more in the form of slaves and droids.
- Balak is pretty clever, and never far away from the majority of his soldiers, so attacking him would be foolish.
- A plan would be to sabotage his ship so that when he and his boys move on, his ship fails to make the mass relay jump, separating him and making him easier to capture.
- Alternatively the players could try shadowing him to see where he ends up. He can't be going too far from the area because:
- Tavion's records show that Balak has been behind quite a few slave raids recently but not selling most of them, so he's keeping them nearby. There's a good chance they might be able to locate and rescue these slaves.

Whatever their plan, it will have to involve landing and doing some investigation to find which ship belongs to Balak, and maybe they can pick up his destination from the "locals" without causing the sort of trouble that happens when you're caught sabotaging a terrorist fleet...

Things are going to get interesting here: the planet's outpost holds a few hundred people, it's a mean sort of place, like one of those towns from a spaghetti western movie. There are only a couple of large bars, and most of the staff are slaves. This is where one of the female slaves comes up to the human, Harry Nelson and says "... Daddy?"

Yes, he's found Jessica, one of his long-lost daughters. There's probably going to be a tearful reunion, possibly where the batarian bar-owner thinks Harry is trying to solicit his slave without paying, and things might get ugly for a while. But bar fights are fun, so roll with it if it happens to go that way. Use about 5 mercs or droids as enemy stats for the bar fight (Stats page 20-21).

The players might want to make themselves scarce after that's done to avoid arousing too much suspicion. A clever quip in the right place might completely defuse things, too. After being rescued, Jessica has some useful information:

- Harry's wife Jenny and other daughter Alice are alive. They used to work here until a mean bastard named Balak bought them off the bartender, as they looked "like they could dig".
- She's heard rumours from bar patrons about Balak- sounds like he's found some kind of archaeological treasure, and has been buying up slaves to help with the digging.
- Balak shoots anyone asking questions about his employers.
- Balak is supposed to have hundreds of slaves on this desert planet, of every race from krogan to hanar. The planet's name is "Eremus".

If the bartender hasn't been dealt with, he'll interrupt here. If he has, she begs to be rescued. There's room enough on the players' ship for a few extra passengers, but not a few hundred slaves. Harry will likely insist on bringing her.

As for finding Balak's ship, they don't necessarily have to do that anymore. They can look up the planet Eremus with Tavion, and get its location. If they tell Tavion he'll recommend they not bother tagging Balak's ship as they have a location to explore now. It still might be useful to track his ship though, so if they want to go ahead with that, give them a spaceport docking bay with lots of armed (but quite corrupt!) guards and plenty of bulkheads and fuel tanks to hide behind. They should be able to come up with a plan for finding Balak's ship and tagging it.

Whatever they do there, They're going to have to go to Eremus at some stage. Again, there's time for players to buy some healing and equipment if needed.

Tavion will begin gathering a fleet to come to the players' aid, but that will take several hours, and they're best placed to find out what the hell is going on. He'll remind them that if they DO go in, be sure to remember the stealth systems he added to the ship.

## SCENE 4: EREMUS

“Eremus” (Latin for desert or wasteland, for anyone who's interested) is ancient and dead, nothing but sand dunes according to what little information exploratory probes passing this way a hundred years ago can provide. It's far out of the way for even the most desperate bandits, and its dying red sun and lack of neighbours means everyone considers it worthless.

The players have a good chance of jumping into the system unnoticed: Make 3 rolls of 6 dice rolls to represent the combines sensors of Balak's fleet and the Collector presence. To notice the players, they need to get more successes on any one roll than the ship's stealth rating, which is 3 + [successes from a Wits or Intelligence + Computers roll by whoever's manning the stealth systems]. Who they meet depends on when they arrive: If they leave for Eremus after Balak does, all the fighters are his. If they leave ahead of him, replace his fighters with Collector drones.

Hopefully, the players are unnoticed and they can sneak towards the planet. If they weren't so lucky, give them a nice wee space battle through asteroids and wreckage and stuff. Some quick rules:

- Their ship is armed with rocket launchers and a mass accelerator cannon (stats for both found with the YMIR battlemech on page 21). That's 3 weapons that can be fired by a different player in one round, while one pilots and another finds something else to do.
- The enemy ships just have a mass accelerator cannon that fires once a round.
- Their ship has armour 8 and 20 health levels.
- Enemy ships have armour 6 and 10 health levels.

However they do it, the players will get close to Eremus. Scans will reveal a major dig site near the equator. Imagery is a bit grainy (some kind of unknown interference), but it looks like Balak has uncovered a ship that looks just like the one that led the geth assault on the Citadel. Sovereign was its name...

There are signs of life down there, plenty of what look like slaves, a few guards a few droids. A cleverness/common sense roll from anyone would let them deduce that most of the guards and droids would be armed for subduing slaves, not killing them. Armour and weapons will come as a surprise to them. There are many, many ways to deal with arrival to Eremus:

- If they tagged Balak's ship, they'll find it set down right by the big ancient ship thing. An enormous entrance to the ship can be seen clearly enough. It would even be large enough for the players' ship to fit... Not that they might try that. That would be just *silly*. Still, there ARE a few anti-aircraft defenses to intimidate them. Roll a bunch of dice in secret, pretend they're in danger. You don't have to pretend, either. Have one of the shots rip off one of the ship's engines and force a crash land.
- If they haven't alerted the planet to their presence, they can set down quietly a few miles from the dig and sneak in to the slave camp on foot. Otherwise they'll have to lose or destroy their attackers. And that will mean sneaking in on foot will be more difficult as guards are doubled...
- It's evening when they arrive, the red sun is setting and the light is dim. Give them a +2 to stealth rolls if they're sneaking about.
- Harry May well want to find his wife and daughter. It won't be easy, there are hundreds of slave workers, he can't check them one by one. The overseer's office might have records to help, but it's got a guard posted outside. Even if he's taken out silently, he's in regular radio contact with his buddies, and will notice if he doesn't respond. There won't be much time until an alarm is sounded.
- They could always wait for Tavion's fleet to arrive, or send word to Tavion to bring weapon drops for the slaves to let them fight back.



If they end up with a fight on their hands in the slave camp, provide them with wave after wave of Balak's goons and the occasional Collector as a tougher challenge (Stats on page 22-23). They can try holding out for Tavion to arrive (He'll busy himself defending and rescuing the slaves, and tell the players to go on without him), or get the slaves to have a rebellion. Early on Balak can be heard on all channels, saying something like:

*"What the hell is going on out there? We're too close to rebooting the core for any delays, sort yourselves out topside or I'll have the Collectors harvest your eyeballs!"*

If they're in contact with Tavion or he's arrived in orbit, he'll contact the players after that message and say something like:

*"That's almost a perfect replica of Saren's flagship Sovereign, and they're going to reboot it. That ship will have enough firepower to wipe us all out! It'll be the geth invasion all over again! Get in there and stop him, do whatever it takes, do NOT let that ship be reactivated!"*

Whatever the reason, the players will have to leave the fight outside and venture into the dead Reaper...

## Scene 5: DON'T FEAR THE REAPER

Inside the Reaper it's cold, and the air is stale. The power is off- The slaves brought in torch lamps to illuminate the corridors, which are metallic but have a vaguely organic shape about them which is unsettling. As the players follow the lamps, there's a huge rumble and the original lighting start to come online. It seems the Collectors are getting close to realising their goal here.

They press on, following the lamps, only to be ambushed at a crossroads in the corridors by a pack of Husks, 2 per player. Husks are unpleasant cyberzombies, which shriek and claw in a most horrific fashion, with no tactics or care for survival.

Soon after those are done with, ask the players for a willpower roll. Anyone who fails begins to hear a vague whisper in their heads, putting them on edge (-1 to their next 2-3 rolls, and let them test willpower again). The atmosphere should be very oppressive. They're walking around inside a dead machine of near-godlike power, after all.

Eventually they'll reach the AI cores in the central control chamber (A Reaper wouldn't call that section of itself such a tawdry name, but the batarians don't know any better, and the Collectors aren't saying anything). It's a big chamber, big cylindrical power cores and data crystals and huge cables and other bits of scenery that might make for good cover. Balak is there, along with 10 Collectors and a massive hulking thing that looks like a dozen Husks stitched together with a giant hump one head poking out the side.

Balak is having an argument with a holographic projection of what looks like a particularly large Collector with extra eyeballs, almost spider-like. In a booming metallic voice it says:

**"NO. YOU HAVE BEEN DISCOVERED. THIS DELAY IS UNACCEPTABLE. WE ARE ALTERING THE ARRANGEMENT. ASSUMING CONTROL..."**

One of the Collectors twitches and glows brightly, and burns Balak to death with what looks like a massive biotic blast. The glowing Collector immediately steps into what looks like the AI cores and appears to... Meld with them in a storm of electricity. The whole ship shakes and the whine of rising power levels fills the air. While fusing with the AI cores, the glowing Collector spots the players and booms:

**"INTRUDERS. YOU ARE TOO LATE. KILL THEM."**

And so we have the final boss battle. The aim for the players is to destroy the Glowing Collector/AI core dealy while fending off a small army of horrors. The Collectors in the room will immediately take up defensive positions around the AI core and lay down a barrage of fire. The Scion will try to use its Shockwave ability to flush the players out of cover. Throw in as many Husks as you need to make it challenging. Collectors and the Scion won't care about hitting them if it means hurting the players. Make it clear that this is a dangerous section. You don't have to kill them outright if their health reaches 0, but there's no harm in breaking a leg or an arm, losing an eye or having half your face disintegrated.

The AI Core has no armour, but 20-30 health levels depending on how well the players are doing. The moment it's destroyed proceed to the final scene...

Relevant stats on page 22-23.

## SCENE 6: LAST EFFECT

As soon as the AI core is destroyed, the Collectors and their forces are thrown to the ground by some kind of sympathetic backlash. The place starts rumbling dangerously, and the whine of power conduits in the background starts rising steadily. A couple of consoles and data crystals explode. Might be a good time to leave.

Behind them the voice of the glowing Collector taunts them:

**"YOU LACK UNDERSTANDING, ONLY DELAYING THE INEVITABLE. WE ARE TIMELESS. ENDLESS. WE WILL FIND ANOTHER WAY."**

Time for them to run. If they can't run, they might have to make some tough decisions. Willpower rolls might let someone grit their teeth and run on a broken leg. Depends on how the game is being played, I guess.

When they get near the surface they'll start picking up Tavion on their comm channel, full of static but getting clearer as they get to the exit, calling out for them to respond.

Tavion will yell for them to get to their ship and get as far away from this planet as possible, it looks like the coming explosion will destroy a significant chunk of it.

If they damaged or lost their ship, or if they parked it too far away, Tavion will shout *"Forget it then, I'm picking up the last of the slaves in the camp center, if you want a ride off this rock you'd better get your asses down here in the next 30 seconds!"*

The Reaper begins slowly exploding either as they get to their ship (in which case have the pilot roll some appropriate rolls to dodge incoming debris and the others can shoot wreckage out of the sky), or as they dash for the camp and Tavion's transport (in which case a couple of Dex+Athletics rolls to do much the same thing are required).

A tense few moments, and the whole thing goes up as the ship barely manages to outrun the blastwave. Anyone looking back will see that the explosion was so powerful that the mushroom cloud is reaching high orbit, and the planet appears to have a very large crack in it.

That's more or less it. Tavion is impressed that whoever survived made it through. He's true to his word, and while their crimes have been too great to pardon, he will give the characters new identities. Pretty much anything the players wanted is possible to grant within reason. Harry is reunited with his family and could set up a new doctor's practice, Karok can use the cash to fund a mercenary company or go home to Tuchanka to breed/rule/whatever, Dar Killick has seen enough to publish papers on the geth and their strange flagships for life, Enur'Saia might be able to return to the Migrant Fleet, Teela has experienced what it's like to be a hero...

The end. Hope y'all had fun.

# ANTAGONISTS:

## Blue Suns/Eclipse/Generic Mercenaries:

There are many "private security organizations" in the Terminus systems. The Blue Suns have a are well-equipped, well-trained, and usually operate with mech support (LOKI and YMIR mechs are common). Eclipse spend less on mechs and more on tech and biotic support, and have more special abilities.

**Troop:** Professional soldiers, well-versed in tactics.

**INT:** 3                    **STR:**3                    **PRE:** 3

**WIT:** 3                    **DEX:** 3                    **MAN:** 3

**RES:** 3                    **STA:** 3                    **COM:** 3

**Size:** 5

**Health:** 7

**Shields:** 2

**Defense:** 3 (+3 armour)

**Skills:** Computer 2, Investigation 2, Athletics 3 Brawl 2, Drive 2, Firearms 3, Stealth 2, Weaponry 2, Intimidation 1

**Abilities:** Blue Suns/Generic: None. Eclipse: ONE tech or biotic ability of your choice.

**Weapons: ONE of the following!**

**Assault rifle:**

**Dam:** 4                    **Capacity:** 30                    **Notes:** Poor vs. Armour. Armour is +1 against assault rifle fire. Semi and full auto fire supported.

**Shotgun:**

**Dam:** 4                    **Capacity:** 8                    **Notes:** Poor vs. Armour. Armour is +1 against Shotgun fire. Shotguns have 9 again to damage.

**Captain:** Elite troops, usually commanding small operations. Versatile and dangerous.

**INT:** 4                    **STR:**3                    **PRE:** 3

**WIT:** 4                    **DEX:** 4                    **MAN:** 3

**RES:** 3                    **STA:** 3                    **COM:** 3

**Size:** 5

**Health:** 7

**Shields:** 7

**Defense:** 4 (+4 armour)

**Skills:** Computer 3, Investigation 3, Athletics 4 Brawl 3, Drive 2, Firearms 4, Stealth 2, Weaponry 2, Intimidation 3

**Abilities:** Blue suns/Generic: Overload 2, Cryo Blast 2. Eclipse: Overload 2, Cryo Blast 2 OR Biotic Barrier 2, Warp 2.

**Weapons: BOTH of the following!**

**SMG:**

**Dam:** 3                    **Capacity:** 30                    **Notes:** Poor vs. Armour. Armour is +1 against SMG fire. Semi and full auto fire supported. -1 to hit at "long" range.

**Shotgun:**

**Dam:** 4                    **Capacity:** 8                    **Notes:** Poor vs. Armour. Armour is +1 against Shotgun fire. Shotguns have 9 again to damage. Useless beyond "medium" range.

**LOKI Mechs:** Human-sized mechs, lightly armed and armoured. Common security everywhere.

**INT:** 0      **STR:** 3      **PRE:** 0  
**WIT:** 0      **DEX:** 2      **MAN:** 0  
**RES:** 0      **STA:** 4      **COM:** 0

**Size:** 5

**Health:** 5

**Shields:** 0

**Defense:** 2 (+2 armour)

**Skills:** Firearms 3

**Abilities:** None

**Weapons:**

**Pistol:**

**Dam:** 3      **Capacity:** 8      **Notes:** Poor vs. Shields and Barriers. Half damage, rounding up.

**YMIR Battlemech:** 12-foot tall human-shaped weapons platforms, heavily armed and armoured.  
Their only tactic is to advance while firing, occasionally stopping to fire a rocket.

**INT:** 0      **STR:** 7      **PRE:** 0  
**WIT:** 0      **DEX:** 2      **MAN:** 0  
**RES:** 0      **STA:** 6      **COM:** 0

**Size:** 9

**Health:** 15

**Shields:** 20

**Defense:** 2 (+7 armour)

**Skills:** Firearms 4

**Abilities:** Upon death, YMIR mechs trigger a self-destruct sequence, with an explosion powerful enough to bring down some buildings. Players should be given just about enough time to get out of the danger zone.

**Weapons:**

**Twin-linked Mass Accelerator Cannons:**

**Dam:** 5      **Capacity:** N/A      **Notes:** 8 again to damage. Often fired to pin enemies in cover as it advances.

**Rocket Launcher:**

**Dam:** 6\*      **Capacity:** N/A      **Notes:** \*Damage is not applied to attack roll! Instead it is added as automatic damage on a successful hit!

**Collectors:**

Nobody knows much about the Collectors. Most people don't even believe they exist. They appear to be based behind the Omega 4 mass relay, which nobody has ever passed through and returned from, and they occasionally appear in the Terminus systems to barter their advanced technology for biological quirks- Mostly sentient species with odd cancers or mutations. They resemble humanoid, bipedal insects, covered in armoured chitin plates (many have wings that let them make short flights, much like a jetpack), and often employ powerful biotic abilities. None of them have any tech abilities. They often employ terrifying expendable weapons created by implanting sentient humanoids with cybernetics and melding them together, like Husks and Scions.

**Collector: Strange bipedal four-eyed insectoids with advanced technology****INT:** 4      **STR:** 4      **PRE:** 3**WIT:** 2      **DEX:** 4      **MAN:** 3**RES:** 4      **STA:** 3      **COM:** 3**Size:** 5**Health:** 7**Shields:** 7**Defense:** 2 (+5 armour)**Skills:** Computer 3, Investigation 3, Athletics 4 Brawl 3, Drive 2, Firearms 4, Stealth 2, Weaponry 2, Intimidation 3**Abilities:** Biotic Barrier 2, Warp 2. In addition, they have wings allowing them to fly short distances.**Weapons:****Assault rifle:****Dam:** 4      **Capacity:** Inf      **Notes:** Poor vs. Armour. Armour is +1 against assault rifle fire.  
Semi and full auto fire supported.**Husks:** Synthetic “zombies”, lightly armed and armoured. Expendable Collector shock troops.**INT:** 0      **STR:** 3      **PRE:** 0**WIT:** 0      **DEX:** 3      **MAN:** 0**RES:** 0      **STA:** 3      **COM:** 0**Size:** 5**Health:** 3**Shields:** 0**Defense:** 2 (+2 armour)**Skills:** Brawl 3**Weapons:****Claws:****Dam:** 2

**Scions:** Hulking conglomerations of cybernetics and corpses with powerful biotic attacks.

**INT:** 0            **STR:** 7            **PRE:** 0  
**WIT:** 4            **DEX:** 2            **MAN:** 0  
**RES:** 0            **STA:** 6            **COM:** 4

**Size:** 9

**Health:** 15

**Shields:** 20

**Defense:** 0 (+8 armour)

**Skills:** None

**Abilities:**

**Shockwave:** A biotic attack which sets off a chain of explosions between the Scion and its target.

Anything caught in the line of fire (a beam about 3 metres wide) takes damage and must roll

Stamina+Resistance (Difficulty 2) to resist knockback.

Dam: 4

**Holth:** Elcor information broker.

**INT:** 3            **STR:** 6            **PRE:** 3  
**WIT:** 4            **DEX:** 2            **MAN:** 2  
**RES:** 4            **STA:** 6            **COM:** 3

**Size:** 9

**Health:** 15

**Shields:** 10

**Defense:** 2 (+5 armour)

**Skills:**

**Brawl** 2

No empathy or socialise skills. Assume all relevant computer and hacking skills are 3-4, as you prefer.

## Tavion Kalarris, Citadel Special Tactics and Recon:

Elite agent of the Citadel Council, with advanced training and equipment, extralegal authority, and no moral qualms about doing whatever is necessary to achieve his objectives.

INT: 4      STR: 3      PRE: 3  
WIT: 4      DEX: 4      MAN: 3  
RES: 4      STA: 3      COM: 4  
Size: 5  
Health: 8  
Shields: 8  
Defense: 4 (+5 armour)

### Skills:

|               |   |              |   |                 |   |
|---------------|---|--------------|---|-----------------|---|
| Academics     | 2 | Athletics    | 4 | Animal Handling | 1 |
| Computers     | 3 | Brawl(fists) | 4 | Empathy (lies)  | 2 |
| Crafts        | 2 | Drive        | 3 | Expression      | 2 |
| Investigation | 4 | Firearms     | 4 | Intimidation    | 3 |
| Medicine      | 2 | Larceny      | 2 | Persuasion      | 3 |
| Occult        | 3 | Stealth      | 3 | Socialise       | 2 |
| Politics      | 2 | Survival     | 3 | Streetwise      | 2 |
| Science       | 3 | Weaponry     | 4 | Subterfuge      | 2 |

**Abilities:** Overload 2, Cryo Blast 3, Incinerate 2, **Also ALL biotic abilities!**

**Weapons: ALL of the following!**

### Spectre Pistol:

Dam: 4      Capacity: 30      **Notes:** Special ammo negates the usual drawbacks of a pistol.

### Spectre Shotgun:

Dam: 4      Capacity: 8      **Notes:** Special ammo negates the usual drawbacks of a shotgun  
Spectre Shotguns have 8 again to damage.  
Useless beyond “medium” range.

### Other notes:

### Special Tactics and Recon:

Tavion is a Spectre. He can go anywhere, do anything, and answers only to the Citadel Council. His mission is to bring back the players (who were responsible for massive civilian casualties back on the Citadel) preferably alive, but dead will do if alive becomes too much hassle.

### Tavion's Mercenaries:

Tavion has a whole company of mercenaries at his disposal. If you need to use them, use the Mercenary template, but give the Troops Overload 2 and the Captain Overload 3 and Barrier 3.

**Note:** It really isn't the plan to have the players ever attack Tavion. His stats are included just in case they're needed.



## Going to the Shops: CASH EFFECT

If the players are zipping through the scenario, why not give them a visit to the markets to buy some shiny things that'll make shooting and blowing things up much easier? Omega and Illium both have VERY relaxed trading laws. You can find almost anything, for the right price...

Players each have 1,000 credits on them, more if they choose to loot the bodies of whoever they kill. Be generous with loot on corpses, but remember that this is all black market stuff, so prices are high and dangerous people will notice them buying a lot of stuff.

### **Medigel: 700c per dose**

Instantaneously heals [Intelligence + Medicine] health levels. Using in combat is a full action. Quarrians heal half that amount rounding down, due to their weak immune systems.

### **Frag grenade: 1,000c**

3 yard blast radius, anything caught within takes damage: Roll 4 damage, and add 4 automatic successes. Armour reduces damage taken, but Defense is useless.

### **EMP grenade: 4,000c**

3 yard blast radius, any electronic devices (omni-tools, scanners, civilian vehicles etc) caught within cease to function for a scene. Defense is useless.

**Shield Damage:** Roll 4 damage, and add 4 automatic successes. Lose that many Shield points.

Once without shields, geth and other synthetics take damage from EMP grenades like a frag grenade, except armour soak is halved, rounding down.

### **Ammunition modifications:**

These plug into most projectile weapons and modify the properties of the shot. They last ONE SCENE of combat, and require replacement after that. Thanks to embedded copyright protection, they cannot be repaired.

### **Incendiary ammo: 5,000c**

If a shot causes damage, the target is set on fire, and takes 1L damage per round until extinguished.

### **Cryo ammo: 5,000c**

If a shot causes damage, target takes a penalty to all rolls equal to damage dealt, due to numbing cold, for 1 round. If the penalty beats the target's Stamina, he is immobilised for 1 round and armour is halved, as per the Cryo Blast tech power.

### **Phasic ammo: 7,000c**

A successful hit only deals 1 damage to Shields, while the rest passes through as if the shield didn't exist. If target has no shield, the weapon deals 1 less damage.

### **Shredder ammo: 5,000c**

Shots with this weapon gain 9 again on synthetic targets (or 8 again if they already have it), but LOSE all "roll again" properties against organics. If the weapon already has 8 again, the shooter can now re-roll any 7s on the attack roll, although only 8+ still counts as a success.

### **Anti-personnel ammo: 5,000c**

Shots with this weapon gain 9 again on organic targets (or 8 again if they already have it), but LOSE all "roll again" properties against synthetics. If the weapon already has 8 again, the shooter can now re-roll any 7s on the attack roll, although only 8+ still counts as a success.

## Teela, asari biotic assassin:

*“To appreciate the heights of virtue, one must wallow in the depths of depravity.”*

Those words have formed the basis for your outlook on life for nearly 300 years.

You'd always assumed being virtuous again was just a matter of stopping on the dark path you were heading down and simply turning back. Recent events have resulted in a LOT of depravity though, and when you look over your shoulder you're not so sure you can see any virtue behind the piled of corpses and broken promises.

You never really considered the consequences catching up with you until that Spectre tracked you down. You weren't expecting a turian biotic, that's for sure. Or the fact that he poisoned your drink. But he has you now, locked up in some massive ship of his. Some people are called to be heroes, to stand above the common masses, rise to every challenge, soldier on, bloodied but unbroken, inspire others to new heights of glory. It really would have been nice to get a chance at being such an individual. But the chance never came. Maybe it was a mistake to wait for an opportunity for heroism to arrive. You should have been out there BEING a hero.

Too late now though, isn't it?

## Other characters:

**Dar Killick, the salarian:** His genius is sometimes annoying. It will get him into trouble some day when he discovers something he really shouldn't have. And without his tech, a Salarian bleeds more easily than most. It'd be regrettable if I were the one hired to kill him when the time comes. Still, I'm sure he'd appreciate the humour of it before the knife slid home...

**Gatatog Karok, the krogan:** Even for a Krogan, he's angry. A lot of people mistake him for being stupid. It's always their last mistake. There's a big difference between being dumb and just not being complicated. And about the only thing in the galaxy more dangerous than a big angry Krogan is a big angry Krogan with a *plan*. And Karok has been VERY thoughtful on that front of late...

**Enur'Saia, the quarian:** Oh, he's a shifty one. Sneaky, cunning, and a damn fine shot with that rifle of his. Still, nobody likes Quarrians, what with their vagrant shady ways, and that whole business where they accidentally created the most dangerous race of A.I.s to ever threaten the galaxy. Combine that with his race's frankly embarrassing vulnerability to common diseases and he's glad he has a team to watch his back, even if he doesn't want to admit it.

**Harry Nelson, the human:** He worries too much. He's a good medic, so maybe the whole respect-for-life thing gets in the way of the things we sometimes have to do. The job doesn't normally suit his type, but he fits in pretty well. He's seen Batarian atrocities, probably firsthand judging by the way he looks when he hears any mention of them in the news. When your back's against the wall, it's amazing what you find you're capable of.

## Enur'Saia, quarian Infiltrator:

You can't go home now. Not after what you did.

What started out as a Pilgrimige, a coming of age, turned into the realisation that some of the quarians who never came home *just didn't want to return*. One thing led to another, and suddenly you were working for Korden Lynch on the Citadel. Infiltration, hacking, extreme long range assassination, you developed a real flair for it.

You should have known that last job was too good to be true. Nothing good comes of stealing geth technology. It turned on you all, and a lot of people died as a result. You've never TERRIBLY guilty about it before, but recent developments have started putting your life in perspective. Recent developments like that Spectre, Tavion, managing to play you at your own game and outfox you with a clever combination of stealth and psychological warfare, the sniper's best tool and arch-nemesis.

If the Migrant Fleet ever found out you had a hand in the disaster... Well, sitting in a cold cell awaiting execution, their opinions don't seem to matter now. You've had a new family for ages. They're strange, borderline psychotic at times and extremely dangerous, but they're the closest to kin you have.

## Other characters:

**Dar Killick, the salarian:** A technical genius in most respects, but nobody beats a Quarian at manipulating A.I.s. He's very logical and doesn't speak much, and that's not very endearing, but he's dependable and possessed of a dry sense of geek-humour once you get to know him.

**Gatatog Karok, the krogan:** Mother always warned me about krogans. She told stories of the old Warlords who made killing and battle an artform. If the Salarians and Turians hadn't nearly destroyed them all with the genophage, Karok might have been one of them. Big, mean, and clever enough to appear stupid. Great to go drinking with, but don't expect him to carry you home when you pass out.

**Teela, the asari:** She looks cute, but I've seen her crush a man's skull *with her brain* for grabbing her ass. I don't think she's evil, exactly, but she does seem eager to experience the darker side of the job. Living a thousand or so years must give them an odd perspective on life. Usually makes you unshockable. But lately she's been looking kinda brooding. Something's bothering her.

**Harry Nelson, the human:** Ah, Harry. Another victim of circumstance, I can empathise with that. He's had it rough, with the Batarians and losing his family and all. No, it's not common knowledge, but to a Quarian most computer files aren't secure. And yes, if he knew I hacked his diary he'd beat me to death with my own leg, doctor or no...

## Harry Nelson, human medic:

Finally, things really can't get any worse.

Lynch had you by the balls. Even just a hint that your family might have survived the batarian slave raids made you his loyal servant. You fixed up his wounded lackeys, stole and cheated and killed for him, in the hopes that his word was true and he could find and free your wife Jenny, and daughters Alice and Jessica.

He probably never knew anything about them. You just dared to hope. And things went from bad to worse; That monumental catastrophe on the Citadel, the horrendous mess that arose when you tried to escape... And now the Law has caught up with you. There's nowhere left to run. Probably going to die soon. Spectres aren't much for due process. That's it. Your beautiful wife Jenny, your daughters Alice and Jessica, you'll never see them again.

Damn those batarians. You've done bad things, but you were never a slaver. You always held on to some shred of dignity.

## Other characters:

**Dar Killick, the salarian:** The brightest light burns quickest. They only live about 40 years, so they cram as much in as they can. Dar is a wizard at mechnronics, almost an artist. But he's damned hard to relate to. If he was a Human he'd be some combination of autism and OCD, but apparently *all* Salarians are like this...

**Gatatog Karok, the krogan:** Just like all the warrior races the old sci-fi shows were about, but without the pussyng around and biting social commentary. Karok's built for fighting and winning, and I've seen him do a lot of both. I'm bloody glad he's on your side. And while he doesn't gush praise or soppy sentiment, I know he respects my ability to patch him up when he's taken some nasty hits.

**Teela, the asari:** It's a strange species that can reconcile doing such horrible things with personal development. Teela is deadly, and has no qualms about doing nasty things to other people. And yet she sees it all as a step on the road to enlightenment or something. Is there no black and white with Asari?

**Enur'Saia, the quarian:** I don't get him. He says he's turned his back on his family and he's making his own path. I can respect the Independence thing, but I don't buy the rest. He must miss them.

## Gatatog Karok, krogan warrior:

This is actually a little surprising.

Not the part where the job on the citadel went sour and you had to run for it. Not even the part where your attempts to escape Citadel law enforcement triggered a corporate war and got everyone on both sides of the law hunting your skulls. Crazy stuff happens from time to time. Got to learn to adapt and survive it. It's what krogan are best at.

It's not even surprising that a spectre tracked you down and managed to take you in alive. The Citadel's elite agents have all sorts of tricks up their sleeve. No, what's surprising is that you're still alive; Spectres are above the law, and most of them would rather pass judgement by butting a bullet in your head than go through all the paperwork of courts and jailtime. Especially after some of the things YOU'VE done.

No, this Spectre, this Tavion... He's keeping you alive. He wants something from you. Maybe information. More likely a job. And if a Spectre doesn't want to get his hands dirty, it's probably a very unpleasant job.

Still... got to learn to adapt. Survive. It all comes down to survival.

## Other Characters:

**Dar Killick, the salarian:** I don't hate individual Salarians for the genophage sterilising most of my people. That's naive and dumb. Still, he's soft and not much use in a straight fight. And of course his race DID invent the genophage... Right now though, he's still useful, and worth respect for his admittedly great talent with technology. Killing him would weaken the group, and that would be stupid.

**Teela, the asari:** What she lacks in brawn she makes up in speed and biotics. And when she fights, I can't help but admire the brutal efficiency. She'd make a worthy opponent, if it came down to it. It'd be a shame to kill her though, she's fun to have around. Fights break out a lot more often.

**Enur'Saia, the quarian:** He doesn't seem to care that the rest of the galaxy dislikes his kind. I can respect that. The sneaking and skill with a ranged weapon, I can respect that too. But he lies to himself, tries to pretend he doesn't miss his folks. That's stupid. If he doesn't come to terms with it somehow, it's a distraction that'll get some of us killed. If it comes to that, I'll make damn sure he's first to die.

**Harry Nelson, the human:** He's handy to have around. Not much this guy couldn't patch up. He's been through a lot and probably lost more, but he's still fighting. A very Krogan sentiment. I can respect his strong morals too, as long as they don't get in the way of the job.

## Dar Killick, salarian techie:

The reactivation of sovereigns AI cores was... Unexpected. More unexpected was its ability to produce powerful mass effect fields. Nearly killed us. Instead, we destroyed it. Should have made us heroes. Yes, destroying it killed thousands in the blast, but left unchecked it would have killed many times more. Moralistic Citadel Security doesn't like to see it that way.

Options afterwards were obviously limited. Lynch was angry. We were wanted throughout Citadel Space. No real choice but to go on the run. Didn't end well; Started a war between Blue suns and Eclipse mercenary companies. Nearly killed a Spectre. Just made him angry instead. He tracked us down, one by one. Cunning. Resourceful. Turian biotics unusual, was not expecting to be knocked out by a kinetic blast. Not unexpected that my luck would eventually run out.

Incarceration is... Surprising. Far more efficient to kill us. Saves tax credits and prison space. Lowers probability of escape drastically. Suspect this Tavion character has vested interest in our survival. For now, at least. Interesting. Would surmise that he wants us to do something for him. Probably dangerous. Still... don't have much choice.

## Other Characters:

**Gatatog Karok, the krogan:** Big. Strong. Resilient. Cunning fighter. Resistant to manipulation however, cleverer than he looks. Doesn't much like me, but recognises my skills and what they add to the group. Best keep on his good side, if he has one.

**Teela, the asari:** Strong biotic. Dangerous. Strange personal goals, deliberately being the villain to later appreciate being the hero more fully. Philosophical debate with her is very invigorating. Vast lifespan gives her culture a very long-term view of things. Noticing a wistfulness towards atonement for past deeds. Perhaps she's seen enough darkness.

**Enur'Saia, the quarian:** Excellent infiltrator and sniper. Knowledge of artificial intelligence is astounding. Could learn much from him, if he cared to talk about it. Quarian immune system is similarly fascinating. Too risky to infect him for study though. Far more useful alive.

**Harry Nelson, the human:** Good doctor, very good knowledge of multispecies anatomy and physiology. Would be useful in assassination, but moral qualms about the more unpleasant aspects of the job can cause hesitation. Best leave such tasks to the others. Misses his family. Emotional attachment causes him unnecessary stress, but also provides a focus. Curious balance.

## Teela, Asari Biotic Assassin:

INT: 3      STR:2      PRE: 3  
WIT: 3      DEX: 4      MAN: 3  
RES: 4      STA: 2      COM: 5

Size: 5  
Initiative: 8  
Health: 6  
Shields: 6  
Defense: 3 (+3 armour)  
Willpower: 9

### Skills:

#### Mental (-3 unskilled)

Academics 2  
Computers 0  
Crafts 1  
Investigation 1  
Medicine 0  
Occult 3  
Politics 2  
Science 1

#### Physical (-1 unskilled)

Athletics 4  
Brawl(fists) 4  
Drive 2  
Firearms 3  
Larceny 0  
Stealth 1  
Survival 1  
Weaponry 2

#### Social (-1 unskilled)

Animal Handling 0  
Empathy (lies) 3  
Expression 3  
Intimidation 0  
Persuasion (seduction) 4  
Socialise 2  
Streetwise 2  
Subterfuge 1

### Abilities:

**Alluring and compatible:** Asari have an exotic magnetism along with a figure that is pleasing to the observer, regardless of species. They gain 9 again on social rolls involving seduction and charm.

#### Biotics:

Push: 5      Pull: 3      Warp: 4      Levitate: 3

#### Equipment:

1 Medigel dose (Instantly heals [Intelligence + Medicine] health levels on target.)

#### Weapons:

##### Spectre Pistol:

Dam: 4L      Capacity: 8      Notes: Poor vs. Shields and Barriers. Half damage against them, rounding up.

#### Kinetic Gauntlets:

Dam: 4B      Notes: Spend 1 willpower to channel a biotic power through a successful strike instead of dealing damage.

## Enur'Saia, Quarrian Infiltrator:

INT: 2                      STR:2                      PRE: 2  
WIT: 5                      DEX: 5                      MAN: 3  
RES: 3                      STA: 3                      COM: 2

Size: 5  
Initiative: 8  
Health: 7  
Shields: 5  
Defense: 4 (+3 armour)  
Willpower: 6

### Skills:

| Mental (-3 unskilled) |   | Physical (-1 unskilled) |   | Social (-1 unskilled) |   |
|-----------------------|---|-------------------------|---|-----------------------|---|
| Academics             | 1 | Athletics               | 3 | Animal Handling       | 0 |
| Computers(AI)         | 5 | Brawl                   | 0 | Empathy (lies)        | 1 |
| Crafts                | 1 | Drive                   | 2 | Expression            | 0 |
| Investigation         | 2 | Firearms(Sniping)       | 5 | Intimidation          | 1 |
| Medicine              | 0 | Larceny(Security)       | 4 | Persuasion            | 0 |
| Occult                | 0 | Stealth                 | 5 | Socialise             | 1 |
| Politics              | 0 | Survival                | 1 | Streetwise            | 2 |
| Science               | 2 | Weaponry                | 2 | Subterfuge            | 1 |

### Abilities:

**Natural Mechtronics Experts:** All non-social rolls involving knowledge or use of technology/mechanics can use the higher of Wits and Intelligence, and such rolls all gain the "9 again" rule.

**Weak Immune System:** Medigel heals half the normal amount rounding down.

**Dextro amino acid DNA:** Non-Quarrian or -Turian food or flesh or bodily fluid is fatally poisonous.

#### Tech Powers:

Overload: 3      Hack A.I.: 4      Tactical Cloak: 4

#### Equipment:

2 Medigel dose (Instantly heals [Intelligence + Medicine] health levels on target.)

#### Weapons:

##### Upgraded Sniper rifle:

Dam: 6L      Capacity (5)      **Notes:** 8 again to damage and half armour  
soak, rounding down. -3 penalty to hit unless aimed first.  
**Preysight scope:** Can track targets behind doors/crates etc.

##### Silenced Pistol:

Dam: 3      Capacity: 8      **Notes:** Poor vs. Shields and Barriers. Half damage against them,  
rounding up.  
**Silencer:** Detecting shot requires 3 successes on Wits+Compusure roll.



## Harry Nelson, Human Medic:

INT: 4            STR:3            PRE: 2  
WIT: 3           DEX: 4            MAN: 2  
RES: 4           STA: 3            COM: 4

Size: 5  
Initiative: 7  
Health: 7  
Shields: 7  
Defense: 3 (+3 armour)  
Willpower: 7

### Skills:

#### Mental (-3 unskilled)

Academics 1  
Computers 1  
Crafts(medical)2  
Investigation (autopsy) 4  
Medicine(field) 5  
Occult 0  
Politics 0  
Science 2

#### Physical (-1 unskilled)

Athletics 3  
Brawl 3  
Drive 1  
Firearms(SMG)3  
Larceny 1  
Stealth 1  
Survival 1  
Weaponry 1

#### Social (-1 unskilled)

Animal Handling 0  
Empathy 2  
Expression 0  
Intimidation 1  
Persuasion 1  
Socialise 1  
Streetwise 1  
Subterfuge 2

### Abilities:

**Ambidextrous:** No off-hand penalties

#### Equipment:

5 Medigel doses (Instantly heals [Intelligence + Medicine] health levels on target.)

Medical Omni-tool (+1 to medicine rolls)

#### Weapons:

##### Pistol:

Dam: 3            Capacity: 8            **Notes:** Poor vs. Shields and Barriers. Half damage against them, rounding up.

##### Upgraded SMG:

Dam: 4            Capacity: 30            **Notes:** Poor vs. Armour. Armour is +1 against SMG fire. Semi and full auto fire supported.

## Gatatog Karok, Krogan Thug:

INT: 3            STR: 5            PRE: 4  
WIT: 2            DEX: 2            MAN: 2  
RES: 3            STA: 5            COM: 2

Size: 6

Initiative: 5

Health: 15

Shields: 7

Defense: 2 (+5 armour)

Willpower: 6

### Skills:

#### Mental (-3 unskilled)

Academics 0  
Computers 1  
Crafts 3  
Investigation 0  
Medicine 1  
Occult 1  
Politics 1  
Science 1

#### Physical (-1 unskilled)

Athletics 4  
Brawl(Grappling) 4  
Drive 1  
Firearms 4  
Larceny 0  
Stealth 1  
Survival 2  
Weaponry(Improvised) 4

#### Social (-1 unskilled)

Animal Handling 0  
Empathy 0  
Expression 0  
Intimidation(Physical threats) 4  
Persuasion 0  
Socialise 1  
Streetwise 2  
Subterfuge 0

### Abilities:

**Blood Rage:** Free action. It lasts for the duration of the fight or until the Krogan successfully calms down. While active, the krogan ignores wound penalties, and Brawl, Firearms and Weaponry are +1, but all other skills are -2. Snapping out of it requires a Willpower roll. Failure means they stay in the fight, or shoot to kill instead of taking prisoners.

#### Weapons:

##### Assault rifle:

Dam: 4            Capacity: 30            **Notes:** Poor vs. Armour. Armour is +1 against assault rifle fire.  
Semi and full auto fire supported.

**Incendiary Ammo:** A shot causing damage sets the target on fire, it takes 1L damage per round until extinguished.

##### Shotgun:

Dam: 4            Capacity: 8            **Notes:** Poor vs. Armour. Armour is +1 against Shotgun fire.  
Shotguns have 9 again to damage.

**Kinetic punch ammo:** On dealing damage, target rolls Stamina or is knocked back a number of metres equal to damage dealt.

## Dar Killick, Salarian Techie:

INT: 6                      STR: 2                      PRE: 1  
WIT: 4                      DEX: 4                      MAN: 4  
RES: 3                      STA: 2                      COM: 4

Size: 5

Initiative: 7

Health: 6

Shields: 7

Defense: 3 (+4 armour)

Willpower: 7

### Skills:

#### Mental (-3 unskilled)

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| Academics           | 4 |
| Computers           | 3 |
| Crafts(Mechtronics) | 5 |
| Investigation       | 5 |
| Medicine            | 1 |
| Occult              | 0 |
| Politics            | 2 |
| Science             | 5 |

#### Physical (-1 unskilled)

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| Athletics | 3 |
| Brawl     | 1 |
| Drive     | 2 |
| Firearms  | 2 |
| Larceny   | 1 |
| Stealth   | 2 |
| Survival  | 1 |
| Weaponry  | 1 |

#### Social (-1 unskilled)

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Animal Handling | 0 |
| Empathy         | 1 |
| Expression      | 1 |
| Intimidation    | 0 |
| Persuasion      | 2 |
| Socialise       | 1 |
| Streetwise      | 1 |
| Subterfuge      | 1 |

### Abilities:

**Eidetic Memory:** Salarians have near-perfect recollection of facts, people, places, names etc.

**Hyperactive metabolism:** Salarians only need 1 hour of sleep a day, and process thoughts and emotions far quicker than other races. As a result they only live to about 40.

**Encyclopaedic Knowledge:** You know a bit about everything. You can roll Wits+Intelligence when confronted with something new to remember something relevant from a show/paper/news bulletin

**Mechtronics:** Specialisation of Craft skill. Mechtronics is the ability to jury-rig working devices by clobbering together disparate pieces of equipment, eg. Overloading a personal shield generator to make a grenade, making the rocket launcher off a YMIR mech suitable for humanoid use, etc.

#### Tech Powers:

**Overload:** 3      **Incinerate:** 5      **Cryoblast:** 4

#### Equipment:

1 Medigel dose (Instantly heals [Intelligence + Medicine] health levels on target.)

#### Weapons:

##### Pistol:

Dam: 3                      Capacity: 8                      **Notes:** Poor vs. Shields and Barriers. Half damage against them, rounding up.

**Phasic ammo:** A successful hit only deals 1 damage to Shields, while the rest passes through as if the shield didn't exist. If target has no shield, the weapon deals 1 less damage.

##### SMG:

Dam: 3                      Capacity: 30                      **Notes:** Poor vs. Armour. Armour is +1 against SMG fire. Semi and full auto fire supported.