

STARFINDER



DEAD SUNS
ADVENTURE PATH

THE UNOFFICIAL

DEAD SUNS PLAYER'S GUIDE

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As the first Starfinder Adventure Path, Dead Suns doesn't rely on any player material beyond the Starfinder Core Rulebook. Even though Starfinder doesn't have the volume of material to work with that Pathfinder does, players may want some advice when they are getting ready to play in this adventure path. This guide is intended to help them create characters that will fit well within the Dead Suns story and provide guidelines without spoiling the plot.

At the beginning of the campaign, the PCs have come to Absalom Station, either to join the Starfinder Society or to find some other kind of work. They initially have the opportunity to conduct an investigation on behalf of the Starfinder Society. Most likely, this will be as new or prospective Society members, but they may simply be people the Starfinder Society decides will be useful allies. During the investigation, they interact with corporate, government, and other entities of the Pact Worlds system, explore Absalom Station and more mysterious locations, and encounter alien creatures.

Later, PCs will be able to fly starships, travel to other planets, and uncover ancient secrets. As one might expect from Starfinder, there will be interactions with previously unknown cultures, as well as conflicts with known entities, both living and undead.

Disclaimer: This guide is built on imperfect knowledge. At the time of writing, only Incident at Absalom Station has been published. Although the adventure contains a synopsis of the entire adventure path, there are many unknown details that will be revealed as the later chapters of the campaign are published.

CREATING CHARACTERS FOR DEAD SUNS

The following information provides some advice to players selecting rules options for their Starfinder characters.

ALIGNMENT

Although the adventure path does not assume the PCs have any specific alignment, the PCs will be part of or closely associated with the Starfinder Society. The Society is made up of "adventuring scholars" who seek to "advance the cause of knowledge." The Starfinder Society is "one of the most cosmopolitan and egalitarian organizations" in the Pact Worlds system. Player characters' motivations and outlook should be aligned with the Society's goals of making discoveries and gathering and disseminating knowledge, both ancient and modern, for the benefit of all. At a minimum, they shouldn't

actively try to behave in a way that will make the Society look bad. The Society's administration "frowns on outright theft, wars of aggression, and, especially, the exploitation of previously uncontacted cultures" as their agents carry out the organization's mission (Starfinder Core Rulebook 479).

THEMES AND CLASS OPTIONS

Dead Suns is a wide-ranging campaign that begins on Absalom Station then moves out into the Pact Worlds system and beyond. Nearly any theme and class combination can be fun, but knowing a little bit about what to expect may help players maximize their character's participation in the story. As written, the adventure path ranges from character level 1 through level 12.

While any theme could fit within the Dead Suns campaign, the themes most closely tied to the campaign arc are themeless, ace pilot, scholar, spacefarer, and xenoseeker. Any character class will have plenty to do during the course of the campaign. The individual backgrounds provided below also have suggestions for themes that would be well-suited for those characters.

There is no wrong choice for improvisations, tricks, mods, connections, specializations, revelations, fighting styles, or magic hacks. For the mystic, however, the connections most strongly tied to the concepts in the adventure path are Akashic, Empath, or Star Shaman.

STARSHIP COMBAT ROLES

The Dead Suns Adventure Path assumes that the PCs will have access to a starship to serve as "their home and their base of operations throughout the campaign" (Incident at Absalom Station). The adventure path also contains encounters involving starship combat. As such, players should familiarize themselves with the starship combat rules in Chapter 9 of the Starfinder Core Rulebook and should coordinate with each other to ensure that key roles are filled.

Most starships that the PCs will use can be flown with only a pilot, but in order to maximize their ship's combat effectiveness, players should cover as many of the five roles as possible: captain (limit one), pilot (limit one), gunner (limit to one per weapon mount), engineer (no limit), science officer (no limit). It is also advisable to take ranks in skills that allow you to fulfill multiple roles, in case a fellow PC becomes incapacitated.

LANGUAGES

The variety of races and the mobility of people in the Pact Worlds mean that player characters will find it helpful to speak any of the prevalent languages listed on page 40 of the core rulebook. Calling out specific languages that would be helpful might spoil certain elements of the plot. Therefore, to help language selection when preparing to play in Dead Suns, it is sufficient to say that player characters should not be required to invest extra resources into learning Akitonian, Aklo, or Triaxian.

RACES

Any of the races in the Starfinder Core Rulebook will be well suited for this adventure.

SKILLS AND FEATS

There is no single skill that comes into play more often than others in the Dead Suns Adventure Path, so PCs should have skills that generally aid in self-sufficient exploration—both physical exploration and the exploration of knowledge. Skills like Athletics, Computers, Culture, Diplomacy, Engineering, Life Science, Medicine, Mysticism, Perception, Physical Science, Piloting, Sense Motive, and Survival would all be useful to put ranks into.

No single feat stands out as a necessity for this adventure path.

PLAYER CHARACTER HOOKS

The following information is designed to provide you with some optional background information that you can use when creating your character.

COMMON BACKGROUND

If you want to provide a reason for all the PCs to be together on the shuttle at the start of the adventure, you can give all PCs the following information as part of their backgrounds:

You have come to Absalom Station looking for a new opportunity. Even if you were originally from the station, you've been away for a while. Now, you find yourself in need of something new. Maybe you need a job. You might be running from someone or something. Perhaps you simply need a change of pace or scenery. Whatever your reasons, you came across Duravor Kreef's ad on your local infosphere:

"Free transportation to Absalom Station! Absolutely no credits required! The Starfinder Society will pay the transportation costs for qualifying candidates. No obligation! Just attend a small meeting to discuss the opportunities available as a member of the most prestigious explorers' society in the Pact Worlds system."

An infosphere address after the advertisement put you in touch with a local travel agency that booked you on a transport. You gathered your personal belongings and made whatever arrangements you needed to make. Before long, you were seated in your transport, headed to Absalom Station and ready to begin a new phase of your life.

After arriving within the Station's sensor coverage, your transport moved to a holding position and waited for a chartered shuttle, the Okimoro, to arrive and take you down to the docking bay. The shuttle captain told you that he'd been directed to hook up at docking bay 94 and the trip would take about an hour from the last pick-up point. He complained about how long this job has taken because of the quarantine zone that the "Port Control goons" put in place while the "pinhead lawyers" resolve a dispute over the disposition of a salvage ship called the Acreon. Unfortunately, he'd left his commlink to Port Control open and they took offense at his comments. The captain quickly shut the cockpit door, so you only heard the muffled shouts and curses from the ensuing argument.

Left to your own devices, you eyed the refreshment dispenser in the back of the cabin and sized up the other travelers who responded to Kreel's offer.

The players can introduce their characters to each other during the trip down to the station.

INDIVIDUAL BACKGROUNDS

These backgrounds provide players with links to various organizations or activities that may play a part in the Dead Suns adventure path. You can use the examples below as-is or simply as inspiration to work with your GM and come up with your own background connections.

Similar to the campaign traits included in Pathfinder Adventure Path player's guides, the goal here is to provide hooks for roleplaying. Unlike campaign traits, there are no specific rules benefits associated with these options. However, the GM may decide that circumstances connected with your background warrant the inclusion of bonus, a hint, or similar boon. The GM might also allow you to invoke your background for such assistance on a limited basis (perhaps once per gaming session).

Some of the details start off a little vague in order to prevent conflict with later parts of the adventure path, which have not yet been published. The information here also represents the PCs' connections as they are at the start of the campaign. As the PCs' power and influence increases, the level of help their connections can provide may increase, as well. They may even lose some contacts and gain others. In the cases where a person in the character's background can help in acquiring or selling certain items, the contact has no effect on item prices or item levels. This is simply a story element that can be used to explain how the PCs can get access to certain tools or sell off treasure.

Absalom Station Gang Affiliation: When you were younger, you had to deal with one or more of the gangs that claim portions of the city on Absalom Station. These weren't necessarily the high-profile gangs like the Threepiece Girls, the Six Tips, or the Lowriggers, but they were strong enough to protect their own, local interests. Perhaps you were a local priest, serving the community and preaching to the downtrodden. You might have been a street urchin, destined for membership in one of the gangs. You might even have been a hardened bounty hunter, using your rough background to find your targets. Either way, you learned how to recognize a gang's territory and move through it without drawing too much attention to yourself. You also had enough sense to know who to avoid and who you had to respect.

At some point, you helped one of the gang members in a tough spot. You might have helped them get medical attention after a back-alley fight, spoke up for them to the local cops and kept

them from going to jail (that time), or performed some other simple service. That gang member appreciates your help and is willing to return the favor, as long as it's a not too big a favor. This contact can also help you find sources or buyers for special gear, even if acquisition, ownership, or sale of the items in question is illegal. Your connection to Absalom Station's gang element may be a mark against you when dealing with law enforcement agencies.

Suggested theme(s): Bounty Hunter, Priest, Outlaw, Themeless

Academic Background: You have spent a considerable amount of time in an academic environment, like Kemanis University or the Arcanamirium on Absalom Station. You might have been a student in any field of the physical or social sciences, a visiting priest learning more about your faith, or an avid learning looking for information about alien races. Regardless of where this place of learning was or why you were there, you were fortunate to spend time studying with a visiting lecturer from the University of Xenarcheology and Xenanthropology on Castrovel. This scholar taught you some things about their area of expertise, but they also shared with you their insight into the workings of academia. Combined with your own experiences, this knowledge is helpful when working through the politics and bureaucracy of institutes of higher learning and gives you a little advantage when trying to use them for research.

During your time together, you provided some aid to the scholar, such as helping them with a breakthrough in their work, providing well-timed information to thwart an ambitious rival's attempt to discredit them, or simply providing emotional support to help them keep going when their research stalled. This scholar remembers you fondly because of and may be in a position to help you with a small favor. Additionally, the lecturer has some influence with the various schools and may be able to help you acquire or sell esoteric knowledge or magical items.

Suggested theme(s): Priest, Scholar, Xenoseeker, Themeless

Corporate Connections: You have connections among the movers and shakers of the Pact Worlds' economy. You have some relationship with an executive assistant, assistant department manager, or other functionary at a similar level in one of the interplanetary corporations with headquarters on Absalom Station. Your contact might have helped you get small contracts flying cargo or personnel transport missions. Perhaps you were an up-and-coming young executive yourself and made friends in the company. You might even have been hired as part of the company's private security and got to



know some of the regular employees. Through these connections, you have insight into how business is really conducted in the Pact Worlds system. You aren't privy to any company's most dangerous secrets, but you know a little bit of the gossip. You also know how to maneuver in the corporate world, allowing you to set up appointments with officials, conduct minor business deals, or give advice for getting around government bureaucracy.

Your contact can also help you find buyers for a wide variety of trade goods, either from their own company or by connecting you with companies that deal with the materials you are selling. The contact may also be able to help you find suppliers for special equipment, including starship parts, and reliable contractors who can perform the modifications crews inevitably want made on their ships.

Suggested theme(s): Ace Pilot, Icon, Mercenary, Themeless

Corpse Fleet Involvement: Sometime in your past, you came in contact with Eox's Corpse Fleet. Part of the fleet attacked your ship, colony, or home planet or attacked friend or a loved one when you weren't there. You might have been part of a group hired by representatives of the Eoxian government to hunt down Corpse Fleet members. You could be a holy warrior dedicated to ridding the universe of the threat posed by the rogue undead. Perhaps you were a young starship pilot who faced off against a Necroglider flown by a more experienced foe.

As a result of your experience, you developed an obsession with—or at least a strong interest in—the Corpse Fleet. Even if you didn't specifically conduct research about it, you paid attention to every detail you came across. As a result, you have a basic understanding of the Corpse Fleet. You can identify its common ships and know something about the crews they carry and how they are organized. You also know the names and some basic profile information of the Fleet's key leaders.

Your knowledge of the Corpse Fleet also translates into limited knowledge about the undead, in general. You also know where to find or sell magical and mundane items that are either used by the undead or can be used against them.

Suggested theme(s): Ace Pilot, Bounty Hunter, Priest, Themeless

Cosmonastery Student (Solarions only): You conducted your training at the Cosmonastery of the Empty Orbit on Absalom Station. You might have been at the top of your class or just barely managed to complete the graduation trials, but you graduated. During your stay, you might have focused your learning to maximize your combat prowess, dedicated yourself to spiritual enlightenment, or developed your intellectual understanding.

You have friends and colleagues in the Cosmonastery and most of them are still happy to see you when you visit. These contacts can help you find information relating to solarion lore, stellar cosmology (in both physical and spiritual terms), and the kasatha civilization. Contacts in the Cosmonastery can also assist you in obtaining or selling magical and mundane items and information associated with stars and black holes.

Suggested theme(s): Mercenary, Priest, Scholar, Themeless

Diplomatic Relations: You are connected to the Pact Coun-

cil through a friend, relative, or acquaintance who serves as a junior administrator or similarly low-level worker at the Plenara, the Council's headquarters on Absalom Station. You might have developed your contacts as a Council staff member yourself, perhaps gaining some notoriety for your quick wit and charm. You may have been a junior member of Planera security, making friends among the more cerebral members of Council personnel. You might even have been brought in as part of a team of experts to help with preparations for when the Council meets with new, sentient species.

Your contact performs basic support tasks for the Council and has no direct influence on any of the Pact Worlds' ambassadors, but can provide help or advice in handling certain diplomatic problems or challenges involving interplanetary law. Your contact can also provide you with inside information on some of the political issues facing the Pact Worlds, though this information will be limited by the contact's level of access. The contact may also be able to help you find buyers or sellers of technological or magical items from other planets, as well as collectors of artifacts connected to specific cultures, whether within the Pact Worlds system or beyond it.

Suggested theme(s): Icon, Mercenary, Xenoseeker, Themeless

Forbidden Lore: Some part of your life has been dedicated to the study of the multiverse's most dangerous secrets. This interest may have come from a personal experience with a bizarre entity or effect or from friends or other connections who were members of a fringe group like an Elder Mythos Cult, the Cult of the Devourer, or even supporters of the Dominion of the Black. Perhaps you worked with members of such groups, getting in way over your head—and in trouble with the law—before you realized what was really going on. You might have an interest in what those with otherworldly knowledge have learned about alien creatures throughout the galaxy. Whatever the affiliation, you were forced to delve into knowledge that you later realized you really didn't want to know. But the more you discovered, the more you were driven to learn. Your experiences and occasional tendency to share tidbits of what you know—intentionally or not—can sometimes make people around you uncomfortable.

You have some familiarity with the more perilous cults and esoterica found in the Pact Worlds (and elsewhere). While this doesn't give you encyclopedic knowledge of dark lore, you know enough to recognize it when you see it. You also know where to buy and sell artifacts and information associated with these topics. Not all of these places are strictly legal, however, so you may not have great relations with the authorities in those areas.

Suggested theme(s): Outlaw, Scholar, Xenoseeker, Themeless

Law Enforcement Connections: You have some connection to the public peace keeping authorities on Absalom Station, either Absalom Station Police, a local crime prevention organization in the Spike, or even the Pact World Stewards. You may have taken contracts to find criminals that the police couldn't locate on their own. You might have been a member of a local security force. Or, perhaps you were a criminal with a conscience who provided the police with critical evidence to solving a case. Whatever your association, you have a friend, relative, or acquaintance who serves in the organization or have just done a lot of research and interviewed a lot of cops

about how the police conduct their work.

You have a basic understanding of how police conduct an investigation, including a limited knowledge of how to handle a crime scene. You also know about the kinds of places that the police go to gather information. Also, because of your interest or personal connections, you have a contact on the police force who can provide some information or minor assistance. This contact can also help you find sources or buyers for special gear, as long as acquisition, ownership, or sale of the items in question is not illegal. Your connection to one of Absalom Station's law enforcement agencies may be a mark against you when dealing with the station's criminal element.

Suggested theme(s): Bounty Hunter, Mercenary, Outlaw, Themeless

Mining Background: You grew up in a mining colony in the Diaspora or elsewhere in the Pact System. You know the hard work that miners do, either from direct experience or from living with friends and family who labored in dangerous environments to supply the raw materials that literally build up the Pact Worlds' civilizations. You might have been a pilot carrying miners or extracted goods to and from colonies. You might have served as part of a protection team, making sure a company didn't lose its claim to an aggressive competitor. You might even have been part of a team that explored space for new resources.

You know first-hand what can happen when things go wrong in those dangerous environments. Some years ago, you lost someone you care about—a friend, a relative, or a partner—in a mining accident. You met a Starfinder, a dwarf named Duravor Kreele, at the memorial service for the victims. He had lost a cousin in the accident. There were people who said the company that ran the mining operation had been cutting corners, but that might have just been a way for the families to have someone to blame. You know some companies do cut corners, but not all of them run unsafe operations.

You later realized that you couldn't waste any more time on tiny, lifeless hunks of stone and metal, so you reached out to Kreele. He said he could help you find work on Absalom Station and would even sponsor your membership in the Starfinder Society.

You've got some savvy about how to survive in the harsh environment of space, more than the softskinned, planet-bound folk and Absalom's pampered elite, anyway. You also keep in touch with folks back home, so you've got access to some basic information about current mining interests and the most visible operations. These contacts might also be able to help you find or sell certain equipment or machinery and may even be able to help in the trading of raw materials.

Suggested theme(s): Ace Pilot, Mercenary, Spacefarer, Themeless

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