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## What is a Field Report?

A Field Report isn't an adventure module, like in Dungeons & Dragons or Pathfinder. It's an event, like a comic book crossover or storyline, for "Masks: a New Generation". You can plug Field Reports into an ongoing game, or begin a new game with the report as your starting point. They're intended to provide guidance to new GMs, as well as usable content for GMs of any skill level.

Each Field Report is structured as a series of **moments**, which either spotlight specific playbooks or provide pivotal scenes where the team can make a difference in the larger event. As GM, you will lead the group through a mixture of team moments, playbook moments, villain fights, and dramatic scenes. The Field Report includes NPCs and villains that can help populate these moments.

Not every playbook is represented here. That's okay! If a GM or player has an idea for a new moment that spotlights their playbook, play it out! Similarly, the GM can ask players for feedback on how their moment ought to go, and how to tailor it to their characters.

# The Premise

*"When the Blot came to Earth, we knew how they got their name. Their ships blotted out the Sun. They tried to blot us out next."*

Alien baddies from outer space appear in their saucer-shaped, city-sized megaships. Hordes of identical infantry pour out of landing craft to begin the takeover, starting with the city where our protagonists reside. Weird attack aircraft fly overhead, to be met with fighter jets and missiles. Human heroes face off against extraterrestrial champions. At first, our best weapons are useless. But a key vulnerability is identified, a new technology is devised, or a leader is defeated, and the tide is turned. The Earth is saved! At least until the sequel.

A common variation is the alien infiltration. The invaders are here, but they're among us, taking over insidiously instead of through military conquest. The moments presented in this Field Report include both types, and leave it to the group how to portray the overall invasion.

Alien invasions are popular in comic books and superhero films. They provide an easy way to bring heroes together, a clear but difficult problem for them to overcome, and a variety of ways to demonstrate both their powers and their heroism.

## The Setup

The Invasion Field Report functions as an arc ("Masks" core book, chapter 9), specifically the "Invasion (Aliens)" type and subtype.

What is the impulse of the arc? In other words, why are the invaders here, anyway? You as GM should look at the PCs you have, then look for ways to tie it into their backstories or existing plots. For example, if the group has an Outsider or Nomad, the invaders might be known to those PCs as conquerors, and may have even followed the PC to Earth. A star-spanning Legacy might already be fighting them elsewhere. A Soldier may brief their team with secret ACTION intel about the invaders.

If none of the PCs have an obvious tie that you want to exploit, try one of the following:

- To acquire raw materials and resources for future conquests
- To challenge or capture the best of humanity's heroes and villains
- To pursue someone or something dangerous or valuable, and extract it from Earth at any cost
- To occupy and fortify the world against yet another invading force
- To control or destroy something humanity has developed, such as a weapon, power source, or teleportation device

## When Our Team First Came Together...

What if the invasion is the inciting incident for the team? The Bull might have been modified as an anti-alien weapon. The Newborn might be a prototype weapon that sides with the good guys after being activated. The Transformed could be the result of alien experiments on abductees. And so on.

If you start a new campaign with this event, answer the questions as normal. Don't require any player to have an invasion-related origin, however. Sure, the Harbinger might have come back in time to stop the aliens from altering Earth's climate, but the Nova has been wielding celestial theurgy for a year already, and the Beacon has been training with swords since childhood. This is okay. This story exists to serve the heroes' stories, not the other way around.

## Variations

What if the invaders aren't from outer space? Even if their origin and motives are different, the same moments can apply.

- They're a prehistoric empire that's just awoken after eons of stasis
- They're from the Inner Earth or another plane of existence
- They're magical beings from another plane or the land of dreams
- They're humans from a parallel dimension or alternate timeline

Even if they're extraterrestrials, they can have some access to magic or psychic powers, if that's an element in your game - especially if one or more PCs possess such powers.

## Beacon Drives

At the start of the event, the GM can offer to let anyone with Beacon Drives change unmarked drives. The following drives are likely to be a part of the event:

- Lead the team successfully in battle
- Take down a threat all on your own
- Outperform an adult hero
- Save a teammate's life
- Drive a fantastical vehicle
- Earn the respect of a hero you admire
- Travel to an incredible place (or time)

# Safety Tools

If you aren't already familiar with safety tools in tabletop gaming, please check out this resource:

*The TTRPG Safety Toolkit is a resource co-curated by Kienna Shaw and Lauren Bryant-Monk. The TTRPG Safety Toolkit is a compilation of safety tools that have been designed by members of the tabletop roleplaying games community for use by players and GMs at the table. You can find it at [bit.ly/ttrpgsafetytoolkit](https://bit.ly/ttrpgsafetytoolkit).*

It's easy to treat the invaders as aggressive fiends, bent on conquest. But this kind of othering has been used in the real world to dehumanize real people, or to justify awfulness on the side of the "good guys". Plus, not every group of players will feel comfortable just blowing up a mothership full of thinking, feeling people, even if they're on the other side of a conflict.

For this reason, before starting the Invasion event, please discuss it with your players. Address any and all player concerns about the content you envision. If any players are not comfortable going forward with it, you should either rework or abandon the event.

If players have concerns about the content, but are willing to play through an adjusted version, you can suggest any or all of these constraints:

- One or both sides of the conflict use energy weapons that can incapacitate without necessarily being instantly lethal
- The bulk of the invaders are non-sentient robots, remote-operated drones, or protected by exo suits that force them to retreat or surrender if sufficiently damaged
- Certain outcomes (destruction of population centers or motherships) won't happen; military victories will happen in other ways

## Content Warnings

- Invasion/colonization
- War and wartime combat
- Potentially serious injury or death
- Mass violence and social chaos
- Refugees and evacuees fleeing violence, including family separation
- Discrimination

# Characters

Here are sample characters that represent different parts of the event. Name, gender, ethnicity, etc. are all up to the GM to change if they want.

The GM should try to tie these characters into one or more PCs' backstories, or to some other supporting NPC. For example, the Star may idolize Loren Lessa, and the Outsider's people might have prior dealings with the Extraterrestrial Emissary.

During play, when a representative of some group should show up, the GM should try to reuse the same characters if possible, making them the "face" of that group. For example, the team can run into PFC Wilson's unit whenever they interact with ordinary troops.

## Field Marshal Belay - the Military Commander

*"We're going to win this! I'm.... going to win this. I have to."*

Hailing from Ethiopia, Field Marshal Belay rose through the ranks with a winning combination of strategic genius and personal charisma. She was an unorthodox officer, with an interest in unconventional tactics and unlikely conflicts. Ironically, her expertise at wargames against hypothetical opponents (such as aliens or zombies) propelled her to international attention when aliens did invade. Now, she's got to apply her theoretical studies to a practical problem for the first time. The world is watching.

Belay wants the team to cooperate with her when there's a large-scale operation in the works.

**Drive:** to save humanity, whatever it takes

**Core Condition:** Insecure

**Encounters:** a strategic planning session; a field outpost overlooking an important battle; fighting the alien assassin who infiltrated High Command

**Typical Label Shifts:**

- "You have to coordinate with us. We win this thing through strategy, not impulsiveness." (Superior up, Freak down)
- "I think we can save everyone, but we're not going to do it by charging into this thing with guns blazing." (Savior up, Danger down)
- "Sometimes, making the hard choices leaves a mark on your soul. Learn to live with that." (Superior up, Mundane down)

## Private First Class Wilson - the Grunt

*"Bloody 'ell, what haven't I seen today? Just hand me that magazine. No, the ammo, not a printed magazine."*

An Australian by birth, Wilson joined the military for the training, benefits, and - honestly - the fun. His grandest dream was to eventually leave the service to get a houseboat and go fishing. Now he's flat out in the middle of this alien war, everyone's got an order for him, and if he screws it up, there goes the houseboat. No worries.

Wilson wants the team to help him achieve mission objectives on a battlefield.

**Drive:** to just make it out of this bloody mess alive!

**Core Condition:** Hopeless

**Encounters:** fighting on the ground; taking out a key invader asset (e.g. a communication relay or shield generator); rescuing civilians trapped by invaders; comforting hurt or scared civilians

**Typical Label Shifts:**

- "You're overthinking it, just get out there and trust your gut" (Freak up, Superior down)
- "Guns or powers, no mercy, just give these exties the business" (Danger up, Superior down)
- "We're here to save the civvies. But to do the job, we can't be like them." (Savior up, Mundane down)

## Loren Lessa - the War Correspondent

*"Conquest and colonization is wrong. We all know it, so why does everyone keep doing it?"*

A famous journalist from the Philippines. Even after losing a hand in a dangerous war zone, Loren Lessa has never given up on her resolve to tell the story of war's effects on humanity. She has contributed incriminating evidence in the trials of several warlords. Her compassionate coverage of refugees, and searing indictment of unhelpful politicians, has opened borders and wallets. Now it's time for her to see what all mankind is made of.

Lessa wants the team to look at what's happening honestly, and help whoever they can, whatever the cost to themselves or some larger objective.

**Drive:** to document humanity at war

**Core Condition:** Angry

**Encounters:** embedded with troops in the field; filming a catastrophe; revealing something the brass overlooked or want covered up

**Typical Label Shifts:**

- "You can't just say you're helping people. You have to listen to what they need first."  
(Mundane up, Superior down)
- "You go where you're needed, and you see what's happening there, and you do what you know is right. That's all it is." (Freak up, Superior down)
- "Everyone in this business has got a story worth hearing. Even the invaders. Yeah. Even them." (Mundane up, Danger down)



# Professor Pulsar - the Ultra-Scientist

*"There comes a time in everyone's life when duty transcends personal desires. For me, that duty is to science."*

A former villain inventor turned head researcher of the Pulsar Science Institute (PSI). Professor Pulsar now analyzes all manner of ultra-tech gadgets, cosmic phenomena, unusual superpowers, and more. As an ex-villain, he's still under close scrutiny by ACTION, but so far his reform seems to be genuine.

Pulsar wants to promote the development of science and technology for the good of the planet, and to atone for his past misdeeds.

**Drive:** to understand and communicate science to others

**Core Condition:** Guilty

**Encounters:** at a PSI facility; studying alien tech in the wake of an attack

**Typical Label Shifts:**

- "They don't understand us, just as we don't understand them. It's okay. Be yourself - not an imitation of someone else." (Freak up, Mundane down)
- "People are like gears in a clock, meshing and working together to tell time. The world needs gears. But it's better to be a watchmaker." (Superior up, Mundane down)
- "Of course soldiers carry weapons. But wars are won with the brain, not the gun." (Superior up, Danger down)

## Rahar Vega - the Extraterrestrial Emissary

*"I have traveled far and braved much danger to come here. Now I offer you an arrangement..."*

An alien from a different species and culture than the invaders, but who followed their trail to Earth and is now making a spot for themselves among the humans. Rahar's true powers and motives are a mystery, but the GM can introduce them doing any or all of the following:

- Sell advanced arms and tech - for a price
- Provide intel and support to the highest bidder, human or invader
- Attempt to broker peace with the invaders (whether the terms are fair to Earth or not)

**Drive:** to further their species' interests in this time of conflict

**Core Condition:** Afraid

**Encounters:** cooperating with the civilian leadership; hovering in a spacecraft high over a battlefield; making a backroom deal with somebody

**Typical Label Shifts:**

- "Sometimes the way to defeat two predators is to let them fight each other." (Superior up, Danger down)
- "All intelligent beings benefit from peace, even when they pursue war." (Savior up, Danger down)
- "You must know truthfully before you can act effectively." (Superior up, Freak down)

# Villains

The rank and file of the enemy forces are treated as their own villain. You can use only one of these to represent all the invaders, or mix and match to represent a coalition of forces. Use the stat block to represent an entire unit on the battlefield, not individuals!

If you want to include them as supporting characters in another villain's fight, remove one or two of their conditions.

Some of these villains have "supporting units" listed. These can be introduced when you make villain or condition moves. For example, a unit of Soulless Superdrones might call in a bombing run or artillery strike via their gunships and tanks, forcing the heroes to take cover or protect civilians.

## The Soulless Superdrones

*"TARGETS CONFIRMED AS HUMAN SUPERHEROES. OPEN FIRE. ALL WEAPONS."*

**Note:** This enemy represents one of three typical invader forces, the others being the Wrathful Warriors and the Horrifying Horde.

The glowing eyes of the robots is the first thing you see. The second is how unsettling they are. They move with inhuman precision and startling speed. They don't make a sound. And no matter how hard you hit them, they just keep...on....coming....

Variants:

- The chrome skeleton
- The multi-limbed attack bot
- The floating cylinder studded with sensors and weapons

Supporting units: floating gunships; robot tanks; spy drones

**Generation:** Bronze

**Drive:** to further the conquest of Earth as per their programming

**Abilities:** Relentless robotic durability, powerful energy weapons

**Conditions:** Afraid, Hopeless, Insecure

**Moves:**

- Power through even serious damage
- March in lockstep, attack in unison
- Summon waves of identical units

# The Wrathful Warriors

*"You puny pink punks can't stop us! Come and learn a lesson, young ones!"*

**Note:** This enemy represents one of three typical invader forces, the others being the Soulless Superdrones and the Horrifying Horde.

Muscular, boisterous, as likely to carry axes and swords as they are blaster rifles, these swaggering cosmic fighters are here on Earth for one thing - a fight! They will boast of their conquests, challenge each other to competitions or duels, dominate the weak, and mock the defeated. But for all their posturing, they are bright enough as a culture to have developed interstellar travel, and Earth's heroes underestimate their intelligence and cunning at their own peril.

Variants:

- The green, purple, blue, or violet-skinned muscular humanoid
- The lion-, lizard-, or bird-person

Supporting units: aerospace fighter craft; giant war-wheels

**Generation:** Bronze

**Drive:** to achieve victory and glory on the battlefield!

**Abilities:** Superhuman might, versatile weapons

**Conditions:** Afraid, Guilty, Hopeless

**Moves:**

- Laugh off an attack
- Boast of doing the impossible - and do it
- Roar for reinforcements

# The Horrifying Horde

*"KZZZAETETHAQAAEEETHH"*

**Note:** This enemy represents one of three typical invader forces, the others being the Soulless Superdrones and the Wrathful Warriors.

Scuttling, skittering, sprinting, leaping - these things are everywhere! There's no point in counting them individually. It's just a mass of living weapons, the apex predators of their world made perfect through biotech and unleashed on an unsuspecting planet. They slash through anything in their way, eat anything edible, and by the time you kill one, two new ones have spawned from the egg clutches.

Variants:

- The swarming bug
- The shape-changing omni-animal
- The amphibious horror from the ocean

Supporting units: winged versions of the basic creature; colossal armored beetles or turtles

**Generation:** Bronze

**Drive:** to swarm and devour over this succulent planet

**Abilities:** Gene-engineered predation, alien tenacity

**Conditions:** Angry, Hopeless, Insecure

**Moves:**

- Overrun and overwhelm obstacles and opponents
- Reveal a terrifying bioweapon or bio-engineered defense
- Devour and reproduce in unthinkable numbers

## Bruton, the Alien Champion

*"The last thing you will feel is fear, and the last word you speak will be my name: Bruton."*

The biggest and baddest of the invasion forces. When Bruton takes to the field, the ordinary invaders should open a respectful path to let them through.

Bruton's desire for superiority can be cold and calculating ("you carbon-based forms are inferior to our nano-flesh"), fiery and passionate ("I'll make trophies of your skulls!"), or terrifying and inhuman ("we will devour you for the glory of the Mother Ixode").

**Generation:** Bronze

**Drive:** to prove themselves superior to any Earth hero!

**Abilities:** hulking physiology, arm-mounted mega-shields

**Conditions:** Angry, Guilty, Hopeless

**Moves:**

- Smash an opponent into a wall, floor, or other barrier and leave them there
- Shrug off a powerful attack with a smug retort
- Devastate an area by bringing down a building

## The Cyborg Conversion

*"LoOk At WhAt ThEy'Ve GiVeN mE"*

This isn't a specific villain. Instead, use this stat block to represent an existing NPC that has been upgraded, converted, or augmented by the aliens. For example, a human traitor, a captured superhero, or a familiar face from the PCs' past might all undergo this kind of conversion. Decide if it was willing or unwilling on their part.

By the time the heroes encounter the Cyborg Conversion, they should have strong feelings about them as an opponent. They can either be sympathetic, someone the PCs want to rescue from their fate, or cathartic, someone they've fought in the past and now need to take down once and for all. If the heroes opt for rescue, reversing the conversion will be possible - but may come with complications or difficulties down the road, depending on the needs of your story.

**Generation:** as per the original character

**Drive:** to defeat the invaders' enemies at any cost

**Abilities:** any existing abilities plus armor plating, telescoping limbs, and laser claws

**Conditions:** Afraid, Angry, Guilty

**Moves:**

- Echo a familiar move from the past, but more powerful and vicious
- Knock uncoordinated teammates into a pile with each other
- Use augmentations to reflect a hero's attack back to them

## Star-Marshall Strategar - the Invasion Leader

*"Your arrival was predicted. If it falls to me to defeat you, so be it."*

Depending on the nature of the invaders, Strategar could be a brain in a vat or a super-AI with servo arms, a massive alien with a bulging forehead and biceps, a combat-enhanced cyborg genius, or something else entirely. He, she, or they ought to be taller and more impressive than anything else the PCs have met.

Strategar might be sympathetic, charismatic, or horrifying. Make them the representative of who the invaders actually and ultimately are, based on the story your group has been telling up until now. Once Strategar is finally defeated, use the nature of that defeat - a battle of well-matched enemies, a humiliating loss, a near-disaster for the heroes, etc. - to summarize and wrap up the defeat of the invasion as a whole.

**Generation:** Bronze

**Drive:** to lead the invading force in the conquest of Earth

**Abilities:** Impossible physical prowess, numerous reinforcements, brilliant battlefield and psychological insight

**Conditions:** Afraid, Angry, Hopeless, Insecure

**Moves:**

- Anticipate and counter a hero's best tactic
- Deploy defenses, subordinates, and cannon fodder to keep heroes busy
- Unleash an overwhelming blast or crushing attack

# Organizations

Many moments will refer to specific organizations by name. Here's what they are talking about.

"High command" or "the military" refers to an international military coalition dedicated to fighting back against the aliens.

"ACTION" is the American Counter-Terrorism Intelligence Operations Network. It's a law enforcement organization that is responsible for all super-related incidents, including apprehending super-villains and helping recognized heroes navigate the legal system. If your game has a similar agency already, use that agency.

"The Pulsar Science Institute (PSI)" is a super-science laboratory run by Professor Pulsar. They can analyze found artifacts, produce super-tech countermeasures, and generally do any other kind of super-science activity the plot calls for. If your game has a similar organization already, use it.

# Landmarks

These are well-known locations in Halcyon City. They can serve as the backdrop for action or social scenes, or just be mentioned in passing.

## Captain Burger

Captain Burger is a local fast food joint. Their burgers are a rite of passage for young people in Halcyon. They're super-salty, super-savory, and super-greasy. They will, as the adults say, "stunt your growth". For close to \$20, you get a stack of bread, meat, cheese, and sauce, all wrapped in paper marked with the Captain Burger mascot ("saving you from hunger!"), served on a cheap non-stick aluminum tray. You get seasoned fries in a paper cup on the side. Condiments, napkins, and soda drinks are over there - serve yourself. You pay your money, get your meal, eat it, and then try to survive the next 12 hours. It is the purest essence of the American burger-eating experience.

Captain Burger can be a Janus obligation, or just a place for the team to hang out between missions. During the invasion, it might risk being destroyed - or be the place where war-weary heroes come to have a celebratory burger.



## Gladwell Stadium

The home of the home team, Gladwell Stadium is a high-tech marvel. The play area uses modular technology and can be reconfigured for baseball, American football, soccer, track and field, and many other outdoor activities - even music concerts! Bleachers are comfortable and sturdy, with audio amplifiers that let even the nosebleed seats feel close to the action. The roof is open to the elements, but a weather shield can be deployed against rain or snow. Food and drink is self-serve at the concession area. The whole structure is reinforced against earthquakes and other natural disasters, and it's even armored enough to withstand stray blasts during super-heroic battles.

Gladwell is used as an emergency shelter during big crises - such as an alien invasion. When the invaders come for Halcyon City, civilians will be sheltered here.

## Custom Moves

**When you direct friendly forces to keep the enemy distracted**, roll+Superior. On a hit, you can proceed with the activity you were trying to accomplish. On a 7-9, your support gets hurt; mark a condition. On a miss, the enemy bursts through anyway, and you've got a fight on your hands!

*This move should come into play any time the heroes have soldiers or escorts with them on a mission, and need some time to get their own task done. This might mean keeping an entrance clear of enemy forces, providing covering fire while you save civilians from a burning building, or luring an alien mega-robot into a trap you're preparing.*

**When you take a powerful blow while piloting borrowed vehicles**, add the following choices to the existing lists:

- On a 10+, you bail out and your vehicle is destroyed. If you're in space, you'll have to contend with vacuum until a teammate picks you up.
- On a 7-9, you experience systems failure; you're only able to directly engage a threat, unleash your powers, or defend once more while piloting this craft, and then it's damaged beyond usability.

*Any time the team starts dogfighting the enemy in their own craft, they can still make basic moves as normal - the scale just changes. But if they take a hit, it can take them out of their craft before it does any harm to them personally. Characters with their own Kirby-craft or other personal vehicle shouldn't use this move.*

**When you eat at Captain Burger**, roll+number of burgers you've already had this week. On a hit, things aren't great. Choose 1 from the list; on a 10+, choose 2.

- Run desperately for relief; lose Influence over one person at the table (your choice)
- Drop your guard; the first person at the table who **pierces the mask** can ask you one extra question, even on a miss
- Tell yourself it's nothing; take +1 forward when you next **take a powerful blow**
- Suffer in silence; mark a condition (your choice)

On a miss, you take it like a champ; take Influence over one person at the table, or who's eaten at Captain Burger before.

You may only mark potential the first time you roll a miss on this move. One time is educational, but after that you should have learned your lesson.

*This is a goofy slice-of-life move. Daring people to take the Captain Burger challenge - and being forced to take it with them - can open the team to make social or team moves. "People at the table" refers to other PCs eating burgers with you. Characters who cheat and use their powers to resist - or who would be unaffected, such as robots or cyborgs - don't make this move. They just eat a burger. Like a nerd.*

**When you try to find someone among the evacuees**, roll+Mundane (if asking the authorities) or +Freak (if using your powers or scouting around on your own). On a hit, you get a lead to the person you're looking for, and can find them eventually if you follow up on it. On a 7-9, choose one:

- You draw the attention of someone you'd rather not
- You alarm or frighten a group of civilians, and must calm them down
- You give the authorities the wrong impression about you, or the person you're looking for
- You'll spend a lot of time following the trail

On a miss, they're not here (but someone can tell you where they went), or they're here but are in trouble when you arrive (injured, in a fight, etc.).

*Any time the team needs to locate a specific person in a group of panicked civilians, there's the possibility their inquiry will make things worse. The GM can take a weak hit or a miss and amplify the crisis situation, then make the team deal with it. This move can be made at Gladwell Stadium or other locations where a lot of people are staying.*

# Playbook Moments

You don't have to play through every one of these moments. Instead, choose ones that make sense, or give some screen time to PCs that haven't enjoyed as much spotlight as other characters. They can be run as their own thing, or as part of a larger team moment.

Aside from these moments, every playbook has supporting characters and groups in their background questions. These should be included in the story wherever possible. Adversary characters (like the Bull's creator, the Doomed's Nemesis, the Innocent's future self, or the Legacy's greatest opponent) will try to advance their agendas (and sometimes cooperate with either side in the conflict), while friendly faces (like the Newborn's caretaker, whoever thinks better of the Delinquent, etc.) can appear as refugees, prisoners, or allies.

## The Brain - They Really Used It

*"The invaders didn't start using gravity bombs until the second wave of attacks. After that, buildings started falling way faster. We speculated the bombs were being supplied by the same Earthly super-terrorists that took down the Hightower orbital base last year. G-Whiz didn't say a single word during the briefing. He just kept looking at his phone and crying."*

Your shame is active again, this time as part of the war effort. You must confront it. But do you take responsibility for it, or work behind the scenes? And who is using it - your enemies, or your allies?

Answer the following questions together as Brain and GM:

- How do you find out that your shame is being used?
  - You've been keeping tabs on it yourself
  - The signs of its use are unmistakable
  - A reporter or military officer asked the team about it
- Is it being used by the human side, or the invader side?
- What horrible side effects or consequences come with its use?
- What's the first, best shot at dealing with it?
  - Special countermeasures
  - Overwhelming force
  - Careful negotiation
  - Covert sabotage

Do you hide your shame, and just deal with the problem? Or do you own it - and all the fallout from doing so?

What do you do?

As GM, you have an opportunity to make moves like these:

- **Announce between-panel threats** - even before introducing this moment, the GM can give hints of the shame's existence and use on the battlefield
- **Make them pay a price for victory** - especially if the shame is being used by human allies. If the Brain deals with the problem, people will accuse them of hampering the war effort.
- **Complicate their solution or gadget** - if the Brain thinks they have an answer to the shame, unveil ways that its new masters have upgraded or modified it. Then ask how they work around that.
- **Present an impossible problem to solve** - how do you solve your biggest problem when it's been made bigger?
- **Judge them for their overconfidence** - if a plan goes well, have someone point out the risks if it hadn't. If a plan doesn't go well, have them chastise the Brain.
- **Show them how they need others** - solutions for dealing with the shame should take cooperation, both within the team and with allies (e.g. mass production of a counter-chemical).

A suggested way to run this moment is to keep the eyes of the world constantly near the Brain as they solve this problem. There's always someone watching over their shoulder, ready to catch on that they're the original inventor of this problem. That might be the military, a journalist, a spy, or someone else interested in the secret. Emphasize what the shame looks like from an outsider's perspective - "what kind of twisted diabolical mind would create something like this?" - and let the Brain experience that perspective. The Brain must not only confront the damage their shame is doing, but also confront the secret they kept for so long.

A possible question to answer during the moment is: how did they find out? Was it someone close to the Brain, like an NPC they trusted? Was it perhaps a PC that said something to the wrong person? Or was it something else? Ideally, the answer to this question will have a strong emotional impact on the Brain. You as GM can come up with an answer to this yourself, or ask the Brain's player for ideas.

Variants:

- The shame is being used as a scorched-earth tactic or last-ditch weapon, after other options have been exhausted
- The shame can't be mass-produced or widely fielded, but can be used as an assassination tool or a way to target high-ranking individuals
- The shame isn't being used by one side against the other, but by one side against undesirables or rivals within its own ranks

## The Janus - Friends Under Attack

*"Civilians were being funneled toward Halcyon High's gymnasium. EMTs were on hand to tend to the wounded. The alien fighters had strafed the school grounds, according to the television. It was about that time that Gogo disappeared from the fighting..."*

A place related to one of your obligations - a school, a place of business, your neighborhood - comes under attack. But to keep people safe, you might have to go in as your mundane self.

Answer the following questions together as Janus and GM:

- What is the place?
- Who is there right now (e.g. family, friends, coworkers, other civilians)?
- How did you find out about the attack?
  - You saw it on television
  - Someone on site texted you
  - You were in the area already
- What problem demands your mundane identity?
  - Someone on the premises is looking for you, and won't leave until they see you
  - You have a responsibility that only you can fulfill, and you'll be seen doing it
- What problem demands your heroic identity?
  - The place is still under attack and could collapse
  - Invaders have taken hostages or prisoners
  - There's a danger that only your powers can solve
- What else is going on that would keep the rest of the team distracted?

What face will you show people in need - the mask, or the person underneath it?

What do you do?

As GM, you have an opportunity to make moves like these:

- **Put innocents in danger** - Whatever is going on should keep going on, and keep getting worse! Alien reinforcements, structural collapse, panicked crowds, whatever keeps the pressure up on the heroes.
- **Activate the downsides of their abilities and relationships** - Whether they go into the situation masked or unmasked, have someone ask "where is X during all this" (for their other identity).
- **Endanger someone from either life** - A disaster happens (e.g. an explosion or flooding) that requires their powers to solve, with someone they know at risk.
- **Make their lives cross over** - When unmasked, they encounter a hero who's looking for their masked identity. When masked, someone takes photos or videos, and there's a chance they'll be recognized.

- **Put more obligations on them** - If they do well while unmasked, they impress people... who will now expect much more of them.
- **Take away their mask** - While unmasked, something happens to their costume in the place they stashed it (e.g. the roof collapses on it, someone finds it).

A suggested way to run this moment is to emphasize the urgency or scariness of the crisis to the ordinary people involved in it. These people don't have powers! They're florists, baristas, the school track team or cheerleading squad, the elderly aunts and uncles. In a time of crisis, they are going to think about the Janus character, worry when they aren't there, and try to hold onto them when they are. How does the Janus satisfy that mundane need, while also keeping them safe in ways only a hero can?

## The Legacy - The Substitute Hero

*"The Grail Knights aren't the chivalrous champions of old. They're more like a paramilitary agency now. But they still wield the power of Excalibur. So when one goes down, it's serious business. He said later that when duty calls, you don't get to let it go to voicemail."*

Heroes are everywhere - in the skies, on the streets - doing their best to save lives and fight off the invaders. Your Legacy is out there too, of course. But now a senior member has been badly hurt, or has vanished, or *something*, while doing something important. The Legacy calls on you and your team to step up in their place.

Answer the following questions together as Legacy and GM:

- Which member of the Legacy was originally doing the deed? What is your relationship with them?
- What's something that only members of your Legacy can do?
  - Fight a specific invader champion only the Legacy can (or should) defeat
  - Employ a power, asset, or secret available only to Legacy members
  - Bring bickering factions together or sway some pivotal personality
- How do you feel being called on like this? (fearful, surprised, angry...)
  - Who among your Legacy did you think would get the call instead of you?
  - Are you able to do it too, or do you think you can't?
- Why do you *think* you got called on, and not some other Legacy member?
- What important thing would this pull you and your team away from handling? What are the consequences of that?
- While you're doing this thing, what's the rest of your team going to be doing?
  - Helping you do the deed
  - Holding off baddies while you do the deed

Are you able to be just like a senior hero? Or is it enough that you be yourself?

What do you do?

As GM, you have an opportunity to make moves like these:

- **Remind them of their traditions** - the PC may know (or learn) about other Legacy members who've done something similar in the past, or be sternly told to "do it like we always do it".
- **Compare them to the past** - if the deed has been done before, ask the player what stories are told of those who did it, then how they feel about being the next.
- **Make them answer their family's concerns** - the task should be dangerous, not something even an ordinary hero would be called to do. "Why can't it be someone else?" a family member will ask.

- **Raise expectations on them** - this time, the deed is harder, more complicated, or a route to victory must be improvised
- **Honor them** - no matter how it goes, does the Legacy respect that they tried? If they succeeded, who among the Legacy celebrates the accomplishment?

A suggested way to run this moment is to find ways for the other members of the Legacy to stay occupied - perhaps with their own tasks, perhaps to clear a path - but never unable to witness the PC in action. Give hints along the way of the Legacy's presence ("you see others in the sky, fighting their battles but looking your way every spare moment they can"; "you can practically feel your old trainer's eyes looking over your shoulder as you activate your power").

The PC may never be sure just why they were specifically chosen for this duty. They only know that they were. The deed is a rite of passage for the PC, and should feel significant, mysterious, potentially unfair, and definitely difficult.



## The Outsider - Those Are My People

*"Project 9 didn't explain to us what got them so agitated about the new intel. Something about crystals, parents, and forced projection. But their whole team volunteered for what we thought was a suicide mission to take out the new alien weapon, without hesitation. I've never seen such loyalty."*

Your people are tied to the invaders, and now some of them are here on Earth. You've got to intervene, but more importantly - you've got to take a side.

Answer the following questions together as Outsider and GM:

- What's the relationship between the Outsider's people and the invaders?
  - The Outsider's people are allied with the invaders
  - The invaders forced them to cooperate
  - The invaders are keeping some captive
  - The invaders are using their science or special abilities as a key part of the invasion
- How much of the situation do you explain to your team? How much do you hold back?
- How are human forces reacting to this?
  - Angry - "any alien's a bad alien"
  - Afraid - now that high command know your people are in the picture, they're worried about you
  - Guilty - there's something they've been keeping from you
  - Hopeless - they don't think there's any way to help
  - Insecure - they're thinking about trying to "borrow" your power to fight back

In the end, whose needs will you consider, and whose side earns your sympathy?

What do you do?

As GM, you have an opportunity to make moves like these:

- **Draw attention to their differences** - The Outsider may receive unwanted attention from ordinary people for being "just another alien" in a time of invasion. But there will be things they can do, or insights they have, about the invaders that humans can't match. Being different isn't better or worse, just different.
- **Make a request from home** - This moment can kick off with such a message. The Outsider may also be summoned home, for any number of reasons - perhaps the invaders are there too.
- **Introduce a monitor from home** - Another member of the Outsider's people may be here trying to help, and expect the Outsider to cooperate with them.

- **Accept and support them in their moments of weakness** - If the Outsider is an established hero, have human beings who acknowledge their deeds and remind them that they've got a home here.
- **Provoke their beliefs and practices in tense situations** - There's a human way to deal with this situation. What is the PC's way?

A suggested way to run this moment is to balance human interests and the interests of the Outsider's people. Human high command will want the Outsider to play ball, go along with the larger military objective, even if it costs some of their peoples' lives. The Outsider's people will want the PC on their side, maybe back home, or at least looking out for them first. This isn't just a test of the Outsider's loyalty, but a test of how they handle both sides' demands on them.

A little discrimination can go a long way, and not everyone is interested in playing a game where it appears at all. Before using it during this moment, the GM should have a discussion with the group, and make sure everyone is on board.

Variants:

- The Outsider's people are the invaders!
- The Outsider's home is under the invaders' control, or is being attacked, and the Outsider must decide what to do about that

## The Protege - Team 2

*"Scrapper was never the most social hero. We weren't sure the Steel Soldier made the right call giving her command over TRIDENT Team. They all got the mission accomplished, at least, but the Soldier won't let us read Scrapper's report just yet."*

Your Mentor has been busy. But they've delegated some of the work to you. Take a second team of teen heroes through a difficult mission for high command, along with your regular team. You'll be taking point on this one, naturally.

Answer the following questions together as Protege and GM:

- Who are the members of this new group, "Team 2"?
  - If there's already a rival team of heroes in the game, it's them
  - A sample Team 2 is given below (but only include as many members as there are PCs)
  - Alternatively, ask everyone except the GM and Protege's player to describe a rival, foil, or counter for their PC
  - You need only come up with a name and a rough sketch of personality and powers
- What's the mission?
  - Break something the aliens need
  - Retrieve something the aliens took
  - Take down an alien prototype weapon
  - Clear out an alien-controlled area
- What does Team 2 think about this?
  - They're Beacons - they're excited to be here, but they're so not ready
  - They're Bulls - they just want a fight, and don't care where or with whom
  - They're Delinquents - they'll be sullen and uncooperative
  - They're Legacies - a unified team who don't need you to tell them how to operate
  - They're Novas - a power pack of loose cannons you'll have to rein in

Do you know your limits - and your potential? Do you have what it takes to be in charge?

What do you do?

As GM, you have an opportunity to make moves like these:

- **Convey their mistakes** - Let Team 2 act up if the Protege isn't giving them what they want, and have it affect the outcome of the mission.
- **Bestow wisdom, wanted or unwanted** - Have the Mentor leave instructions and biographical notes on how to handle members of Team 2. Decide if those notes are worth anything or not.

- **Hold up a mirror to them** - done team wide, as Team 2 should always be a reflection of the PCs.
- **Give them exactly what they need at a cost** - The actual mission should be perfectly tailored to Team 2's powers. That's why they're here. Make managing Team 2 the problem, not accomplishing the mission itself.

A suggested way to run this moment is to focus on both the rivalry and the similarities between the two teams. Getting to the mission site should take time, allowing the characters to interact. Consider setting up brief 2-on-1 or 2-on-2 scenes between PCs and NPCs. Team 2 will have heard about the PCs' exploits, and should comment on them. And of course, Team 2 will have its own internal conflicts and insecurities.

Don't spend a lot of time creating entirely new characters out of whole cloth, though. Instead, take some of the dynamics in the PC team and reflect them within Team 2. This will keep the focus on the player characters. And who knows? Some long-term rivalries or romances may emerge.

Let the actual mission play out according to how the teams have interacted up until then. If they're fractious and competitive, make it hard. If they've managed to connect with each other, it should be a walk in the park. Make room for mutual life-saving and supporting moments once any fighting begins. Remember that NPCs can spend Team points in a scene.

A sample roster for Team 2:

- **Hyperskin** - child of a big-name industrialist. Wears a golden super-suit. Good-natured, but thinks they're the protagonist of life.
- **Tangent** - kinetic redirection powers. Agent of chaos. Sassy attitude.
- **Veneer** - uses metamaterial paints as camouflage, explosives, traps, and more. Sneaky, and smarter than you.
- **Excimer** - laser-focused energy blasts from any part of their body. Laid-back, easy-going science nerd.
- **Deus Volt** - electrical manipulator. Constantly hears traffic from digital devices nearby. Short tempered but troubled and lonely.

## The Reformed - One Last Job

*"Rivet confessed everything, at the end. The ACTION breakin, the explosion, all of it. It's weird. Usually when he's smiling, it's hollow and fake. He wasn't smiling during the confession. But afterward, he was, and it was genuine."*

Your friends in low places have quite an interest in this invasion. Alien tech, secrets from beyond Earth, powerful weapons and gadgets - this could be the best thing that ever happened to them! As long as you play ball, that is.

Answer the following questions together as Reformed and GM:

- Which Reformed contact(s) want you to supply them with something?
- How do they describe this MacGuffin (the thing they're after)?
- Who's guarding the thing they want you to get?
  - A top super-laboratory, like PSI - you've got to steal it from our side
  - A superhero - who wants to use it for their own purposes
  - Other supervillains - time to raid someone's lair
- What are they holding over you?
  - They'll reveal something you did, hurting the team's trustworthiness with high command
  - Something you did back then is helping the aliens right now, and you need to make it right
  - If you don't do it, they'll send Bruno, and civilians are definitely going to be hurt in the crossfire if Bruno goes in
- What are they offering you to sweeten the deal?
  - A special offer on anti-alien tech and intel
  - A clean slate for some past misdeed you've been worrying about
  - Assistance from another supervillain they know
- How does the team get wise to the plot?
  - You tell them a comfortable lie or a hard truth
  - They arrive in time to save you from disaster while going it alone

How can your dark past be put to use fighting for the greater good?

What do you do?

As GM, you have an opportunity to make moves like these:

- **Remind them of what they've done** - "we're doing it like the Italian job". Ask what kind of familiar tactics or tools they'll be using for a heist like this.
- **Ask them for a criminal or villainous favor** - the premise of the moment. That said, if the Reformed PC encounters other villains along the way, they might try to strike their own deal with the character.

- **Doubt them from a position of moral superiority** - anyone in high command who gets wind of this should be immediately suspicious, even if it did some good.
- **Offer them solace with a criminal or villainous source** - any other villains along for the ride can express understanding that this is how things are in "the life".
- **Confront them with a nightmare from their past** - wherever the MacGuffin is being kept, it won't be alone. Something else from the Reformed's criminal history should be here too, and should raise plenty of questions from the team.

A suggested way to run this moment is as a heist movie within the larger invasion. The Reformed is being leaned on to do a job, but it'll do some good to someone. Put together a plan to break into the mark's secure storage area, get the MacGuffin out, contend with the security defenses - and a random hero or villain fight - and then get out. But it'll be harder to get out than it was to get in. Unexpected reinforcements show up. It was all a trap. The good guys are the bad guys. There's going to be a betrayal, but who's betraying whom? And no matter what heroes are part of this story, somehow they're dirty too.

## The Scion - A Scheme in Three Acts

*"Resister's association with the Storm Queen has been under ACTION scrutiny for months. And whenever someone hassles him about it, we worry he's being pushed back toward her. But the fact is, he saved the mayor and a room full of witnesses. Shocking, I know. But results matter, and that's why I'm voting to end his parole period and close the file."*

The invasion has created an opportunity for your supervillain parent. They've started a scheme, and roped some familiar faces into it. Whether you try to stop it or not, people think you've got a part to play, and not all of them think it's on the side of good.

Answer the following questions together as Scion and GM:

- How does the invasion make the scheme possible?
  - The villain's taking advantage of the general chaos to steal/destroy something valuable or seize a source of power
  - The fighting has brought a rival, enemy, or target into the open
  - The invaders have (or want) a source of power which the villain can swoop in and obtain
  - The invaders offered the villain backing or resources they needed
- For any 2-3 people whose respect you want, what is their role in the scheme?
  - They brought it to your attention and demand action
  - They're the target, or a potential victim
  - They're a patsy, pawn, or scapegoat
  - They're an unwilling or unwitting accomplice
- How are each of these people connected to other members of the team? What is their involvement in the invasion?

How do you show others you're a friend, when all they can see are enemies?

What do you do?

As GM, you have an opportunity to make moves like these:

- **Blame them for their parent's deeds** - Let people accuse the Scion of not doing enough to stop the scheme, or have someone flat-out claim the Scion is collaborating with their parent.
- **Grant them respect** - Let the player know what each Respect character wants, and grant Respect if the Scion conforms to their expectations.
- **Make demands on them** - Every Respect character in play should want something from the PC. That might be "stop your parent", "take the fall for me", "help me with the scheme", "save me", or some other goal the Scion may or may not want to do.
- **Interrogate their reasons or deeds** - Why is the Scion involved in the scheme? While they may want to see justice done, they're also seeking praise, affirmation, and

recognition from others. What will they do, and to what lengths will they go, to get that? Make each Respect character ask for something moderately shady or questionable, and see how the hero responds.

- **Introduce characters tied to their parent** - If someone needs to be kidnapped, something needs to be stolen, or other mayhem enacted, introduce a lieutenant, partner in crime, or named henchperson to do the job. Let the parent appear in the final showdown.

A suggested way to run this moment is to run one scene with each of the Respect characters present and involved. Unveil the scheme in the first scene, provide a twist or shocking reveal in the second one (the Respect character is a scapegoat or accomplice, for example), and allow the character to thwart or interfere in the scheme in the final one.

The Scion has many ways to gain Respect during these scenes. As GM, give them not only opportunities but reasons to make these moves:

- Defend the NPC from attacks
- Pierce the Mask to determine the NPC's real intentions, and ask "how can I take Influence over you"
- Playbook moves like White Lies, or the Star's Cold and Cruel, that grant Influence over a target

Also remember that as GM, you can give Influence to the PC depending on their actions, even if the hero didn't make a move that explicitly granted it.



## The Soldier - Conflicting Orders

*"We all know that Gemini is bright within their field of hacking and intelligence analysis. Other than that, they've always acted like an irresponsible goofball. I was honestly concerned with assigning a task like this to them. They betrayed almost everyone's orders on this assignment. But given what we know now, ladies and gentlemen, I can't blame them at all. I vote to acquit."*

High command has ordered a dangerous gadget destroyed. But ACTION has taken an interest in it, and has ordered you to bring it to them instead. Normally this kind of fracture at the high echelons of the human resistance would be settled by boring meetings between adults. This time, you're being asked to figure it out.

Answer the following questions together as Soldier and GM:

- Who's got the gadget right now?
  - A special unit of the invaders' forces
  - A supervillain who's been involved in the invasion (one way or another)
  - PSI or another super-laboratory that's studying the thing
- Someone's guarding it. What do you know about them?
  - The alien champion you've seen from a distance
  - The villain who stole the thing
  - A hero who's helped you before
- Is it small (and thus easy to lose) or large (and thus hard to move)?
- You know another ACTION agent is here on a mission, but they don't seem here to help you. What's your history with them? What do you think is going on?

When it's time to obey a lawful order or a good order, what do you do when they aren't the same?

What do you do?

As GM, you have an opportunity to make moves like these:

- **Give them new orders, active and tense** - Midway through the mission, the Soldier might get new orders. This might include the other agent or the gadget, or something else that came up during the moment.
- **Endanger their allies in the organization** - If the Soldier reaches out to someone they know & trust to inquire about the situation, let them get one answer, then have their contact go silent. What's the deal?
- **Reward their faith and commitment** - Instead of deciding ahead of time who's the "real good guys", let the player finally decide who to trust, and take your cues from that.
- **Reveal signs of corruption** - What's the other agent here for? If there are heroes or friendly civilians in the picture, are they really working for the greater good, or their own motives?

- **Review their performance** - No matter what, ACTION will have things to criticize. That's fine! Also let them say good things.

A suggested way to run this moment is like a classic spy film. Muddy the waters about who to trust. High command, ACTION, whoever's got the gadget, the other agent - any of them could be concealing some hidden motive.

At the end of the moment, it doesn't really matter whether every plot twist or story detail holds up. Maybe this was just a test of loyalty. Maybe there was a miscommunication. Maybe there's a mole in high command. There's a lot of reasons why things went the way they did, and the team may not know all the details. We're more interested in seeing how the Soldier obeys both orders and their conscience.

Variants:

- The gadget isn't dangerous; this was all a ploy to lure out a traitor or mole.

## The Star - I'm Not Wearing Hockey Pads

*"Some jokers on the Spider-Web thought they'd emulate their idol iSpider, and started throwing glass bottles from rooftops at the invaders and yelling smart-ass remarks. Then they found themselves pinned down by blasters, while the whole city block caught fire beneath them."*

Members of your audience are following your exploits during this crisis, of course. But some of them - ones you know, or have interacted with before - got a bright idea: why don't we go out there, and get ourselves some attention too? Now it's on you to get them back safe and sound, before they get hurt - or worse.

Answer the following questions together as Star and GM:

- What are the fans out there trying to do?
- What are the names and basic personalities of a couple key fans? How many total are involved?
- Are they mostly in danger because of natural hazards, enemy attack, or something else?
- How do you hear about it?
  - They're live-streaming the action
  - Someone else sent you a message
- What's on the line, other than their physical safety?
  - Others might emulate their example
  - You'll be held responsible by their friends or family
  - They're messing up an operation you're participating in
- What does your audience think of all this?
  - They're horrified or worried sick for their fellows
  - They're jaded, and hoping something cool emerges from this
  - They're actively encouraging this foolishness
- What kind of heat have they called down on themselves (from the invaders, the military, or anyone else on the scene)?

How do you solve the problem of people who want to be just like you?

What do you do?

As GM, you have an opportunity to make moves like these:

- **Reveal the future, subtly or directly** - what is the consequence of the fans' actions? Are the invaders going to ignore them, attack them just like any other civilians, make examples of them, or treat them like other superheroes? Do the fans know of the danger they're in - or are they ignorant as it rushes toward them? Give the PC some hints of what's coming unless they intervene.
- **Bring an NPC to rash decisions and hard conclusions** - the fans may think they're doing something good, and resist rescue or intervention even from their idol.

- **Reinterpret their actions in the media** - civilians in distress are always newsworthy, and the press will eat up the fact that they're emulating the PC. Let the PC hear all kinds of wild speculation and theories from talking heads back at the newsroom.
- **Make a demand from their audience** - the fans in danger are friends with other people in the audience. Beyond a Star's usual audience demands, some of these friends may end up complicating the situation.
- **Offer an opportunity for public attention** - any actual rescue of civilians will be a big deal in the media, of course.
- **Offer an opportunity for quiet heroism** - the PC should be able to talk to the fans, whether to encourage them to dial down their enthusiasm or something else. This is a moment that shouldn't be on camera.
- **Demote their superficiality** - someone will be ready to call this a ratings stunt, or an irresponsible move by the PC by letting their fans do this - as though the PC had any choice in the matter. But it'll be said anyway.

A suggested way to run this moment is to show how the audience really sees the Star, by having them emulate the PC's actions, but without the PC's training or powers. Do the fans think they have a special relationship with the Star just because they're doing this? Will they want praise and recognition? This should be a moment of growth for the Star, as they come to grips with their responsibility to their audience, but also with their audience's responsibility. How they handle this situation will - ideally - show them to be the hero their fans believe they are.

Variants:

- The fans have uncovered an actual serious problem the team should deal with
- The fans didn't want to be here; they were bullied or pushed into endangering themselves, and the real culprits need to be addressed
- The fans are adults, and may try to shift the teenage Star's labels by telling them how the world works

## The Transformed - Captive Audience

*"Xenocryst spent a lot of time alone with the captive. We hoped he'd get something useful out of them before we got that S.O.B. to ACTION. No luck. The team did throw Xenocryst some kind of party afterward, though. No idea what for."*

A high-ranking invasion leader or agent has been taken captive, and needs to be escorted to high command for interrogation. Along the way, they manage to make you an offer: how would you like to look human again?

Answer the following questions together as Transformed and GM:

- Nobody but the PC and the captive know the offer was made, at first. How did that happen?
- What evidence or persuasion would make the PC believe the offer is good?
  - The invader can change shape
  - The PC has seen similar conversion tech used by the invaders elsewhere
- What does the invader say they want in return?
  - Escaping captivity
  - Sneaking a device into high command where the interrogation will happen
  - A secret or some kind of valuable intel
- Does the PC think there's a chance they could trick the captive, getting what they want without helping the aliens after all?

What's a normal life worth to you?

What do you do?

As GM, you have an opportunity to make moves like these:

- **Tell them the possible consequences and ask** - becoming human again is within the PC's reach. Let them wrestle with the risks and rewards.
- **Show how they are feared or hated** - During the escort, soldiers should react badly to the PC, or compare them to the inhuman invaders.
- **Attack them with unthinking hordes** - Invader forces can attack the escort, giving the captive and the PC more time to interact while others are busy.
- **Remind them of what they've lost** - Have soldiers and civilians express pro-human sentiment. Show wartime propaganda posters with smiling humans crushing vaguely-drawn others.
- **See their true self** - Don't forget to remind the PC of what they've done, and how their team sees them. They can overhear compliments as well as insults.

A suggested way to run this moment is as a Devil's bargain between a powerful prisoner and their vulnerable jailer. It's the perfect opportunity. The invaders can do what the captive

promises - the PC should be convinced they *can*. Treat the captive as an adult, with Influence over the PC, and have them shift labels when appropriate ("you and I are the same; your prison is your body, while mine is this holding cell"). If the PC tries to Pierce the Mask and misses, have something else interrupt the encounter rather than sowing seeds of doubt in the character's mind.

Above all, the captive shouldn't be bluffing. The drama here is whether the PC goes through with the bargain (and what it might cost them if they say no), not whether they can spot a liar.

Variants:

- The captive has holographic technology that won't alter the PC's body, but will let them pass as human
- The encounter was set up as a loyalty test by ACTION
- The "captive" let themselves be captured, to target the PC deliberately

# Team Moments

These moments serve as the phases of the overall Invasion arc ("Masks" core book, chapter 9). You don't have to play through every one of these moments. Instead, pick ones the players would enjoy and that would challenge the PCs. Then, pick another one (or make up your own) based on their actions during the previous phase.

You also don't have to run the moments in the order they're given. Does the Space Battle come before or after the Assault on the City? Do the PCs discover the Collaborator and defeat them, which reveals the Secret Alien Base? Start with a moment you find interesting, and then chain together more moments that follow logically from there. Sometimes, failing to achieve the goals in one moment can lead to another - for example, the Assault on the City might go badly for the PCs, leading to a Civilian Evacuation.

Whenever you run moments like these, remember to make room between them for team moves (triumphant celebrations and sharing vulnerability or weakness), PC-PC or PC-NPC interactions, and other moments of interpersonal drama. This is a game about teenage superheroes coming to grips with their identities, after all. We want to see how these events are affecting them!

Also remember to escalate the stakes after every team moment. You thought blowing up the central transmitter would fix everything, right? Wrong. A second wave of bad guys is coming in, and it's bigger than the one you just barely survived. You thought this champion was the biggest, meanest alien in space? Meet his big brother.

# The Assault on the City

*"This was it. The mothership had broken through the lines of orbital defenses. Dropships were crashing into neighborhoods and through skyscrapers. You could see chunks of architecture falling, like it was slow motion. Then those things came pouring out. You'd see this kind of widespread devastation on television or in the movies, maybe. But when it's your home, places you live, restaurants where you eat... It was like every villain in the world had attacked, all at once."*

The invaders have finally landed, and their target is Halcyon City! Wave after wave of the invasion force is appearing on city streets, blasting holes in buildings, knocking over landmarks and statues. An alien foot crushes a child's abandoned toy on the street. The child and their parents are blocks away, running for their lives along with hundreds of other civilians. The military mobilizes in turn. Tanks come rolling up the street, only to be blown to smithereens by ultra-advanced weapons. Soldiers bark orders. And in the sky, the city's heroes mobilize. It's time for all hands on deck - that means you too, young heroes!

Answer the following questions together as team and GM:

- What part of the city is this?
  - A business district with gleaming skyscrapers
  - A casual downtown area full of art and music
  - A residential neighborhood still under construction, with half-built stores, houses, and apartment complexes
  - A historic district full of old buildings and lingering memories
- Are the invaders landing everywhere, or focusing here?
- Who's leading the defense?
  - ACTION
  - A notable superhero team
  - The military
- What's the alien plan here?
  - Take captives
  - Establish a base
  - Set up a superweapon

What do you do?

As GM, you have an opportunity to make moves like these:

- **Inflict a condition** - all the fighting and chaos can be overwhelming. If a player has their PC express shock or dismay, ask if it's appropriate for them to take a condition.
- **Put innocents in danger** - saving fleeing civilians from tripod energy beams is a staple of this kind of event.



- **Show the costs of collateral damage** - at any time during battle, but especially during the end, the heroes can see how bad things have gotten in their beloved home city. How will it affect them?
- **Announce between-panel threats** - mention incoming waves of alien weapons and reinforcements arriving soon
- **Make them pay a price for victory** - for example, if two PCs were planning a date or party day at an arcade, narrate them encountering the smashed ruins of the place.

A suggested way to run this moment is just let the PCs go ham on the bad guys - but keep a tally of the collateral damage, and make them pay for it afterwards. Keep adding invaders, champions, and villains to the scene until people get tired, then narrate the aliens retreating for the moment - or forcing the city's defenders out! Alternately, let the PCs try and figure out how to push the invaders back and focus on that, while NPCs handle the rank and file on the ground.

When the team makes a sacrifice or encounters a setback, make it personal. What's the name of that restaurant that got crushed? Did a member of the team go shopping all the time at the clothing store the alien tank just plowed through? If the players haven't already given you ideas for this, ask them to make suggestions during the moment. That said, it's easy to overdo this, or for players to feel punished for investing in places that are just there to be wiped out.

Variants:

- The invaders are just buying time for a mega-weapon to charge up and fire. The PCs need to stop this before it's too late!
- There's alien vehicles the PCs can take control of, helping turn the tide - but they might face friendly fire from people who don't know they're inside.
- The invaders sent a strike team specifically tailored to take on some hero teams, and the PCs' team is on that list!

## The Assimilators

*"By now, the aliens knew all about Gogo, Armiger, Archive, iSpider, and Xenocryst. They didn't know anything about Robin, William, Lewis, Craig, or Kiana. The invaders were hunting for new Gene Twist candidates among the high schoolers, and it turned out that not only a couple of the teachers but several students had been replaced. We got them back from a secret lab under the school, thank God."*

The invaders are worming their way into vital institutions - military command and control, ACTION offices, superhero leagues, civilian businesses. They're replacing key personnel, gathering valuable intelligence about us, and preparing to strike from within.

Answer the following questions together as team and GM:

- How did you get the tipoff? And why won't anyone else listen but you?
  - An anonymous message sent only to the PCs
  - A conspiracy theorist who has no credibility with anyone else
  - A member of the infiltrated organization, who vanished after the tipoff
- What's the target - the place that's being infiltrated?
  - ACTION, where the heroes might be known
  - A high-tech business or super-laboratory the heroes have visited
  - An ordinary place of business the heroes know, such as a school or a shopping mall
- What does the tipoff tell them about the infiltrators? How much of it is wrong?
- How do the PCs want to get in to find out specifics?
  - Hide undetected and observe
  - Enter as their civilian selves and mingle
  - Make contact with a helpful insider

What do you do?

As GM, you have an opportunity to make moves like these:

- **Put innocents in danger** - If an infiltrator is exposed, have them threaten other people within the target.
- **Reveal the future, subtly or directly** - When the PCs take action to investigate, you can make this move to show them what the infiltrators are really here for.
- **Make them pay a price for victory** - Even if the heroes succeed in uncovering the infiltrators, you can reveal that the aliens know a lot more about *them* now - perhaps even their secret identities.
- **Activate the downsides of their abilities and relationships** - The PCs are investigating a familiar place, and they'll be meeting familiar people. If a classmate flirts with a hero, or a scientist asks for a few minutes alone in the lab, is it what it seems, or is there an infiltrator at work? Make the PCs work to blend in.

A suggested way to run this moment is to build the tension of alien activity behind the facade of the normal. Innocuous words should become menacing or suspicious. If the PCs try to immediately go to someone in authority and dump the problem in their laps, have that person be an infiltrator as well - how deep does this go?

The team can try to infiltrate the organization themselves - maybe by using their own secret identities to blend in. If the team themselves don't have these (for example, the team is made up of a Transformed, a Newborn, an Outsider, and a Scion), this strategy may not work, but even a group that stands out in a crowd might fit in at ACTION, for example. Beacon, Delinquent, and Janus characters will have no trouble in a more mundane institution.

It's a good idea to devise a place that lets your group of PCs work undercover, rather than coming up with an idea and then saying "oh yeah, I don't know how we'll do this". The heroes were tipped off because they can do this.

Finally, don't ask for a lot of rolls just to gather clues. The heroes might want to Pierce the Mask of people they suspect, and that's great! But give them some clues, and challenge them on how to use those to take down the invaders without people getting hurt along the way.

Variants:

- People who were replaced have been stored somewhere and must be rescued
- People who were assimilated are the originals, but have a virus, computer chip, or something else curable inside them
- The assimilators have already prepped doubles of the heroes!

## The Civilian Evacuation

*"The Devil Molecule was a purple cloud that transformed anything it touched into more of itself. People were screaming as they ran, dropping anything they were carrying - and the cloud ate it all up. There was just no more Dillin Drive. The Berkowitz wasn't gonna show any more films. All we had now was our people, and by God we weren't going to lose those."*

The Meta-Bomb went off. The invaders were just too numerous. The alien disintegrator evaporated the 784th Battalion's tanks. Now there's a lot of people who need to leave Halcyon City, right now. You've got to keep them safe on their journey, but it's not going to be easy.

Answer the following questions together as team and GM:

- What are people running away from?
  - The invaders' army
  - A superweapon that affects a whole area, such as a huge explosion, a poison gas, or a potent airborne virus
  - A psychic bombardment or nanotech swarm that turns people into tools for the invaders
- Where do people think it is safe to go?
  - A fortified military base or secret ACTION bunker
  - Another neighborhood within the city
  - The natural landscape outside
- What don't people have enough of?
  - Supplies and medicine
  - Vehicles
  - Protectors and organizers
- What's the dominant mood of the crowd? (a Masks condition: Angry, Afraid, Guilty, Hopeless, or Insecure)

What do you do?

As GM, you have an opportunity to make moves like these:

- **Take Influence over someone** - If the heroes impress the authorities or the evacuating civilians, give them Influence from someone they've interacted with
- **Put innocents in danger** - Further alien attacks, opportunistic supervillains, natural hazards, and distrust or fear should all continually threaten the evacuees.
- **Tell them the possible consequences and ask** - if the heroes try to cook up an easy answer to moving thousands of people, identify or create complications and see if the heroes want to try anyway. Don't shoot down clever ideas, just make them fraught with danger.

- **Bring an NPC to rash decisions and hard conclusions** - during this trip, someone's going to do something foolish. Let it spiral a little bit before it comes to the PCs' notice, then find out how they deal with it.
- **Activate the downsides of their abilities and relationships** - if the heroes have any supporting characters (friends, family, caretakers, etc.), include them among the refugees. Then ask if they're going to get special treatment, and if so how other civilians in the evacuation will react to that.

A suggested way to run this moment is to treat it like a disaster film. A lot of people need to make it from here to there, the heroes are the shepherds keeping them safe, and there's alien outriders and Earthly supervillains who'll act like wolves, picking at any stragglers. It should wear down the citizens' morale, and our heroes need to inspire their souls as much as save their lives.

Give the heroes one or two "face" characters to worry about. If there's not already a vulnerable supporting character in a hero's backstory, introduce someone who needs a little extra help. Disaster movies sometimes use the "littlest cancer patient" and "pregnant woman" tropes for this purpose. As GM, you should not use disability or special needs as a cheap way to create sympathy. You can look for alternatives - a father separated from his son, a woman who had to leave her medication behind, a worried young adult concerned for coworkers who stayed behind - if no existing NPC serves your needs here.

Variants:

- The place of safety is unsafe after all, forcing the evacuees to figure out a new plan
- Some people near the rear have been affected by a viral or transformative effect already, forcing them to separate from the main group
- Agitators, instigators, and rabble-rousers among the populace see their moment to gain glory and influence
- Supervillains sneak into the group to gain access to the secure shelter ahead

# The Collaborator

*"We knew about Professor Pulsar's funding problems. We never dreamed he'd sell out his planet just to build a bigger rocket engine."*

A double agent, invader sympathizer, or quisling is secretly working with the invaders. They're highly placed in government, politics, or high command; they're a trusted member of ACTION; they're a prominent scientist or a wealthy businessperson. Worst of all, the PCs already know them. Whatever their position, whatever has gone before, they have to be exposed!

Answer the following questions together as team and GM:

- How is the collaborator connected to the PCs and/or their allies?
  - If there's a Soldier PC, the collaborator is someone at ACTION
  - The collaborator may have worked with gear or suits used by high-tech heroes
  - The collaborator may have gone to bat for the team in the past
  - They were the person rescued when the team first came together, if the Janus question was answered
- Is the collaborator doing this willingly or unwillingly?
- What power and influence do they already have?
- What do they receive from the invaders?
- How does the team learn about the collaborator?
  - They overheard an incriminating conversation
  - Telepathy, super-hacking, or the use of some other power
  - A tip-off from an adult, e.g. the Protege's Mentor

What do you do?

As GM, you have an opportunity to make moves like these:

- **Capture someone** - the collaborator or their invader cronies won't go quietly, and may have anything from trap doors to force field cages to alien death robots ready once their secret comes out!
- **Reveal the future, subtly or directly** - the PCs should become aware of what plans the collaborator is part of, and how horribly things could go wrong (or are already!) if they aren't stopped.
- **Make them pay a price for victory** - the collaborator was a trusted, influential person before. They did an important job. Once removed from the picture, who is going to suffer?
- **Tell them who they are or who they should be** - a lecture on "doing what's necessary" hits much harder if the collaborator has a pre-existing connection to the team.

A suggested way to run this moment is to emphasize the damage the collaborator can do, and to contrast that against the past relationship between the collaborator and the team. What

they're doing now is bad, and whatever they did in the past can't forgive that. Other than that, the team has a variety of options: kick in the door and bust heads, cleverly gather incriminating evidence, stealthily interfere with the collaborator's efforts, and more. The GM's job isn't to pick a right way to tackle the problem, only to make tackling it a challenge for the PCs.

Variants:

- The collaborator isn't a single person, but a group (e.g. a heroic super-team, a mega-corporation, or a famous ultra-tech laboratory)
- The collaborator has been modified by the invaders and will transform into a full-powered supervillain when exposed!
- The collaborator has a bomb or other safeguard against capture, and now the team has to go deal with it
- The collaborator is actually a shapeshifter, clone, or robot duplicate, and the original is locked up somewhere
- The invaders took one of the collaborator's family captive, who must be rescued before the collaborator will cooperate with the authorities

# The Secret Alien Base

*"It was a model of downtown Halcyon City, mapped out exactly. They were using it for run-throughs of the big takeover. Tactical objectives, chokepoints they could hold, all kinds of things. Thing is, they had some places marked as superhero hideouts, and other things they shouldn't have been able to know about. Where'd they get that from?"*

The invaders set up a secret base, somewhere on Earth. They're using this for training, imprisonment, or some other nefarious purpose. Your team has located it. You've got to get in there and destroy the base - but there's a complication...

Answer the following questions together as team and GM:

- What is this base used for?
  - Holding onto prisoners for processing
  - Training invaders to infiltrate or take over somewhere important (e.g. a superhero HQ, a military base, the White House)
  - Doing awful experiments on captives
- Where is it located?
  - Deep under the city - how long have the invaders been preparing?
  - Underwater - how do we get down there?
  - In an abandoned town outside Halcyon City - what happened to people here?
- What led the team here?
- Who's the dominator - the being in charge here?
  - An alien scientist or intelligence agent
  - A turncoat human scientist
  - A supervillain working with the invaders
  - An emotionless AI
- Early in exploring the base, the PCs will see the complication - someone who shouldn't be here. Who is it? How does the team know them?
  - A high-ranking military officer
  - An ACTION agent
  - A respectable superhero
  - A supporting NPC from a hero's personal life

The group starts at the entrance to the base, equipped and prepared to go in. What do you do?

As GM, you have an opportunity to make moves like these:

- **Capture someone** - Either a PC might get captured by the machinations of the dominator, or someone they know might already be captured here.
- **Put innocents in danger** - Regardless of the base's purpose, there should be innocent humans here, and the team should have to free them from the dominator's clutches.



- **Reveal the future, subtly or directly** - Whatever this base is for, it's still doing it. Show the players glimpses of what could happen (e.g. humans converted into invader attack drones) if they don't deal with this place.
- **Announce between-panel threats** - Alarms, roving patrols of robot guards, racks of weapons - there should be plenty here that can come down on the PCs' heads if they aren't careful. You can also show charts, maps, or images that indicate where the invaders' next targets will be. Some of it should be secret knowledge, such as a Protege's Mentor's base.
- **Tell them the possible consequences and ask** - if the players want to go in blasting, ask them if they want to risk losing details on the complication, or the dominator escaping, or have captive civilians get hurt (or worse). You should not punish players for having a plan you don't like by just announcing "well the aliens do bad things to the hostages they kept". Let the players know what's at stake.

A suggested way to run this moment is to run this like a low-key horror film. This moment is the invaders at their worst. The dominator is doing awful things and will keep doing them, unless the base is destroyed. And what's the complication doing here? The PCs should be worried not only about what the invaders are going to do, but what they might have already done.

Variants:

- The base is an old supervillain lair, and some old gadgets or traps might still be here - either to threaten the PCs with, or for them to use against unsuspecting invaders.
- The base is far older than it ought to be, or made using unexpected technology - such as that of the Outsider's people.
- The base was used to plan a big terraforming operation, target a doomsday weapon, etc. and the heroes must now go deal with that.

# The Space Battle

*"Those kids took the time to paint a shark's grinning mug on the nose of the alien shuttle we commandeered. Then they took it up, against the heaviest fire we'd seen yet, at the mothership whose shadow had obscured all of Halcyon. We hated ourselves, putting this burden on five heroes so young, but they didn't hate us. They just did it."*

You're in space! Unfortunately so is the invasion fleet, and they're going to lock onto you soon. It's time for the team to strike at the heart of the invasion - and see if they can escape with their lives, and the prize.

Answer the following questions together as team and GM:

- What's the objective?
  - Disable a power plant, cloaking device, psychic transmitter, or other critical tech
  - Kidnap or fight a key member of the invasion force
  - Steal a vital blueprint or tech readout that'll let humanity turn the tide
  - Obtain a prototype weapon or mecha the aliens developed
- Where did the objective come from?
  - We thought it up ourselves
  - High command, ACTION, or another authority
  - A trusted adult hero, mentor, etc.
  - A rogue alien or outsider ally
- Who thinks this is a bad idea? Why?
- How does the team get into space?
  - Stolen alien ships
  - Experimental Earth craft
  - Teleporters or portals provided by someone
  - Personal powers (e.g. Doomed portals, Outsider Kirby-craft, Brain inventions)
- Are we going in loud, or trying to sneak in?

What do you do?

As GM, you have an opportunity to make moves like these:

- **Bring them together** - Even if they have to split up, keep bringing the team back together for the ultimate objective or the final escape. Nobody gets left behind - unless someone chooses to stay...?
- **Reveal the future, subtly or directly** - Keep bringing invader assets into play, waiting in the wings, pursuing the team. At the same time, remind the team what'll happen if they don't finish the mission.
- **Make them pay a price for victory** - This is a big, dangerous moment, and it shouldn't be easy to pull off. Inflict conditions, take away assets, whatever it takes to remind them of the stakes.

- **Turn their move back on them** - This is the heart of invader territory, and they'll be prepared. Teleporters will find themselves bouncing off force fields. Telepaths will encounter alien psychics. Don't be afraid to bring in counters to team powers, as long as it keeps the team moving and boxes them in.

A suggested way to run this moment is to build tension around getting the mission done and getting back home. The heroes will be overwhelmed by numbers if they loiter around or waste time. Any time you feel like the team isn't moving fast enough, add another guard patrol or wing of space fighters coming for them, but also let them retreat forward towards the goal rather than fight.

Sometimes the team will want the excitement of a space dogfight. In that case, give it to them, straight out of a World War II or Star Wars movie! But remind them that the clock is ticking, perhaps with a radio message from high command or a countdown before the aliens make their own move.

An important part of the moment is to make it harder to get back than it was to get here. If the team stole alien ships to get here, they're blown up or captured. If teleporters were used, alien force fields are now blocking them. When the heroes enter through a metaphorical door, shut it behind them. Force the team to improvise a way home, then make it an interesting challenge to use it.

Variants:

- The objective isn't on a ship, but a nearby asteroid, the Moon, or some other celestial body - or even through a long-range space portal to elsewhere in the universe!
- There are multiple objectives and the team must split up to get them all.
- The sacrifice play - something or someone remains behind as captive or distraction (especially if a player has to miss a session or leave early).

# Aftermath

The whole world got invaded! Naturally, a lot will change.

It's easy to say "alien invasions happen every week". But what could an event of this magnitude mean for your game world?

- A super-prison was damaged during the fighting, releasing previously captured villains
- A villain got their hands on some new alien tech, which will fuel future schemes
- Gene bombs or mutagenic nano-clouds might have created new superhumans - hero, villain, or other
- Other extraterrestrials may have come to Earth, as captives or allies of the invaders, or just as curious third parties
- Big sections of the city might have been damaged, and might be rebuilt with new technology - or by unscrupulous mega-industrialists

For the player characters, this means lots of opportunities to make playbook changes, or to bring in new heroes. For the GM, this means the ability to introduce new and improved villains, or to spring ones the PCs thought they'd put away for good. You can also bring in new supporting characters, such as the Princess of Procyon who's now dating the Soldier after a dramatic rescue scene.

It's also possible that the invaders win! If so, it might mean the start of a new campaign, with another generation of heroes having to fight for Earth's freedom. Or if the invaders are defeated, the characters might be drawn into space after them. The "Masks Unbound" supplement from Magpie includes playsets that can be used to explore these outcomes, or you can roll your own.

Other big changes to the status quo are possible, if the players are interested. What if the adult heroes died, retired, or were de-powered during the invasion? The kids have suddenly become the only force for good in Halcyon. Better hope they're up to it...

Look for interesting directions for your characters and the campaign, no matter the specifics. We're here to see how young heroes grow and change. The invasion isn't the story - they are.

# Appendix: Creating Interstellar Civilizations

Do you need to quickly come up with some hostile, neutral, or even friendly alien societies who can get involved in an invasion? Do you need an origin for Outsiders or Nomads?

**Step 1.** Assign one or more adjectives to the civilization from this list: Ancient, Expansionist, Mysterious, Powerful, Reclusive.

**Step 2.** Determine the civilization's Label, representing its overall self-image. Pick one, or roll 1d6.

1. **Freak.** Xenophobic, isolated, or very alien. DS9's Changelings.
2. **Danger.** Warlike, domineering, or honor-driven. The Klingon empire.
3. **Superior.** Enlightened, self-important, or arrogant. The Romulan empire.
4. **Savior.** Benevolent, protective, smothering. The DS9-era Federation.
5. **Mundane.** Utopian, pacifist, or primitive. The TNG-era Federation.
6. Roll twice more (disregarding 6+ results). This can mean several things, so pick your preferred version:
  - a. The civilization has two major factions; apply the second label to the other faction
  - b. The civilization sees itself one way, but others see it another way
  - c. The civilization used to be one way, but has recently shifted to another

**Step 3.** Determine the civilization's Tech. Tech is divided into the following areas, with a label to match:

- **Warfare** (Danger)
- **FTL Travel** (Freak)
- **Medicine** (Savior)
- **Science** (Superior)
- **Daily Life** (Mundane)

Civilizations have Inferior, Common, Uncommon, or Rare tech in each area. A civilization starts with Common tech in all areas, and Uncommon tech in its label's area.

- **Inferior** is primitive, shoddy, or experimental, compared to most galactic societies. A primitive Earth, entering a more advanced civilization.
- **Common** is the baseline for any interstellar civilization. Common tech can solve the typical problems a civilization faces at some cost.
- **Uncommon** is technologically advanced, unusual, or difficult to replicate.
- **Rare** is highly advanced, coveted, and sometimes thought to be impossible.

Examples: Inferior space travel might involve rockets. Common tech would be some kind of reactionless or impulse drive, using energy but no fuel. Uncommon tech would use levitation, anti-gravity, or space elevators. Rare would use teleportation.

Some civilizations are more, or less, advanced. Roll 2d6, and add +1 for each of the following adjectives: Ancient, Mysterious, Powerful, Reclusive. On a 10+, increase two Tech areas by one level (Inferior Common to Uncommon to Rare). On a 7-9, increase one tech area, or increase two different areas and decrease one other. On a 6 or less, drop two tech levels one level.

**Step 4.** Determine the civilization's Size. A civilization is Small, Medium, or Large. Roll 2d6. Add +1 for each of the following: civilization is Ancient; civilization is Expansionist; civilization has Uncommon or better FTL tech. On a 10+, the civilization is Large. On a 7-9, the civilization is Medium. On a 6 or less, the civilization is Small.

- **Large** civilizations are sprawling interstellar empires. Examples: Star Trek's Federation, the Clone Wars-era Republic of Star Wars.
- **Medium** civilizations occupy dozens of star systems, and may have colonies or settlements beyond those boundaries.
- **Small** civilizations have only a few star systems, or perhaps even just one. They might have explorers or small settlements.

**Step 5.** Determine the civilization's Drive. This is a statement that captures who they are and what they want. Their Drive will influence how they interact with other civilizations, or independent groups (such as the PCs).

**Step 6.** Determine up to three relationships or other neat details about the civilization. Each detail should drive conflict or generate story somehow. Examples: there's internal strife or factionalism (cultural, political, religious); the civilization has a notably good (or bad) relationship with a neighbor; the civilization is a vassal state to a greater power (or has another state as a vassal); they've made a surprising or dangerous discovery. If any of the PCs have a cosmic origin or connection, at least one of these relationships should relate to that PC.