

## New Traits for MWP's *Serenity* RPG

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With ideas from the Crew of the Ghur J'wi: Captain Gus (Pip), Dr. Galen (Doug), Gavin McDonnell (Dan), Lady Belen (Annalee), Seung Da (Shiv), Suaxi (Syd), Maddox 'the Mad Russian' Ivan (Evan), Tien Shien (Rob), Kip (Andrew), Irish Niska (Samara), 'Hey You' (Other Rob). Keep flyin', guys!

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### Buying Assets

To gain a new Asset in play, you will usually have to spend Advancement Points. If the GM wishes, they can grant (to one character or a whole crew) any Assets they feel appropriate, or necessary, for their game; in that case, no AP cost should be levied. However, they may also choose to set up a situation—the characters may create a situation—where buying an Asset would be especially appropriate. For example, the characters might save a group of kidnapped Companions; at that point, the GM might not feel they *automatically* gain **Friends in High Places**, if the reward for the rescue is a one-time arrangement. However, if a character wants to develop an ongoing relationship with the people they saved, they could spend AP to buy the Asset; in such a situation, where it fits the game especially well, the GM should charge 10 points for a Minor Asset or 20 points for a Major (or 10 points to upgrade a Minor to a Major).

However, it is entirely possible that players will want to get Assets not being 'handed' to them. In that case, they should come up with a good reason for gaining it; maybe, in an alteration to the above example, the player says that between adventures they responded to a distress signal and saved the Companions themselves (or with NPC, such as Federal, help), and the Companions owe him one. If the GM is willing, they can let the character take the Asset at that point, but the cost is doubled: 20 AP for a Minor Asset, and 40 for a Major (or 20 to upgrade a Minor to a Major).

This may seem a steep price, but keep in mind that Assets, even Minor one, frequently add a 2 or more Step bonus to Attributes or Skills. It costs 48 AP to raise a d10 Attribute to a d12, and then 56 points to go from d12 to d12 + d2; buying, for example, **Lightnin' Reflexes** to boost a d10 Agility to d12+d2 costs 40 AP, in comparison to 104 AP, even though it does apply to a narrower range of situations. Because of this, it is necessary to make sure that players don't just buy Assets without thought to why the characters should get them, and also necessary to charge a fair number of AP for them. The GM should be careful when awarding Assets, or the option of buying them at the reduced price.

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## Assets (30 total /7 revised)

### Business as Usual [Minor]

You are so accustomed to life in a boardroom (or on a Core planet; there's little practical difference) that you can play that lifestyle like a hand of cards.

Benefit: Having gotten a lot of experience in government or corporate life, you know the way things work. You get a +2 Step Skill bonus on all rolls involved with working at a major business, company, or organization, to invest wisely, and read the market on almost anything, as long as you're in the right setting—a megacorp-style office or setup, with digital feeds from every major economic broker, info on recent lawsuits, etc.

### Crack Shot [Major]

You're more than handy with a gun; you can pull off trick shots and make ones that others gawp at. Or bleed at, depending.

Benefit: If you take no more than one shot with a single gun in a given round, set to single-shot (not burst or autofire), reduce all Called Shot penalties you receive to that attack by 2 Steps. This does not translate into a bonus if you had a Called Shot penalty of less than 2 Steps. You may not gain this bonus if you make any other attack actions that round, though Dodging, moving, and most other actions are allowable.

Note: As a Combat rule change, I would also increase all of the normal Called Shot penalties by 1 Step, making the progression: -2/-3/-4 for increasingly difficult targets. If you don't want to do that, I would reduce the benefit of this to downgrade penalties 1 Step instead of 2.

### Cybernetic Implant [Minor/Major]

A lot of folks in the 'Verse have had to have some part or other replaced with a mechanical or electronic equivalent. Yours doesn't just replace something, though—it provides some additional benefit.

Benefit: At the minor level, you possess some kind of technological implant that provides a +2 Step bonus to one Attribute, or a +1 Step bonus to two Attributes—but in either case, the bonus applies only in certain circumstances (which depend on the nature of the implant). For example, a system-flushing device to screen for poison might add +2 Steps to Vitality for resisting poison, but not for Life Points or Endurance rolls. A replacement arm might have +2 Steps added to Strength (or +1 each to Strength and Agility), but that would still only apply with that arm—attacks in melee or with one-handed weapons would get the bonus, but not rolls for running or dodging.

At the Major level, you possess extensive (though not extremely powerful) cybernetic alteration; the bonus is +2 steps to two Attributes, or +3 Steps to one Attribute, and it applies completely—effectively raising your Attribute(s) the set amount, as long as you are functioning properly. Damage, especially on an Extraordinary success, may cause malfunctions, and maintenance work would then be required (Hard Technical Engineering/Cybernetics complex roll); also, your implants may shut down when exposed to an EMP—and that might mean a lot more than a loss of the bonus, since someone with a mechanical arm would have that limb rendered entirely useless.

Remember that this Asset only applies when an implant increases normal ability; a character may, with the GM's permission, have an implant for free during character creation, as long as it only allows normal functioning—for example, if you want your character to have lost his eye but now have an electronic one, then you don't need to pay unless this new one provides an Alertness bonus. You might even take Ugly as Sin to account for the way it makes you look, or take Dull Sense to

account for it not working terribly well (though it would still be vulnerable to EMP).

Note: Extensive modification, as per the Major level of this Asset, is not only expensive but also extremely rare. The GM's permission is required to take it, and the character will need a good reason: life-saving medical procedure, test subject for a major organization (which might mean that they're a fugitive or 'indentured'), or similar.

### **Damsel in Distress [Minor]**

No matter how harrowing the situation, you seem to have a knack for getting rescued.

Benefit: The character just seems to get lucky when it comes to having back-up or help; any time they spend Plot Points to alter the game and arrange a rescue for themselves, treat it as if they had spend 2 more Plot Points than they did. However, the GM is still the final arbiter of whether or not they can spend those PP in that situation.

### **Diplomat [Minor]**

While you may not have any special clearance, you've been well schooled in the arts of diplomatic speech and negotiations—or you just happen to have a talent for conveying things in a reasonable-sounding sort of way.

Benefit: You receive a +2 Step Attribute bonus when making any roll to negotiate, bargain, ask for political favors, and so on. This does not aid attempts to seduce, however, unless the target is somehow attracted to logical argument. Also, this does not confer any rank or diplomatic immunity.

### **Duct-tape Medicine [Major]**

You specialize in patchin' folk back together.

Benefit: Given time to tend a patient who has suffered Wound damage and who is already On the Mend, you can make a Heroic Intelligence + Medical Expertise/Internal Medicine roll to reduce their damage. The action takes 1 hour to complete, and, if successful, converts ½ (rounding down) the Wound damage the patient has taken to Stun damage, which will heal much more quickly. This can only be attempted on a given patient once for the same set of injuries, even if the roll fails. However, because of the difficulty of such a task, this attempt requires at least Ambulance Conditions and uses up 80 credits worth of medical supplies.

### **Farm Hand [Minor]**

You worked as a farm hand or in a similar position for quite a while; you know the trade, how the land works, and how to treat it proper.

Benefit: Because of your experience on a farm or plantation on a Rim or otherwise rundown planet, you know how to survive on one, and you know what that life is like. You get a +2 Skill Step bonus on all rolls related to farming, raising animals, making crafts or otherwise making a normal life for yourself under those conditions—working with the right tools, though they are far from the most modern of equipment. You do not get this bonus working in an advanced agricultural setting or similar.

### **Fleet of Foot [Minor/Major]**

You move faster than most folk.

Benefit: Increase base movement distance by 5 feet for walking, to a total of 20 (which is then multiplied for faster movement). As a Major Trait, you also receive a +2 Attribute Step bonus to Agility or Strength on any Athletics-based rolls involving sheer speed: running, jumping, and

moving, but not dodging or similar.

### **Good Balance [Minor]**

You've got a good sense of balance; you almost never fall down.

Benefit: Add +2 Attribute Steps to any rolls to avoid falling, tripping, or otherwise losing your balance.

### **Graceful in Gear [Minor]**

You know how to move, and how to do it right.

Benefit: Your preternatural sense for balance and movement reduces all penalties imposed on your Agility or Strength by armor or clothing by 2 Steps, as you unconsciously correct for the impediment. This does not alter Alertness penalties or penalties for carrying a lot of weight, nor does it translate into a bonus if you are unimpeded by garments. Example: If you are wearing armor that reduces your Agility and Alertness by 1 Step, having this Asset would mean that your Agility is actually unaffected by the armor, while your Alertness is still reduced by 1 Step.

### **Guild Standing [Minor/Major]**

You hold a position of relative importance in some group or organization, possibly one of the Guilds (such as the Bounty Hunters or Traders)—except for the Companion's Guild and other extremely high-profile organizations, unless you also have other appropriate Assets to grant you access to those groups. In that case, you happen to have more standing there than otherwise...

Benefit: You hold some sway over the actions of the group you are involved in, have access to privileged information, or something similar; what group that is and what the exact benefits are is between the player and the GM. As a Minor Asset, you possess little pull, and can only access information that is classified at a low level. However, this may give you access to jobs and equipment otherwise completely unavailable, even if you still need to pay for them, such as bounty-hunting jobs. As a Major Asset, you have more influence in the group, and have access to information classified to a higher level.

Remember that the ability to actually requisition money or items is a function of the **Friends in High/Low Places**, **Parliamentary Clearance** or **Moneyed Individual** Assets, and other benefits that are normally conferred by other Assets remain the province of those Traits; you must buy those if you want their benefits. This provides informational or organization access to smaller groups the government and the bigger megacorps.

### **Hide-Hole [Minor/Major]**

You have someplace safe to run to, somewhere that no one knows about (yet).

Benefit: You have a small place, be it a home, apartment, old bomb shelter, disused bunker, or somewhere else, that you can run to for safety, and which no one can find or link to you unless to lead them there or tell someone (who might tell someone else). The exact specifications of the place are between you and the GM, but the place should be no larger than a small apartment for the Minor (1-2 could live only mildly cramped) or a small house for the Major (3-6 could live only mildly cramped). It can also be assumed that there is additional space for a relatively small vehicle (small ship or medium ground-transport). Anything you actually want in the place, though, must be paid for in cash.

Note: Multiple characters can take this Asset and stack the benefits together to create an increasingly large and/or sophisticated 'safehouse' or base of operations. If they take it after the game

starts, then they should be rewarded (soon) with a newly discovered place—they shouldn't also have to pay for it, or at least not very much. If they pay for one in credits, or the GM gives them one as part of the game, they DO NOT need this Asset as well. Also, if the hiding place is discovered, the GM might consider giving characters a chance to find a new one of similar value, unless they revealed its location on purpose or in a particularly foolish manner.

### **Lightnin' Reflexes [Minor/Major] (New Version)**

You react to danger quickly. Folk rarely get the drop on you, and your quick-draw leaves others groping for their holster.

Benefit: As a Minor Trait, you get +2 Attribute Step bonus on your Agility on all Initiative, Get out of Harm's Way, Innate Defense, and Athletics/Dodge rolls (the GM may declare other rolls eligible). As a Major Trait, any Plot Points spent on rolls you would receive the above bonus on count as if you had spent 2 additional Plot Points

Note: This replaces **Lightnin' Reflexes** as listed in the Core Book, and brings the bonus scheme more in line with other Core Book Assets.

### **Mean Left Hook [Minor/Major] (New Version)**

You pack a mean wallop!

Benefit: As a Minor Asset, your unarmed attacks deal Basic damage (divided between Stun and Wounds) instead of Stun. As a Major Asset, you also add a die of Basic damage to your hits based on your Strength (and ONLY your Strength! No other Attributes may substitute). The bonus die is equal to your Strength die with a -3 Step penalty, with a minimum of d2.

Note: This replaces the **Mean Left Hook** Asset as listed in the Core Book.

### **Moneyed Individual [Major] (New Version)**

You can put your money where your mouth is.

Benefit: Increase your starting money by half (multiply by 1.5). Also, once per session, you may make an Intelligence + Influence roll to see if you can afford something on credit with your 'trust fund' instead of needing to spend cash. The difficulty of the roll depends on how much the item costs. You may not use this to 'get cash back,' and overuse of this ability in a way that is detrimental to the game should cause the GM to, temporarily or permanently, crash your accounts.

| Difficulty | Up to...in Credits |
|------------|--------------------|
| 3          | 100                |
| 7          | 200                |
| 11         | 400                |
| 15         | 800                |
| 19         | 1,600              |
| 23         | 3,200              |
| 27         | 6,400              |
| 31         | 12,800             |

Note: This replaces the **Moneyed Individual** Asset as listed in the Core Book.

### **Pack Rat [Minor/Major]**

Your bunk looks like a magpie's nest. Anything small and inexpensive most likely finds its way into your piles and pockets at some point; not that you steal it, unless otherwise inclined to do so, but it just seems to happen. Pocket change becomes a few extra pens and a candy bar; you pick up old

keys and elastic bands off the ground; you never throw anything away.

Benefit: Unless you've recently been searched and divested of everything, you can spend PP on the following table, at any time, to have 'just what you need!' in a pocket:

0 PP: Rubber bands, small scraps of paper, other 'junk.'

1 PP: Any small piece of gear that would normally be readily available to you, should you have chosen to buy it, worth 1 Credit or less.

2 PP: Any small piece of gear that would normally be readily available to you, should you have chosen to buy it, worth 5 Credits or less.

3 PP: Any small piece of gear that would normally be readily available to you, should you have chosen to buy it, worth 10 Credits or less.

Every time beyond the first that you use this Asset during a session, increase the PP cost by 1. So, if you spend 0 PP to get a broken stub of pencil, and then need a rubber band (normally 0 PP), the rubber band would now cost 1 PP.

As a Major Trait, the benefit is the same, shift the cost table down 1 PP (minimum 0), so that what costs 1 PP on the table above now costs 0 PP—but keep in mind, multiple uses of this Asset in one session still increase the cost by 1 PP each time.

### **Parliamentary Clearance [Minor/Major]**

For some reason, the Parliament has granted you special clearance. You might be a high-level official (governmental, military, scientific...), you may have been granted it in order to aid you in a particularly tough assignment, or maybe you're not even supposed to have it.

Benefit: The government of the Alliance has given you special clearance. With positive identification (IdentCard, biometric check, retinal scan, or something like that), you can get away with murder....sometimes literally. At the Minor level, you have permission to request aid from facilities or personnel that are not otherwise occupied or incapable of providing assistance; what you can request is limited, and it isn't guaranteed that they'll help you out if they have some reason (even a personal one) not to, but this can still be very useful. Once per session, you can spend Plot Points as per the Friends in High Places table, but with the following additions:

1-2: Urgent medical treatment or emergency situation response.

3-4: Transportation, bodyguard, information classified at a low level.

5-6: Clearing up of 'misunderstandings' on major criminal charges in the line of duty.

As a Major Trait, shift that table 'up' one level and add a new 5-6 line:

1-2: Medical treatment/emergency response, transport, guards, minor classified information.

3-4: Clearing up of 'misunderstandings' on major criminal charges in the line of duty.

5-6: Requisition a ship, invent charges against someone, access high-level classified info.

Note: This Asset requires GM permission, and that permission should not be given lightly; this may be more appropriate to NPCs than to players. This does not replace Friends in High Places, since it is more specific but more powerful within that focus.

### **Pet [Minor]**

You have a loyal friend you can always count on—especially because they aren't human! It could be anything up to the size of a horse that the GM will agree to, and it's a friend you aren't likely to lose anytime soon.

Benefit: Pick an animal you already have or own (or that you've found). That animal becomes a long-term pet or companion, and is much less likely than most such animals to die, disappear, get lost, or otherwise be removed from the character; it's practically a *part* of the character. You may

make Willpower + Animal Handling/(Animal Type) rolls to get it to do ‘tricks.’ Most basic tricks have an Average difficulty (7), but anything more specialized than fetching a thrown object (such as: retrieve a specific object or type of object, act friendly and then attack from behind, etc) has a higher difficulty (usually Hard or Heroic), at the GM’s discretion. You can also spend PP to have your pet do something ‘without instruction,’ temporarily taking control of the NPC from the GM (though they can overrule you if it gets ridiculous) by spending 1 PP to control the animal for the ‘scene,’ which is broadly defined as one encounter, major activity, or event.

### **Quick Healer [Minor/Major]**

Your body mends faster than most folks’.

Benefit: When getting proper rest and care, you heal 1 Wound per day, instead of every 2 days, while On the Mend. As a Major Asset, you also automatically get ‘On the Mend’ after 1 day of rest, even without a physician, except in the case of injuries causing continued damage (such as those caused by an Extraordinary Attack with Wound-type damage).

### **Religiosity [Minor/Major] (New Version)**

You are a true believer, and that can give you an awesome presence...and a terrifying drive.

Benefit: As a Minor Trait, you are a true believer or follower of a faith (you pick what faith). When you are working to uphold the tenets of your belief (you and the GM may need to agree on when that is, but it usually includes heroic things your faith approves of/requires of you and also attempts to influence other followers of your faith) you gain a +2 Willpower Step bonus to all applicable rolls, and once per session (in those same situations) you may substitute Willpower (including your +2 Step Willpower bonus) for any Attribute that would normally be used in a roll.

As a Major Trait, you are an ordained leader of your chosen faith, and will receive appropriate respect from those who appreciate your station so long as you make it obvious (where the right clothes, act appropriately, etc). In addition to the roleplaying benefits this confers, whenever you spend Plot Points on a roll that receive either of the benefits from the Minor version, treat them as if you had spent 2 additional Plot Points.

At either level, if your belief is shaken in an extremely powerful way, you may temporarily lose the benefits of this Asset until something restores them or you have time to recover. You may even change faiths! Also, note that when taking this Trait, the belief you choose doesn’t necessarily have to be a religion....

Note: This replaces the **Religiosity** Asset as listed in the Core Book.

### **Renaissance Man [Minor/Major]**

You specialize in not Specializing.

Benefit: All your General Skills may be raised to a maximum of d8 (instead of d6); however, buying any skill at d10 (which is now the first level at which they become Specialties) or higher costs an extra 4 Advancement Points at each level.

Note: During character generation, you CAN buy General Skills at d8, but the cost penalty above that level ONLY applies during advancement later on, and not during character generation. Instead, during character generation, you are limited to a d10 in all skills: no Specialty can be raised higher than d10 with your starting Skill points. This level of **Renaissance Man** counts as a Minor Asset because the value of it is decreased by the additional cost of high-level Skills—otherwise, this is extremely powerful, and even with it, GMs should consider whether or not to allow it.

As a Major Asset, once per session players can spend 2 PP to add a +1 Step Skill bonus to one

General Skill for the remainder of the session. This DOES NOT apply to Specialties; use it ONLY when the General Skill itself is rolled. This can increase the chosen General Skill to d10 if it was already at d8.

### **Salvage License [Major]**

You have managed to secure a license from the government to clean up trash for them.

Benefit: Salvage licenses are hard to come by, since the Alliance wants to tightly control who is allowed to salvage what—otherwise, civilians might be getting military tech off drifting troop-transports, and so on. However, with the proper clearance, a thorough background check, and an annual fee of 250 Credits, you have secured permission to salvage wrecked ships or other applicable space-borne debris. You must always send a Wave to a contact in the Core and receive official confirmation before beginning any salvage operation; often, when dealing with military or Alliance-owned hulks, they want to send in a military vessel first, to strip any sensitive equipment or information, before allowing folk like you to pick the bones. However, having the license does provide a way to earn an increased income, and also a possible way to excuse your actions or cargo, as long as no-one thinks to check with your contact about recent permissions-granted.

### **Sharp Sense [Minor] (New Version)**

You have one sense that is particularly acute.

Benefit: Pick one sense (Sight, Smell/Taste, Touch, Hearing). You get a +4 Alertness Step bonus when using that sense, or when it might aid other involved senses in an important way (GM's call). However, being so sensitive also makes that sense vulnerable to anything that might disable it; you receive a -2 Step penalty to any roll to resist an effect that deals with that sense.

Note: This qualifies as Minor because it is 1/4 as useful as putting the points directly into Alertness, and because the penalty offsets some of the bonus as well, even though the +4 Step bonus is usually attached to a Major Trait. Also, I combine Taste and Smell because they are, in effect, the same sense; if you have trouble with one, the other is also damaged, etc. This replaces the **Sharp Sense Asset** as listed in the Core Book.

### **Ship Owner [Minor/Major]**

You own a ship, or at least a share in one.

Benefit: You own a ship! Or, at the very least, part of one. Ships are expensive pieces of equipment, and so can be hard to find—but every now and then you might find one cheap at a junkyard, put there by mistake 'cause it still runs (maybe...), or at an auction or somesuch. As a Minor Asset, this counts as up to 4,000 Credits towards the value of a ship; as a Major Asset, it counts as 10,000 credits. Any 'left over' Credits are lost; this doesn't represent actual money paid towards the ship, but value of ship that lady luck has decided to make you not have to pay for.

Note: Multiple characters can take this Asset and stack the benefits together to create an increasingly large and/or sophisticated ship for their use. If they take it after the game starts, then they should be rewarded (soon) with a newly discovered boat—they shouldn't also have to pay for it, or at least not very much. If they pay for one in credits, or the GM gives them one as part of the game, they DO NOT need this Asset as well. Also, this price bonus is based on the assumption that the cost of ships has been drastically increased from the book, which lists prices that are **much too low**.

### **Talented [Minor/Major] (New Version)**

You have a knack for something.

**Benefit:** Choose a General Skill/Specialty combination. As a Minor Trait, whenever making a roll that would fall under the heading of that Specialty (even if you don't have it yet), you get a +2 Skill Step bonus. As a Major Trait, you also get more for you Plot Points on the Specialty: whenever you spend PP on a roll that you gain the Step bonus on, you count it as if you spent an additional 2 PP (1 PP gets you a d6 instead of a d2, 2 get you a d8 instead of a d4, etc).

**Note:** This replaces **Talented** as listed in the Core Book, and brings its bonus scheme more in line with other Core Book Assets, but still stacks with bonuses from **Born behind the Wheel**, **Allure**, etc.

### **Teacher [Minor/Major]**

You're a natural-born instructor.

**Benefit:** Pick a General Skill/Specialty combination. You can make it cheaper for characters to learn that General Skill and that one Specialty, as long as you have it at a higher level than they do. To give them this benefit, you must spend at least 2 hours a day for 1 day per Step of the level they want to buy (d2 takes 1 day, d4 takes 2 days, d10 takes five days, etc) instructing them; you can instruct a group of up to 10 people at once, but each person beyond that adds 1 day to the total time required. At the end of the required time period, the characters you were teaching may purchase the chosen Skill/Specialty at the new level for 2 AP less than it would normally cost (so they can learn d2 in that Skill for free!).

As a Major Trait, the mechanics are the same, but you can Teach any Specialty you know under the General Skill that you choose.

### **Tough as Nails [Minor/Major] (New Version)**

You're tougher than you look; you can take a beating and stay in the fight longer than anyone would expect.

**Benefit:** Every time you take Stun damage, the amount you take is reduced by 2 points. As a Major Trait, whenever you spend Plot Points to reduce damage, they count as if you had spent 2 additional PP.

**Note:** This replaces the **Tough as Nails** Asset as listed in the Core Book.

### **Trustworthy Face [Minor]**

You look like a good sort; people just *know* they can trust you.

**Benefit:** People you don't even know are liable to trust you. In bars, sobbing drunks confide in you and broken-hearted lovers ask you why the world is so cruel. On the streets, people pursued beg you for aid. Add a +2 Step Willpower bonus to any roll to convince someone to trust you and believe what you say is true, or to get them to tell you something they would normally keep secret. Also, you are less likely to be accused of lying in general, and a crowd or group is more likely to believe what you tell them.

### **Uncommon Knowledge [Minor/Major]**

You know things that most other folk don't—maybe there's secrets, maybe lost lore, maybe covered-up history...but you know about it. That can be helpful at times...and sometimes, it can get you killed....

**Benefit:** Pick a subject, topic, etc. that you want to have knowledge about that isn't usually available. You can pick a subject completely unknown to most people, or you can pick something normal and know some secret information about it; either way, the GM decides exactly what you

know, but if they don't have something in mind, you can suggest what your character might know. This represents more, however, than just knowing one important secret about something or someone; this represents an understanding or knowledge of something that you otherwise *could not* know, since there would be almost no opportunity for you to have gained this knowledge. How extreme this is is up to you and the GM. As a Minor Asset, this gives you the ability to make Knowledge-based Skill rolls about this subject, and to take it as a Specialty of Knowledge that is normally unavailable. As a Major Asset, this gives you a +2 Skill Step bonus to all such Knowledge rolls, and, if applicable, the GM may allow this to give you access to other Skills and Specialties not normally available, depending on your area of expertise and the level of the game and your Knowledge.

### **Very Favorite Gun [Minor/Major]**

You have a piece of gear that is *yours*. It needn't be a gun or other weapon—but whatever it is, it is as much a part of your character as their arm, and about as likely to disappear on ye'. There may well be a story behind it—and it almost certainly has a name.

Benefit: Pick any item you already have—it could be anything that you and the GM agree on, but the price in Credits should not exceed 100 for the Minor version or 1000 for the Major. That item becomes a 'signature item' for the character. You should make a point to use it, or at least have it with you, at all times. Whatever it is, it will be much harder for you to lose it than a normal item of that sort. If it is stolen from you, you should be able to chase the thief down or buy it back more easily than otherwise. If you are arrested and your gear impounded, then your jailor decides he wants to keep it for himself, rather than ship it to auction. If you lose it, it should turn up later. It will be less likely to be broken, and easier to fix if it is. How these benefits apply is mostly a function of roleplaying—it doesn't actually provide a numerical benefit, but the GM should be generous. The item is a symbol or extension of the character.

If the character successfully sells or gives away the item, they lose this benefit AND the Asset. However, if the situation is suitable, and the character is giving away the item rather than selling it, the GM may allow this Asset to pass to the recipient. For example, a dying man could give his Very Favorite Gun to his best friend, asking him to look after his family, the friend would receive the Asset if they intended to follow through and use the gun as *their* signature item.

## Complications (25 total/4 revised)

### All Preened Up [Minor]

You make this look *good*... and everyone else needs to know that. All the time.

Penalty: You are a vain, vain person. Whether you look good or not, you spend excessive amounts of time on your appearance. This can take money, too, for clothing or makeup, or it could just mean you are easily distracted or beguiled by compliments. You play it up all the time—because you know it's true!

### Amnesia [Minor/Major]

You can't quite remember....

Penalty: As a Minor Complication, you cannot remember something specific: a person, an event, a certain time; it could be something important, but it isn't all-encompassing. Trauma may have buried the memory, or maybe you've been brainwashed to forget. The GM should assign you a secret Complication that even you don't know the immediate nature of: it could be **Traumatic Flashes, Branded, Chip on the Shoulder**, or anything else. You get the points for it as well, and can only choose up to 4 Complications yourself, as the secret uses up one spot.

As a Major Trait, you have almost no memory of yourself; when creating your character, you must leave certain aspects up to the GM to assign. You may pick only 3 Assets and 3 Complications (including Amnesia); the GM may assign any others as they see fit (if they see fit), to be discovered in play, and then tells you how many total Attribute Points you may assign (and these you may use freely). Also, you may only assign ½ of your starting Skill Points; the GM secretly determines the other ½, as well as any you do not or choose not to spend.

Note: This Complication greatly alters character creation, and can alter the way the character is played in a significant manor. You may only take this Complication with the GM's permission.

### Comfort Object [Minor]

You have a security blanket—and it keeps the monsters away...

Penalty: You have a small, inexpensive object that you rely on as a sort of charm or talisman to keep you safe. This could be a teddy bear, a security blanket, a lucky rock with a whole in it, a rabbit's foot—whatever. You always have the object with you, and if you ever lose it, you become extremely upset. Unless it would be fatal, you drop whatever you are doing and set about trying to get the object back, doing anything within your power that is not too dangerous for you to try it. If you cannot, you will be at -2 Attribute Steps until you can get it back. If permanently lost or destroyed, you will suffer the above penalty until you find a new Comfort Object or buy off the Complication.

### Conditional Programming [Minor/Major]

You've been programmed, whether through boot camp or brainwashing, to act a certain way.

Penalty: You have ingrained responses to certain things, stimuli you have great difficulty controlling—if you can at all. It is entirely possible that you don't even fight the conditioned responses. As a Minor Trait, you have a limited range of things which you are conditioned to do as a reflex or consistent response: go for the kill in a fight, even if you've already won, always listen to what a man dressed a certain way tells you, always report seditious activity, etc. These aren't impulses you can easily control, nor are they trivial; they were conditioned into you to be obeyed, and it will be almost impossible to resist. The first time you try to resist a given response, you must make

a Ridiculous Willpower + Discipline/Concentration roll. If you succeed, you can resist, and attempts in the future are only of Heroic difficulty. However, if you fail, you need to make the same roll again next time, and you can't even hope to resist in that moment. Even this Minor Trait level can be devastating, leading to a character killing or causing the death of a companion; it should not be taken lightly, and should only be allowed in certain circumstances.

At the Major level, the Minor penalty applies, but the character is also programmed with certain code words or phrases—which are generally nonsense, to prevent accidental activation, and which can be heard or seen to be used. What the code words are and what they do is up to the GM; the player/character will never find out, because when they are activated, their normal personality is completely subsumed by the coded response. The compulsions caused by programmed codes (be they 'safe words' that knock them out, or commands to kill *everyone*) can only be fought by making an Impossible Willpower + Discipline/Concentration roll for the initial attempt; if they fail, they must make the same roll again, next time. If they succeed, the difficulty for future rolls is Ridiculous, and this time (and each time they succeed), they are overwhelmed with confusion as their conscious mind fights the programming, and they are debilitated and unable to act for 3d6 rounds, during which time they either collapse and mumble to themselves or fall unconscious. This level of Conditional Programming is *extremely* rare, since most organizations don't have the know-how, the time, and the controlled, secret environment needed to do it. Only characters who may have been in the control of such an organization should have this Complication (and, of course, they won't know about it).

### **Creaky [Minor/Major]**

You're gettin' too old for this....

Penalty: You are getting rather elderly, and your body isn't wearing too well. You suffer bouts of arthritis, weakness, shaking, or similar. Once per session, your problems act up and you suffer a -2 Step Attribute penalty to Agility and Strength until you can sit down and rest for at least five minutes. As a Major Complication, the penalty is increased to -3 Steps and you suffer attacks twice per session.

Note: Not all old characters should be assumed to get this Complication; they can still be in good shape right up to the day they die.

### **Distractable [Minor]**

You—wait, what was that? Never mind. I was saying—hey, look! Shiny!

Penalty: You are easily distracted, and get bored very quickly. This can draw your attention away from your work with sometimes disastrous results. You have to make a Hard Willpower + Discipline/Concentration (or similar Specialty) roll to avoid being distracted at some point during any complex action that lasts longer than 2 rolls (the GM decides when, exactly, you get distracted); also, you are liable to be rather obnoxious at times, being unable to concentrate on what people are saying to you if something interesting is going on nearby. If you are distracted during a Complex Action roll, you lose all time spent on the current roll and half of your accumulated total so far.

### **Dull Sense [Minor] (New Version)**

One of your senses doesn't work so great—which can be bothersome at times.

Penalty: Pick one sense: Touch, hearing, sight, or taste/smell. At all times, for whatever reason you can dream up, you receive a -4 Alertness Step penalty when using that sense specifically, and a -2 Alertness Step penalty when making any roll that is normally benefitted by that sense.

Note: I combine Taste and Smell because they are, in effect, the same sense; if you have trouble with one, the other is also damaged, etc. This replaces the **Dull Sense** Complication as listed in the Core Book.

### **Forked Tongue [Minor/Major] (New Version)**

You lie like an oriental rug. No—*two* oriental rugs!

Penalty: You are a compulsive liar, and everyone knows it. You just can't help yourself! Unfortunately, this gives you a -4 Step penalty getting anyone to believe a word you say once they know you. As a Major Complication, the compulsion is irresistible; the GM can cause you to lie, against your will or even without your knowledge, once per session, in any situation they choose.

Note: This replaces the **Forked Tongue** Complication as listed in the Core Book.

### **Freak! [Minor]**

You are *really* hairy. Or maybe you have a vestigial tail. Whatever the reason, you could make good money in circus barker's sideshow.

Penalty: You are easily recognizable (giving others a +2 Alertness Attribute Step bonus when trying to spot you), but it gets worse than that. Being such a curiosity makes it difficult for people to take you seriously, and many are frightened of you. You suffer a -2 Step Attribute penalty to social rolls with most people, who find you distasteful company at best. Also, people who are highly insular, inclined to prejudice, or generally unkind will likely target you for abuse before your companions.

Note: This is separate from the **Memorable** Complication, though very similar; characters should not be allowed to take both. **Freak!** exists to add a more direct flavor to the idea behind **Memorable**, but is not a considerably greater detriment.

### **Hyper-focused [Minor/Major]**

You always get the job done—at least, the job at hand; everything else takes back seat.

Penalty: When performing a Complex Action, you have to make an Average Alertness + Perception/Specialty (usually Hearing or Sight) roll in order to notice *anything* other than what you're doing, unless someone actually strikes you, or your work is forcibly interrupted (knocked down, hurt, etc). As a Major Trait, the same applies, but you suffer a -2 Alertness Step penalty to *all* Alertness-based rolls to notice things you weren't expecting or specifically looking for—this applies at all times.

### **Indentured Hand [Major]**

You, or a family member, went way into debt, and now you're paying it off with your life and labor.

Penalty: You are an indentured servant, with 2d2 years to go before freedom (at which point you could buy this off with AP), and the possibility of paying your way out for 10,000 Credits per year left (at which point you would STILL have to pay the AP to remove the Complication; otherwise, something happens that still leaves you indentured!).

As long as you are indentured, you are almost a slave. You cannot take any Asset that would give you (at least currently) particular standing or wealth (such as **Moneyed Individual**) unless you can work out with your GM why you have it—**Moneyed Individual** would likely be impossible, but **Friends in High Places** might be justifiable, for example. 80% of all earnings go to your holder, to

pay off debts, and if you stop making regular money, your contract may have time added to it. Attempting to run away, of course, adds even more time (typically 6 months to a year). However, your holder may permit you to travel, if they trust you, while you make this money for them—but that is chancy, and might lead to problems, such as bounty hunters if they ever perceive you to have ‘jumped ship’ or neglected your duty, at which point this might become **Branded [Major]** or another Complication of equal value.

### **Khan Complex [Minor]**

There’s one person out there, somewhere, who you count as your arch-rival. Whether they always foil you, or you always seek to foil them, the two of you are irreconcilable. Unlike those with a **Deadly Enemy**, this isn’t a group or organization; there’s just one person you need to deal with, but they seem to be blocking your way at every turn.

Penalty: You have a rival who seeks to foil you as you seek to foil him. They will likely be very tough to get rid of, though they probably won’t have an easy time bumping you off, either; you are at something of an overall stalemate, continually interfering with each other and rarely getting anywhere. As with **Deadly Enemy**, until you remove the Complication, the threat will always exist—except in this case it is impossible to actually *kill* your foe (and have him replaced, as per **Deadly Enemy**), no matter what appears to happen. They always survive, somehow, though you don’t seem to have that same luxury.

### **Klutz [Minor/Major]**

You can’t seem to avoid causing accidents and mishaps; you should never enter china-shops or ever, ever be a surgeon.

Penalty: You trip on things. You drop fragile things down stairs. You fumble with small objects. You have a -2 Step Attribute penalty to all rolls to balance, catch things, move quickly, and so on. This penalty does not apply to initiative or dodging, though it might be fun to characterize successful dodges as falling, luckily, out of the way; generally speaking, your mishaps do not physically damage you or your friends. As a Major Trait, you even have to make rolls for normal, every-day actions! Twice per session, the GM can make you roll Agility + Athletics (or other appropriate Skill/Specialty) with the -2 Step Penalty in order to not drop something you’re carrying, trip and fall down, bump into someone, etc.

### **Lazy [Minor]**

Why bother? You can always do it later...

Penalty: You have motivation problems; you’d rather laze about all day than do your work. If at all possible, you’ll weasel out of anything remotely like a job, even if it gets you into trouble later.

### **Lily-Soft Hands [Minor]**

You haven’t done a hard day’s work in your life; whether or not this means you’re stuck-up, and whether or not you have the know-how to get by, it does mean you stick out like a sore thumb on the Rim or in a worker’s joint.

Penalty: Anyone who would look down on a lily-skinned boss or an overseer who just shouts orders and doesn’t even know what they mean will probably dislike you, giving you a -2 Step Willpower penalty when making any Influence rolls against them.

**Oblivious [Minor/Major]**

You rarely notice things; your senses are fine, but you just seem to be oblivious to your surroundings half the time.

Penalty: You suffer a -3 Step Attribute penalty to Alertness to notice things you aren't specifically looking for, making it difficult to spot anything you aren't already on the lookout for. This applies to Initiative in all situations where your side weren't the ones who initiated combat, since you never quite pick up on the tell-tale signs that you should maybe be moving now. As a Major Complication, all Plot Points spent on Alertness-based rolls cost twice the normal amount for the same benefit (1 PP has no benefit; 2 PP gains you a d2, 4 PP gains a d4, etc).

**Plodding Along [Minor/Major]**

You move slowly.

Penalty: You have trouble keeping up with most people, and your reaction time is a little slow. Your base speed is reduced by 5, and as a Major Trait you also suffer a -2 Step Attribute penalty to Agility or Strength on any rolls involving speed or movement, including running, Initiative, dodging, and Innate Defense.

**Pyromaniac [Major]**

You love fire! Fire, fire, fire!

Penalty: You are a pyromaniac; you love fire so much that you just like to go out and burn things—and sometimes, that might mean that people die, or have their things destroyed. You probably feel remorse about that, but it doesn't stop you. You just like to burn things! Unfortunately, this is a major problem on a spaceship, and can get you in a lot of trouble in a hurry, even on a planet.

**Sadistic [Minor/Major] (New Version)**

You're one sick *huen dahn*.

Penalty: As a Minor Complication, you have no qualms about hurting people who get in your way. In fact, you think torture is a good way to get information or punish the enemy, and you enjoy making your enemies suffer. However, you wouldn't want the same treatment given to your allies, and you aren't in it just for the pleasure—that's just a side benefit to the practical uses of pain. However, as a Major Complication, the sound of human screaming is music to your ears, and you like to watch while they die—though you may try to keep them alive for several days, just to see what they can endure. Both versions bring social penalties, as your friends, family, and even strangers may discover your sadistic streak and take to their heels.

Note: The Major version is the same as in the Core Book—no BDH should ever take it. However, the Minor version might be appropriate for some 'anti-hero' or otherwise dark Crewmembers, with the GM's permission. This replaces the **Sadistic** Complication as listed in the Core Book.

**Slow Learner [Minor] (New Version)**

You have trouble learning new skills.

Penalty: You can never have a General Skill higher than d4; instead, you begin buying Specialties at the d6 level, instead of the normal d8, and you cannot have the Asset **Renaissance Man**. This applies both to character creation and later advancement; should you ever buy off this

Complication, any General Skills you have at d4 in which you have at least one Specialty at d6 or higher are automatically raised to d6, and any Specialties you had at exactly d6 are lost as they are subsumed into the General Skill again. For example, if you had this Complication, you could have Covert d4 (with no Specialties) and Guns d4/Pistol d10/Rifle d6. If you then bought off **Slow Learner**, you would suddenly have Guns d6/Pistol d10 (and no more Rifle Specialty), but your Covert would stay at d4.

Note: This replaces the **Slow Learner** Complication as listed in the Core Book.

### **Smells Like a Farm [Minor]**

You come from a workin' family—and you can't never seem to get the smell out...

Penalty: You're obvious to anyone who looks at you as a country boy (or girl), and not in the cute kinda way. Even if you know how to get around in the Core and other places of high civilization (which you might not) you find that anyone inclined to look down on the lower classes doesn't like you around much, giving you a -2 Step Willpower penalty when making any Influence rolls against them.

### **Stir Crazy [Minor]**

Get cooped up too long and you're liable to start acting strange.

Penalty: If you spend more than a week without a significant change of scenery, you start to go a little nuts—you don't sleep well, you become easily startled and distracted, you get increasingly irritable. For each week that you can't get a change of scene (getting off-ship for a few hours or a day, leaving town to go on a hike, etc) you suffer a -2 Step Skill penalty to all rolls from being so irritated. Also, especially in close quarters (like on a ship), you start to get on other peoples' nerves after a while, acting out and being generally aggravating about it.

### **Trickster [Minor/Major]**

You don't get mad—you get hilarious! Or at least, *you* think its hilarious...

Penalty: Whether or not you're prone to violence, you abso-fraggin'-lutely prone to mischief. You like to play practical jokes on people; these may or may not be malicious, but they generally get people mad at you. As a Major Complication, though, you have an even bigger problem. You like to pull off really dangerous pranks whenever you can, just for the thrill of it—which can make it much harder to survive a supposedly stealthy mission. You might be noticed—but things are so much more fun when you back up the sewage treatment system, or when you *personally* serve the poisoned food to your target. You don't hold back—and when anybody riles you up, you *have* to play some kind of prank on them. It might not be immediate, but it'll come soon....

### **Tri-plex Junkie [Minor]**

You're a compulsive shopper. You like to spend hours wandering around the Tri-Plex in any Core city, poke around stores and markets on the outer rim, and you never pass up the chance to check out a flea-market. You just have to shop—and you always find something you just *have* to buy.

Penalty: Whenever the opportunity arises, you get the urge to splurge. You would spend huge amounts of time shopping, given the opportunity, and you always end up buying something useless. Whenever you enter a shopping area, you have to spend the cash you have on hand on something that is largely useless, like a badly-carved swan or a souvenir plate. Whatever it is you come up with, though, your cash just burned its way out through your pocket, and you waste a bunch of time

wandering around.

### **Young ‘un [Minor/Major]**

You’re still wet behind the ears, and everyone knows it. People almost never let you make any important decisions, and a lot seems to go over your head.

Penalty: You are below the age of a legal adult. As a Minor Complication, you are just under age (17-20 years); people may show some respect, but you still get treated as ‘just a kid’ a lot, and don’t have a lot of freedom. As a Major Complication, you are significantly under adult age (16 or younger), and are given very little freedom; also, a lot of the world is pretty shocking and hard to grasp at that point, at least if you get up to most of the things likely to happen in a game.

Note: If your character should pass through enough time to grow out of this Complication (or at least turn the Major into the Minor), they may no longer have to deal with the legal problems associated with being under-age, but they will still suffer the social penalties (be viewed by adults as young and untried) until they pay it off with AP like normal.