

TALES FROM THE WILD BLUE YONDER

Lady BLACKBIRD

CREATED BY

John Harper

REVISED BY

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INFLUENCES

Clinton Dreisbach, James V. West, Luke Crane, Vincent Baker, Jonathan Walton, Judd Karlman, Jason Morningstar, Fred Hicks, Rob Donoghue, Leonard Balsera, Ben Lehman, Xai Causey, Brandon Amancio, Claudio Cipolla, Mike Rivero, Beau Jàgr Sheldon, Joss Whedon, George Lucas, Hayao Miyazaki, Reiko Kodama.

PLAYTESTERS

Adam Chevrier, Shannon East, Naydanka Huamani, Sage LaTorra, Paul Riddle

CONTACT

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is on the run from an arranged marriage to Count Carlowe. She hired a smuggler skyship, The Owl, to take her from her palace on the Imperial world of Ilysium to the far reaches of the Remnants, so she could be with her once secret lover, the pirate king Uriah Flint.

HOWEVER—Just before reaching the halfway point of Haven, The Owl was pursued and captured by the Imperial cruiser Hand of Sorrow, under charges of flying a false flag.

EVEN NOW Lady Blackbird, her bodyguard, and the crew of The Owl are detained in the brig, while the commander of the cruiser, Captain Hollas, runs the smuggler ship's registry over the wireless. It's only a matter of time before they discover the outstanding warrants and learn that The Owl is owned by none other than the infamous outcast Cyrus Vance.

HOW WILL LADY BLACKBIRD AND THE OTHERS ESCAPE THE HAND OF SORROW?

WHAT DANGERS LIE IN THEIR PATH?

WILL THEY BE ABLE TO FIND THE SECRET LAIR OF THE PIRATE KING? IF THEY DO, WILL URIAH FLINT ACCEPT LADY BLACKBIRD AS HIS BRIDE? BY THE TIME THEY GET THERE, WILL SHE WANT HIM TO?

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NATASHA SYRI ✠ LADY BLACKBIRD

An Imperial noble, in disguise, escaping an arranged marriage so she can be with her lover

TRAITS & TAGS

Imperial Noble	Master Sorcerer	Athletic	Charm	Cunning	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Etiquette ● Dance ● Educated ● History ● Science ● Wealth ● Connections ● House Blackbird 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Spellcaster ● Channeling ● Stormblood ● Wind ● Lightning ○ Fly ○ Blast ○ Sense 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Run ● Fencing ● Rapier ● Duels ● Shooting ○ Pistol ○ Acrobatics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Charisma ● Presence ● Command ● Nobles ● Servants ○ Soldiers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Deception ● Misdirection ● Disguise ● Codes ○ Sneak ○ Hide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____

KEYS

Key of the Paragon

As a noble, you're a cut above the common man. Turn your key when you demonstrate your superiority or when your noble traits overcome a problem.

BUYOFF: Disown your noble heritage.

Key of the Mission

You must escape the Empire and rendezvous with your once secret lover, the Pirate King Uriah Flint, whom you haven't seen in six years. Turn this key when you take action to complete the mission.

BUYOFF: Give up on your mission.

Key of the Impostor

You are in disguise, passing yourself off as commoner. Turn this key when you perform well enough to fool someone with your disguise.

BUYOFF: Reveal your true identity to someone you fooled.

Key of

Key of

When you turn a key, take an **experience point (xp)**. If you go into danger because of your key, take 2 xp. Each key also has a **buyoff**. If the buyoff condition occurs, you may permanently remove that key and replace it with a new one, and earn 5 xp.

XP

Spend xp at any time to:

5 xp — Add a new **trait** with 3 tags.

5 xp — Add a new **key** you've never had before.

5 xp — Add a new **secret**.

5 xp — Increase **pool maximum** by 1 (and get a **pool die**).

3 xp — Unlock a **tag** on an existing trait.

1 xp — Get a **pool die** (up to your pool maximum).

SECRETS

Secret of Stormblood

As long as you can speak, you can channel magic and do Sorcery.

Secret of Inner Focus

Once per refresh, you can re-roll a failure when doing Sorcery.

Secret of

Secret of

Secret of

CONDITIONS

☐ INJURED

☐ DEAD (PRESUMED)

☐ TIRED

☐ ANGRY

☐ LOST

☐ HUNTED

☐ TRAPPED

☐ _____

POOL

MAXIMUM



CURRENT

ITEMS & APPEARANCE

Lady Blackbird begins detained in the brig, weaponless.

ITEMS: Commoner's garb — Fine noble garb — Rapier — Handful of Imperial crowns — House Blackbird heirloom

NAOMI BISHOP

Former pit-fighter and bodyguard to Lady Blackbird

TRAITS & TAGS

Pit-Fighter	Bodyguard	Ex-Slave	Keen		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Combat Tested● Brutal● Living Weapon● Fast● Hard○ Strong○ Bone-breaking○ Scary Look	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Awareness● Threats● Defend● Disarm● Restrain● Carry● Delay○ Security○ First Aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Sneak● Hide● Run● Tough● Endure● Scrounge● Nobles○ Hatred○ Iron Will	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Insightful● Aware● Coiled● Liars● Traps○ Danger○ Sense Motives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ _____○ _____○ _____○ _____○ _____○ _____○ _____○ _____○ _____○ _____	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ _____○ _____○ _____○ _____○ _____○ _____○ _____○ _____○ _____○ _____

KEYS

Key of the Guardian

You are Lady Blackbird's loyal defender. Turn this key when you make a decision influenced by her or when you protect her from harm.

BUYOFF: Sever your relationship with the Lady.

Key of Vengeance

The Empire enslaved you and made you kill for sport. You will have your revenge on them and watch their cities burn. Turn this key when you strike a blow against the Empire (especially by killing an Imperial).

BUYOFF: Forgive them for what they did to you.

Key of the Warrior

You crave the crash and roar of battle, the tougher the better. Turn this key when you do battle with worthy or superior foes.

BUYOFF: Pass up an opportunity for a good fight.

Key of

Key of

When you turn a key, take an **experience point (xp)**. If you go into danger because of your key, take 2 xp. Each key also has a **buyoff**. If the buyoff condition occurs, you may permanently remove that key and replace it with a new one, and earn 5 xp.

XP

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Spend xp at any time to:

5 xp — Add a new **trait** with 3 tags.

5 xp — Add a new **key** you've never had before.

5 xp — Add a new **secret**.

5 xp — Increase **pool maximum** by 1 (and get a **pool die**).

3 xp — Unlock a **tag** on an existing trait.

1 xp — Get a **pool die** (up to your pool maximum).

SECRETS

Secret of Destruction

You can break things with your bare hands as if you were swinging a sledgehammer. It's scary.

Secret of the Bodyguard

Once per refresh, you can re-roll a failure when protecting someone.

Secret of

Secret of

Secret of

CONDITIONS

- ☐ INJURED
- ☐ DEAD (PRESUMED)
- ☐ TIRED
- ☐ ANGRY

- ☐ LOST
- ☐ HUNTED
- ☐ TRAPPED
- ☐ _____

POOL

MAXIMUM



CURRENT

ITEMS & APPEARANCE

Naomi Bishop begins detained in the brig, weaponless.

ITEMS: Commoner's garb — Bishop vs. Orkblood broadside — Writ of Emancipation

CYRUS VANCE

An ex-Imperial soldier turned smuggler and soldier-of-fortune, Captain of The Owl

TRAITS & TAGS

Ex-Imperial Soldier	Smuggler	Survivor	Warrior		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tactics ● Command ● Soldiers ● Rank ● Connections ○ Maps ○ Imperial War Ships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Haggle ● Deception ● Sneak ● Hide ● Camouflage ● Forgery ● Pilot ● Navigation ○ Repair ○ Gunnery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tough ● Run ● Scrounge ● Endure ● Creepy Stare ● Intimidation ○ Medic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Battle-Hardened ● Shooting ● Two-Gun Style ● Pistol ● Fencing ○ Sword ○ Brawl ○ Hail of Lead 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____

KEYS

Key of the Commander

You are accustomed to giving orders and having them obeyed. Turn this key when you come up with a plan and give orders to make it happen.

BUYOFF: Acknowledge someone else as the leader.

Key of Hidden Longing

You are completely enthralled by Lady Blackbird, but you don't want her to know it. Turn this key when you make a decision based on this secret affection or when you somehow show it indirectly.

BUYOFF: Give up on your secret desire or make it public.

Key of the Outcast

You got exiled from the Empire. Turn this key when your outcast status causes you trouble or is important in a scene.

BUYOFF: Regain your former standing or join a new group.

Key of

Key of

When you turn a key, take an **experience point (xp)**. If you go into danger because of your key, take 2 xp. Each key also has a **buyoff**. If the buyoff condition occurs, you may permanently remove that key and replace it with a new one, and earn 5 xp.

XP

Spend xp at any time to:

5 xp — Add a new **trait** with 3 tags.

5 xp — Add a new **key** you've never had before.

5 xp — Add a new **secret**.

5 xp — Increase **pool maximum** by 1 (and get a **pool die**).

3 xp — Unlock a **tag** on an existing trait.

1 xp — Get a **pool die** (up to your pool maximum).

SECRETS

Secret of Leadership

Once per refresh, you can give someone else a chance to re-roll a failed roll, by giving them orders, advice, or setting a good example.

Secret of Warpblood

Once per refresh, you can teleport yourself or someone you're touching.

Secret of

Secret of

Secret of

CONDITIONS

☐ INJURED

☐ DEAD (PRESUMED)

☐ TIRED

☐ ANGRY

☐ LOST

☐ HUNTED

☐ TRAPPED

☐ _____

POOL

MAXIMUM



CURRENT

ITEMS & APPEARANCE

Cyrus Vance begins detained in the brig, weaponless.

ITEMS: Faded pilot's garb — Imperial Navy medals — Pistols — Variety of forged documents and false identification

KALE ARKHAM

A burglar and petty sorcerer, first mate and mechanic of The Owl

TRAITS & TAGS

Burglar	Tricky	Petty Magic	Mechanic		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Quiet ● Sneak ● Dextrous ● Locks ● Perceptive ● Traps ● Darkness ○ Alarm ○ Distractions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Quick ● Dirty Fighting ● Tumbler ● Escape ● Contortionist ○ Sleight of Hand ○ Acrobatics ○ Dagger 	<p>PICK ONE TAG PER ROLL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Light Spell ● Dark Spell ● Jump Spell ● Shatter Spell ○ Channeling ○ Spellcaster 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Repair ● Engines ● Efficiency ● Spare Parts ● Sabotage ○ Enhancements ○ Ship Weapons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____

KEYS

Key of Greed

You like the shiny things. Turn this key when you steal something cool or score a big payoff.

BUYOFF: Swear off stealing forever.

Key of the Mission

You must safely deliver Lady Blackbird to the Pirate King Uriah Flint, so she can marry him. Turn this key when you take action to complete the mission.

BUYOFF: Give up the mission.

Key of Fraternity

You are sworn to Captain Vance in a bond of brotherhood. Turn this key when your character is influenced by Vance or when you show how deep your bond is.

BUYOFF: Sever the relationship.

Key of

Key of

When you turn a key, take an **experience point (xp)**. If you go into danger because of your key, take 2 xp. Each key also has a **buyoff**. If the buyoff condition occurs, you may permanently remove that key and replace it with a new one, and earn 5 xp.

XP

Spend xp at any time to:

5 xp — Add a new **trait** with 3 tags.

5 xp — Add a new **key** you've never had before.

5 xp — Add a new **secret**.

5 xp — Increase **pool maximum** by 1 (and get a **pool die**).

3 xp — Unlock a **tag** on an existing trait.

1 xp — Get a **pool die** (up to your pool maximum).

SECRETS

Secret of Concealment

No matter how thoroughly you're searched, you always have a few key items with you. You can produce any common, simple item at a moment's notice.

Secret of Reflexes

Once per refresh, you can re-roll a failure when doing anything involving grace, dexterity, or quick reflexes.

Secret of

Secret of

Secret of

CONDITIONS

☐ INJURED

☐ DEAD (PRESUMED)

☐ TIRED

☐ ANGRY

☐ LOST

☐ HUNTED

☐ TRAPPED

☐ _____

POOL

MAXIMUM

●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
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CURRENT

ITEMS & APPEARANCE

Kale Arkham begins detained in the brig, weaponless.

ITEMS: Mechanic's garb and tools — Dagger — Lock picks — Trick cards — Goggles

SNARGLE

A goblin sky-sailor and pilot of The Owl

TRAITS & TAGS

Pilot	Sky Sailor	Goblin	Sly		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Daring ● Steady ● Maneuvering ● Evasion ● Tricky Flying ● Navigation ● Maps ● Atmospheric ○ The Owl ○ Battle ○ Ramming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gunnery ● Aim ● Maintenance ● Observation ● Signals ● Empire ● Pirates ● Free Worlds ● Haven ○ Repair ○ Connections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Warp Shape ● Glide ● Nightvision ● Agile ● Quick ● Tumbler ● Teeth & Claws ○ Mimic Shape ○ Reckless ○ Connections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Crafty ● Sneaky ● Distractions ● Bluff ● Languages ● Trade Speak ○ Sharp ○ Disguise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____ ○ _____

KEYS

Key of the Daredevil

You thrive in dangerous situations. Turn this key when you do something cool that is risky or reckless (especially piloting stunts).

BUYOFF: Be very, very careful.

Key of Conscience

You don't like to see anyone suffer, even enemies. Turn this key when you help someone who is in trouble or when you change someone's life for the better.

BUYOFF: Ignore a request for help.

Key of Banter

You have a knack for snappy comments. Turn this key when Snargle says something that makes the other players laugh or when you explain something using your pilot techno jargon.

BUYOFF: Everyone groans at one of your comments.

Key of

Key of

When you turn a key, take an **experience point (xp)**. If you go into danger because of your key, take 2 xp. Each key also has a **buyoff**. If the buyoff condition occurs, you may permanently remove that key and replace it with a new one, and earn 5 xp.

XP

Spend xp at any time to:

5 xp — Add a new **trait** with 3 tags.

5 xp — Add a new **key** you've never had before.

5 xp — Add a new **secret**.

5 xp — Increase **pool maximum** by 1 (and get a **pool die**).

3 xp — Unlock a **tag** on an existing trait.

1 xp — Get a **pool die** (up to your pool maximum).

SECRETS

Secret of Shape Warping

As a goblin, you can change your shape, growing shorter, taller, fatter, thinner, and changing your skin color, at will.

Secret of the Lucky Break

Once per refresh, you can keep your pool dice when you succeed (so go ahead and use 'em all).

Secret of

Secret of

Secret of

CONDITIONS

- ☐ INJURED
- ☐ DEAD (PRESUMED)
- ☐ TIRED
- ☐ ANGRY

- ☐ LOST
- ☐ HUNTED
- ☐ TRAPPED
- ☐ _____

POOL

MAXIMUM



CURRENT

ITEMS & APPEARANCE

Snargle begins detained in the brig, weaponless.

ITEMS: Pilot's garb — Bandalier — Pocket astrolabe — Goggles

ADVANCEMENTS

Ways for your character to grow and change while journeying aboard The Owl

NEW TRAITS & TAGS

Reputation

Trustworthy, Reliable, Fearless, Reckless, Ruthless, Underhanded, Dangerous, Deadly, Cruel, Unpredictable, Heroic, Honorable, Compassionate

Crew

Gunnery, Aim, Maintenance, Damage Control, Observation, Signals, The Owl, Cargo, Supplies, First Aid, Boarding Action

Explorer

Curious, Aware, Nimble, Hardy, Ancient Lore, Languages, Ruins, Monsters, Myths, Maps

Investigator

Search, Deduction, Perceptive, Seduce, Interrogate, Bribe, Coerce, Contacts, Sneak, Deception, Insight, Logic, Fisticuffs, Pistol

Miner

Tunnels, Labor, Strong, Pickaxe, Dim Light, Hold Breath, Ores, Resist Cold, Endure

Bold

Brave, Daring, Heroic, Rescue, Falling, Fire, Reckless, Explosions, Escapes, Outnumbered, Underdog

Sky Pirate

Vicious, Hack & Slash, Cutlass, Knife, Shooting, Boomstick, Gunner, Boarding Action, Crew, Loot, Capture, Drink, Hardy, Treacherous, Intimidating, Contacts, Underworld

Ghostblood

Fly, Possess, Insubstantial, Control Technology, Electrical, Dominate, Terrify, Sneak, Overload

Stoneblood

Harden, Make Heavy, Meld Into Stone, Petrify, Immovable, Mauler, Move Through Stone, Shape Rock, Tough

Voidblood

Invisibility, Vacuum, Make Weightless, Pass Through, Erase Mind, Counterspell, Disintegrate

Dreamblood

Sedate, Manipulate Dream, Enter Dream, Hallucination, Blind Fighting, Read Mind

Bloodhunter

Gather Information, Interrogate, Intimidate, Incognito, Recognize Blood, Reflexes, Authority, Firefights

NOTE: When you buy a new trait, you start with three tags. You need to buy the rest with xp.

NEW KEYS & SECRETS

The Key of the Traveler

You love exploring new places. Turn this key when you share an interesting detail about things you've seen or when you go somewhere exciting. BUYOFF: Pass up the opportunity to see something new.

The Key of the Broker

You like to make deals and trade favors. Turn this key when you bargain, make a new contact, or exchange a favor. BUYOFF: Cut yourself off from your network of contacts.

The Key of the Tinkerer

You just can't leave it alone. Turn this key when you modify, improve, repair, or patch some tech. BUYOFF: Pass up the opportunity to mess around with technology.

The Key of the Pirate

You pillage, raid, and terrorize the Wild Blue. Turn this key when you impress someone with your piratical nature or do something to add to your reputation. BUYOFF: Turn over a new leaf and go straight.

The Key of the Vow

You have a vow of personal behavior that you have sworn not to break. Turn this key when your vow significantly impacts your decisions. BUYOFF: Break your vow.

The Secret of the True Course

You know how to navigate the Remnants. REQUIRES: You need to learn the navigation codes from someone who has the secret.

The Secret of the Explorer

You've been all over the Blue, seen a lot of strange things. Once per refresh, you can re-roll a failure when you're dealing with local customs or strange places. REQUIRES: You've traveled from one side of the Blue to the other.

The Secret of the Sky Song

You know how to call sky squid and can attempt to communicate with them when they appear. REQUIRES: You've trained with a master of the Sky Song or have been dream-linked to a sky squid.

The Secret of the Shootist

You're deadly with a firearm (or two). Once per refresh, you can re-roll a failure when you're shooting. REQUIRES: You've been in a lot of gunfights or are learning from someone who has.

The Secret of Experience

Once per refresh, you can use tags from more than one trait when you make a roll. REQUIRES: Experience in a wide variety of dangerous situations.

THE OWL

An old but reliable skyship, outfitted for smuggling



RELATIVE SIZE COMPARISON

THE OWL → 48M

SKY SQUID → 139M

HAND OF SORROW → 550M

DETAILS & STATISTICS

The Owl was once a Sky Hauler C9 cargo ship but has since been extensively customized by Cyrus and Kale. It has a smaller cargo area and four passenger berths in the reclaimed space. It also has hidden smuggling compartments scattered throughout the vessel.

The Owl is an old ship, but it can hold its own with more modern vessels thanks to its custom engines and supercharged steam drive. Snargle has also made several unique adjustments to the controls to allow the large ship to maneuver like a much smaller craft.

Unfortunately, all of these modifications put a lot of strain on the old girl. Kale keeps the ship running day to day, but when it's put under a lot of stress (as it often is) things can go awry—broken pipes, vented steam, leaking fluids, and worse.

Still, *The Owl* is not just a skyship, it's a home to its crew. They gather around the beat-up old wooden dinner table in the galley every night and thank the four winds that fortune saw fit to bless them with such a fine craft.

Length: 48 meters

Crew: 2–3

Berths: 6 (2 crew, 4 passenger)

Cargo Capacity: 30,000 pounds (6 cargo pods)

Powerplant:

- ♦ Tri-Valve Reciprocal Steam Drive
- ♦ (2) Twin-Coil Induction Thrusters

Cruise Speed: 160 knots

Flank Speed: 310 knots under boost

Weapons: Top-mounted external gun turret

Wireless: Midrange Multi-Band with Signal Mask

Sensors:

- ♦ Short-Range Sonar
- ♦ Atmosphere/Pressure Analyzer

Hull: Treated to resist corrosion in the lower depths for up to 4 hours.

CONDITIONS

The GM can inflict conditions on *The Owl* as events warrant. It begins play with the **Need Fuel** condition marked.

☐ **NEED FUEL**

☐ **NEED SUPPLIES**

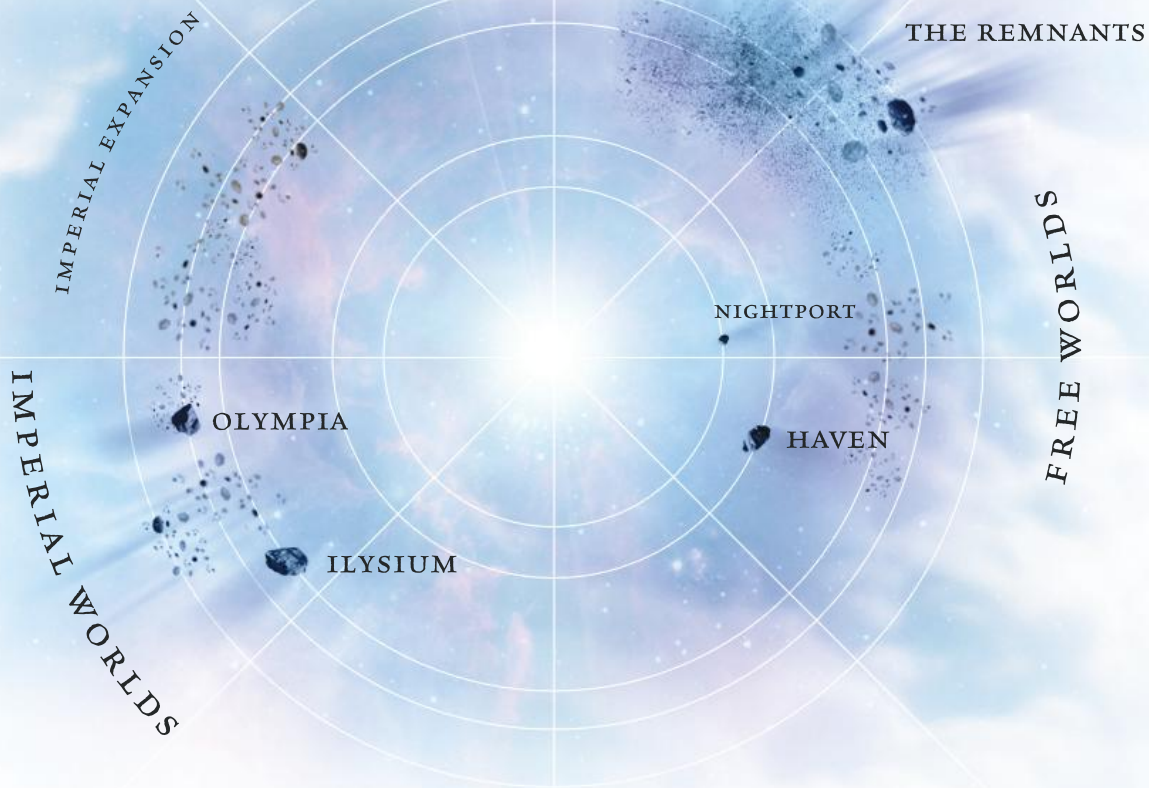
☐ **BUSTED & LEAKING**

☐ **SLOWED**

☐ **CRIPPLED**

THE WILD BLUE

Shattered worlds circling a dimming star



THE WORLDS

Adrift in the Blue

The worlds of the Wild Blue float in a sky of breathable gases circling a small, cold star. Scholars believe that the star is made from pure Essence—the strange energy that sorcerers channel for their magic. This “solar system” is much smaller than you might think—it takes about six weeks to cross from one side to the other on a standard sky ship. Most of the worlds of the Empire are so closely positioned that it takes only a day or two to travel from one to another.

The Lower Depths

The heavier gases form a dense layer of fog below the “sky” of the Wild Blue. This fog is corrosive—people need to wear gas-masks to breathe and most airship hulls will start to corrode after a single exposure. Pirates and other criminals sometimes use the lower depths to evade Imperial patrols and launch raids from hiding. Unfortunately, the depths are home to sky squid and other monstrous things....

Ilysium

The capitol world of the Empire, home to the great noble houses. Ilysium is rich and decadent, attended by servants, slaves, and the elite bodyguards of the nobility.

Olympia

The staging world of the Imperial Sky Fleet. From here, expeditions are launched into the colonial expanse and all across the Wild Blue. Olympia is also home to the finest brewers and distillers in the Empire.

Haven

The most prominent of the Free Worlds. Here, in the sprawling city hubs, the Trade Union tries to impose some order on the bickering clans and factions of the Free Peoples. Slavery is outlawed here, so many ex-slaves make Haven their home.

Nightport

Unlike other worlds, Nightport does not rotate, which means one face is always in darkness. It is on this side that pirates and smugglers have built a hidden port city in which to carry out their nefarious dealings. This hive of scum and villainy is a dangerous place, but almost anything may be bought or sold there, including secrets.

The Remnants

A swirling maelstrom of spinning world-shards. The Remnants are almost impossible to navigate, even for the best airship pilots. It's said that pirate royalty keep a secret fortress somewhere deep within the Remnants and only those who know the secret of the true course can ever reach it.

PLAYING THE GAME

Rules for playing in the Wild Blue Yonder

ROLLING THE DICE

When you try to overcome an obstacle, you roll dice. Follow these steps to determine how many dice you get to roll.

TRY: Start with one die just for trying.

TRAIT: Select one trait that applies, add a die for that.

TAGS: If that trait has any tags that apply, add another die for each *filled circle* on that tag. Tags with *empty circles* cannot be used until you unlock them with experience. Some tags are grouped in a box; you can use *only one tag within that box* per roll.

POOL: Finally, add any number of dice from your personal pool.

Roll all the dice you've gathered. Each 4, 5 or 6 (or each X if you're using 50/50 dice) is a **hit**. Each 1, 2 or 3 (or each **blank**) is a **miss**. You need hits equal to the difficulty level to succeed.

DIFFICULTY LEVELS

2 EASY

3 DIFFICULT

4 CHALLENGING

5 EXTREME

If you succeed, discard all the dice you rolled (including any pool dice you used). Don't worry, you can get your pool dice back.

If you fail, you don't yet achieve your goal. But, you get to keep the pool dice you rolled and *add another die to your pool* (up to your maximum pool size). The GM will escalate the danger of the situation and probably inflict a *condition*. You might be able to try again.

The GM may give some obstacles two difficulty levels (typically two steps apart, for example 2 and 4). Getting a number of hits equal to the higher difficulty level allows for a greater success.

EXAMPLE: "Yes, Naomi, you can take down those two guards, the difficulty level is 3. However, if you get 5 hits, then you can clear all the marines out of this section of the ship."

PC vs. PC: If your character contends with other another PC, both players roll against a difficulty level set by the GM. If one player succeeds, that player wins the conflict and discards dice normally. The other player keeps their rolled pool dice and gets another. If both players succeed, no pool dice are discarded or gained, but the GM interrupts the conflict in whatever manner they see fit. If both players fail, they keep their pool dice and get another die, and the GM escalates the situation or introduces a new obstacle.

Helping: If your character is in a position to help another PC, you can give that player a die from your pool. Say what your character does to help. The outcome of the roll affects both PCs.

CONDITIONS

When events warrant or especially when you fail a roll, the GM may impose a **condition** on your character: **Injured**, **Drained**, etc. A condition might increase the difficulty level of a roll, or may restrict your choice of action (you can't be reasonable if you're angry). **NOTE:** The "dead" condition just means "presumed dead" unless you say otherwise.

REFRESH

In between dice rolls, characters can have **refreshment scenes** with each other. Refreshment scenes are a good way for the characters to show their personalities and develop their relationships with one another. The conversation between characters can happen in the moment, but can also take the form of a flashback.

After a refreshment scene, each character:

- ♦ Restores their pool back to their maximum pool.
- ♦ Removes one condition (if they did something during the scene to deal with the condition).
- ♦ Regains the use of their secrets.

SCRIPT CHANGE

Generally, games in the Wild Blue Yonder are rated PG-13 for intense action, fantasy violence, sexual situations and occasional strong language. However, if a situation happens in the game that makes you—as a player—feel uncomfortable, or the game is going in a direction that doesn't reflect the tone or content you expected, you can call for a **script change**.

PAUSE

If a scene is getting too intense, you're confused about something, or you just need to take a break, you can say "Pause" and, optionally, discuss what just happened and where the story is going. After the break or discussion, you can decide if you want to continue playing without any changes or if you want to adjust something.

FAST FORWARD

If you don't want to play through what's about to happen, you can say "Fast Forward" to skip past it (sort of like when you know what's about to happen in a movie but it fades to black instead of showing the action).

REWIND

If something already happened that you object to, you can say "Rewind" to jump back to the point in the scene where it went off course for you. Work with the GM and the other players to take the story in a different direction.

Script Change is by Beau Jàgr Sheldon: briebeau.com/scriptchange

RUNNING THE GAME

Tips, tricks and advice for the GM

GETTING STARTED

Read the opening passage to set up the situation. Then hand out the character sheets and help everyone pick who they want to play.

This game is designed as a one-shot session (running about 3 ½ hours), but can also easily be spread out over two or three sessions. Ideally, the PCs will undergo satisfying character arcs, as the xp reward for buying off keys has been built specifically to encourage that. Pay close attention to when the players turn their keys, don't be stingy with xp, and look for opportune moments to introduce scenarios that lead to an eventual buyoff.

The game should naturally fall into a cinematic cycle of action—rest—action because of the way the dice pool gets replenished. Give players that time in their refreshment scenes, as that's where their characters and relationships really come to life.

LISTEN AND ASK QUESTIONS, DON'T PLAN

When you're the GM, don't try to "direct" the action or plan out what will happen. Instead, ask questions—lots and lots and make them pointed toward the things you're interested in. Like, Cyrus gives Naomi an order within earshot of Lady Blackbird, but the Lady's player doesn't register it right away. Naomi goes to follow the order. So I ask Lady Blackbird's player, "How do you react when the Captain orders your bodyguard around? Is that okay with you?" And then, when it's totally not okay, "What do you say to him? What do you say to Naomi?" and a few more like that and everyone is yelling at each other and rolling dice to impose their will.

Also ask questions like:

- ❖ "Does anything break when you do this crazy maneuver?"
- ❖ "The fire probably spreads out of control doesn't it?"
- ❖ "That sounds like a bold plan. What's the first step?"
- ❖ "Do the two of you end up somewhere quiet together? Does something happen between you?"
- ❖ "Do you know anything about the Crimson Sky rebels? What are they like? Is it normal for them to be this far into the Empire?"

Keep that going at a steady pace and the game flies along pretty well.

Part of the job of the GM is *listening* to what the players say, catching it, turning it around and looking at it, and seeing if there's anything else to be done with it.

The GM's jobs: listen and reincorporate, play the NPCs with gusto, create interesting obstacles, impose conditions as events warrant (especially when rolls fail), call for refreshment scenes (especially flashbacks).

SAY YES, LOOK FOR THE OBSTACLES

By default, characters can accomplish anything covered by their traits. They're competent and effective people, in other words. It's no fun to ask for a roll when there's no cool obstacle in the way. Just say yes to the action, listen, and ask questions as usual. But also, be on the look out for the opportunity to create obstacles as the action develops. Because you're asking leading questions and listening closely, they'll be all over the place, so it won't be too hard to spot them.

Obstacles can be other characters, situations (explosions, falling, chases, escapes) or anything else you can imagine.

If a character tries something not covered by their traits, that's an obstacle right there: lack of experience and training. Lots of fun things can go wrong when you don't know what you're doing! Also, players will sometimes try things they're bad at so they can fail and add dice to their pool. It's a fine move for them and it gives you the chance to create more trouble, so everyone wins.

For some rolls, you may want to set two difficulty levels: the normal one and an even higher one (at least 2 steps higher) for a grander success. This encourages higher risk-taking from players, which increases the expenditure of pool dice. Spending pool dice forces refresh scenes, which builds characters and relationships, and deepens the story. It's a wonderful thing!

CONDITIONS

A condition constrains what the player should say about their character. It's a cue to tell the GM and players to pay attention to that thing and use it as material for the developing fiction. Gaming is just us saying stuff to each other, right? So you're like, "What do I say now?" and you look down and go, "Oh, I'm Angry. I'll go be angry at someone then. 'Snargle! Why aren't we at Nightport yet, you shiftless layabout?!'"

For the GM, the conditions can create opportunities or give permissions. "You're Injured, right? The Void Spiders can smell blood. They swarm right at you, ignoring the others." Sometimes a condition will become an Obstacle in its own right, calling for a roll to deal with it.

LONG-TERM PLAY

You might find that this one-shot naturally leads into further adventures with some or all of these characters. That's great! Encourage the addition of new traits, tags, keys and secrets to reflect the character's growth. Depending on the game's outcome, the characters' next adventure might include further exploration of the Remnants, leading a rebellion against the Empire, or hunting down more of the Blooded.

BUILDING THE WORLD

Questions and names to bring the Wild Blue to life

STARTER QUESTIONS

General

- ❖ Can anyone learn magic or do you need to have noble blood?
- ❖ What kind of trouble are pirates known to cause?
- ❖ Have you ever seen a real sky squid?
- ❖ What did you notice about the *Hand of Sorrow* as you were lead to the brig?
- ❖ What game are the guards playing outside the brig right now?

Natasha Syri ❖ Lady Blackbird

- ❖ How did you fall in love with Uriah Flint?
- ❖ Does anyone in the crew know that you are the Lady Blackbird?
- ❖ How did you arrange hiring *The Owl*?
- ❖ What would a very observant person notice about you that would indicate that you're a noble?
- ❖ How did you become a Master Sorcerer?

Naomi Bishop

- ❖ How did the guards manage to take you alive?
- ❖ How did you become Lady Blackbird's bodyguard?
- ❖ Why did you leave pit-fighting?
- ❖ Who was your biggest rival in the pits?
- ❖ Have you ever been to Haven or any of the other Free Worlds?

Cyrus Vance

- ❖ What do you usually smuggle?
- ❖ What did you do to be exiled from the Empire?
- ❖ Whose fault is it that you were captured for flying a false flag?
- ❖ Who was the pilot before Snargle?
- ❖ How do you know Captain Hollas and what did Hollas do to make an enemy of you?

Kale Arkham

- ❖ What created such a deep bond between you and the Captain?
- ❖ You are on a mission to get Lady Blackbird to the Pirate King. What's in it for you?
- ❖ Who does the Captain like more: you or Snargle?
- ❖ What are you hiding in the spot the guards forget to search?
- ❖ What weird thing has been going on with *The Owl* lately?

Snargle

- ❖ How are goblins treated by the Empire?
- ❖ Who does the Captain like more: you or Kale?
- ❖ *The Owl* is low on fuel. How were you going to pay for it?
- ❖ What's the most dangerous escape you've ever made?
- ❖ Is it rare for a goblin to be the pilot of a skyship?

NAMES

MALE: Abel, Artemis, August, Bram, Charles, Dmitri, Edmund, Eli, Giovanni, Ivan, Jack, Jefferson, Jonas, Kerim, Leo, Logan, Malachi, Mario, Micah, Nahum, Noah, Orlence, Oscar, Samuel, Silas, Thaddeus, Victor, Vlad, Wellington, Wester

FEMALE: Alice, Ardent, Ashlyn, Brena, Caess, Clare, Daphne, Elena, Eveline, Fiona, Grace, Hannah, Hazel, Hester, Isabel, Jezebel, Josephine, Krista, Leah, Lucile, Lydia, Melinda, Odessa, Rachel, Rosie, Seraphina, Sonya, Sophie, Veronica, Violet

SURNAMES: Bell, Bowen, Canter, Carson, Cross, Durrant, Faber, Harwood, Hollas, Hunter, Judge, Kalra, Keel, Lang, Moreau, Morgan, Porter, Pickett, Quinn, Rowe, Sidhu, Soto, Thrush, Torrez, Vakharia, Walker, Winter, Wright, York

NOBLE HOUSES: Ash, Blackbird, Firefly, Mooncloud, Nightsong, Snow, Twilight, Whitethorn

GOBLINS: Aka, Barra, Boggin, Chank, Edder, Fenya, Gabba, Gimble, Hob, Ippa, Mogga, Molok, Olf, Skitter, Tork, Wamba

NOTES

OBSTACLES & DIFFICULTIES

Suggested challenges for the characters

Escape the Brig

The cells in the Hand of Sorrow brig are walled in steel with heavy iron locks on the doors

OBSTACLES

- 3 — Pick the lock.
- 3 — Trick a marine guard.
- Automatic — (*Naomi only*) Smash the door open.
- 5 — (*Naomi only*) Smash the door open quietly.
- 4 — Sneak through the ship.
- 3 — Fight crew.
- 4 — Fight marines.
- 5+ — Fight a lot of marines.

ESCALATION

- ❖ Alarm goes off.
- ❖ More marines appear.
- ❖ *The Owl* is jettisoned to stop your escape.
- ❖ Someone gets separated from the group (*Lost* and/or *Trapped*).

Sky Squid Attack

*While passing through the lower depths, your engines attract a hungry sky squid. Its tentacles close around *The Owl*...*

OBSTACLES

- 5 — Escape from tentacles.
- 3 — Attack squid.
- 4 — Maneuver in squid ink.
- 3 — Avoid harm from squid attacks (crushing, smashing, biting, thunderous song).

ESCALATION

- ❖ Squid calls other squid with its song.
- ❖ Squid blood attracts other monster(s).
- ❖ Pulled further into the depths (*Lost*).
- ❖ Crash into rocks/debris/hidden world (*Busted & Leaking* or *Crippled*).

Bounty Hunter Ambush

*Unless they keep a low profile, the actions of *The Owl* will eventually draw attention from bounty hunters looking to cash in on the warrants for Vance or the reward for Lady Blackbird.*

OBSTACLES

- 5 — Fight back when ambushed.
- 3 — Flee.
- 4 — Try to bargain with them.
- 3 — Pull a dirty trick to turn the tables.

ESCALATION

- ❖ Someone is grabbed and held at gunpoint (*Trapped*).

Skyship Battle

You always want to be above your enemy in a skyship battle—unless your vessel is equipped to go into the Lower Depths....

OBSTACLES

- 3 — Maneuver for a clear shot.
- 4 — Maneuver against a smaller, faster ship.
- 4 — Maneuver to boarding action.
- 3 — Fire on enemy ship.
- 4 — Fire on a smaller, faster ship.
- 3 — Avoid enemy fire.
- 4–5 — Avoid a lot of enemy fire.

ESCALATION

- ❖ *The Owl* is hit and loses control (*Busted & Leaking, Slowed*).
- ❖ More enemy ships appear.
- ❖ You're driven into a storm by enemy action.
- ❖ The fight attracts a sky squid.

Parlay with Scoundrels

To find the secret path to the lair of the Pirate King in the remnants, you'll have to deal with a whole host of unsavory characters.

OBSTACLES

- 3 — Find an underworld den.
- 3 — Show you're not someone to mess with.
- 4 — Arrange a fair deal.
- 5 — Arrange a deal that goes in your favor.
- 4 — Spot their devious lies.

ESCALATION

- ❖ The scoundrels decide to simply take what they want from you.
- ❖ You're sold out.
- ❖ You were followed to the meet!

Fight a Sorcerer

Uriah Flint is a flameblood and a master sorcerer. Not that anyone would need to fight him, though. I mean, why would that happen?

OBSTACLES

- 3 — Dodge blasts of magical fire.
- 5 — Attack Flint through his magical defenses.
- 3 — Endure the heat and smoke as the fight wears on.

ESCALATION

- ❖ The fires spread out of control.
- ❖ You drop your weapons when they get too hot to hold.

PLAY TRACKER

An aid for the GM to keep track of conditions and watch for when keys are turned

Lady Blackbird

☐ INJURED

☐ DEAD

☐ TIRED

☐ ANGRY

☐ LOST

☐ HUNTED

☐ TRAPPED

KEY OF THE PARAGON

- ☐ ☐ They demonstrate their superiority or their noble traits overcome a problem.

KEY OF THE MISSION

- ☐ ☐ They take action to complete the mission to see Uriah Flint.

KEY OF THE IMPOSTOR

- ☐ ☐ They perform well enough to fool someone with their disguise.

Naomi Bishop

☐ INJURED

☐ DEAD

☐ TIRED

☐ ANGRY

☐ LOST

☐ HUNTED

☐ TRAPPED

KEY OF THE GUARDIAN

- ☐ ☐ They are influenced by Lady Blackbird or protect her from harm.

KEY OF VENGEANCE

- ☐ ☐ They strike a blow against the Empire.

KEY OF THE WARRIOR

- ☐ ☐ They do battle with worthy or superior foes.

Cyrus Vance

☐ INJURED

☐ DEAD

☐ TIRED

☐ ANGRY

☐ LOST

☐ HUNTED

☐ TRAPPED

KEY OF THE COMMANDER

- ☐ ☐ They come up with a plan and give orders to make it happen.

KEY OF HIDDEN LONGING

- ☐ ☐ They indirectly show their affection for Lady Blackbird.

KEY OF THE OUTCAST

- ☐ ☐ They cause trouble because of their outcast status.

Kale Arkham

☐ INJURED

☐ DEAD

☐ TIRED

☐ ANGRY

☐ LOST

☐ HUNTED

☐ TRAPPED

KEY OF GREED

- ☐ ☐ They steal something cool or score a big payoff.

KEY OF THE MISSION

- ☐ ☐ They take action to safely deliver Lady Blackbird to Uriah Flint.

KEY OF FRATERNITY

- ☐ ☐ They are influenced by Vance or show how deep their bond is.

Snargle

☐ INJURED

☐ DEAD

☐ TIRED

☐ ANGRY

☐ LOST

☐ HUNTED

☐ TRAPPED

KEY OF THE DAREDEVIL

- ☐ ☐ They do something cool that is risky or reckless (especially piloting).

KEY OF CONSCIENCE

- ☐ ☐ They help someone who is in trouble or they improve someone's life.

KEY OF BANTER

- ☐ ☐ They make the other players laugh or explain something using jargon.

The Owl

☐ NEED FUEL

☐ NEED SUPPLIES

☐ BUSTED & LEAKING

☐ SLOWED

☐ CRIPPLED