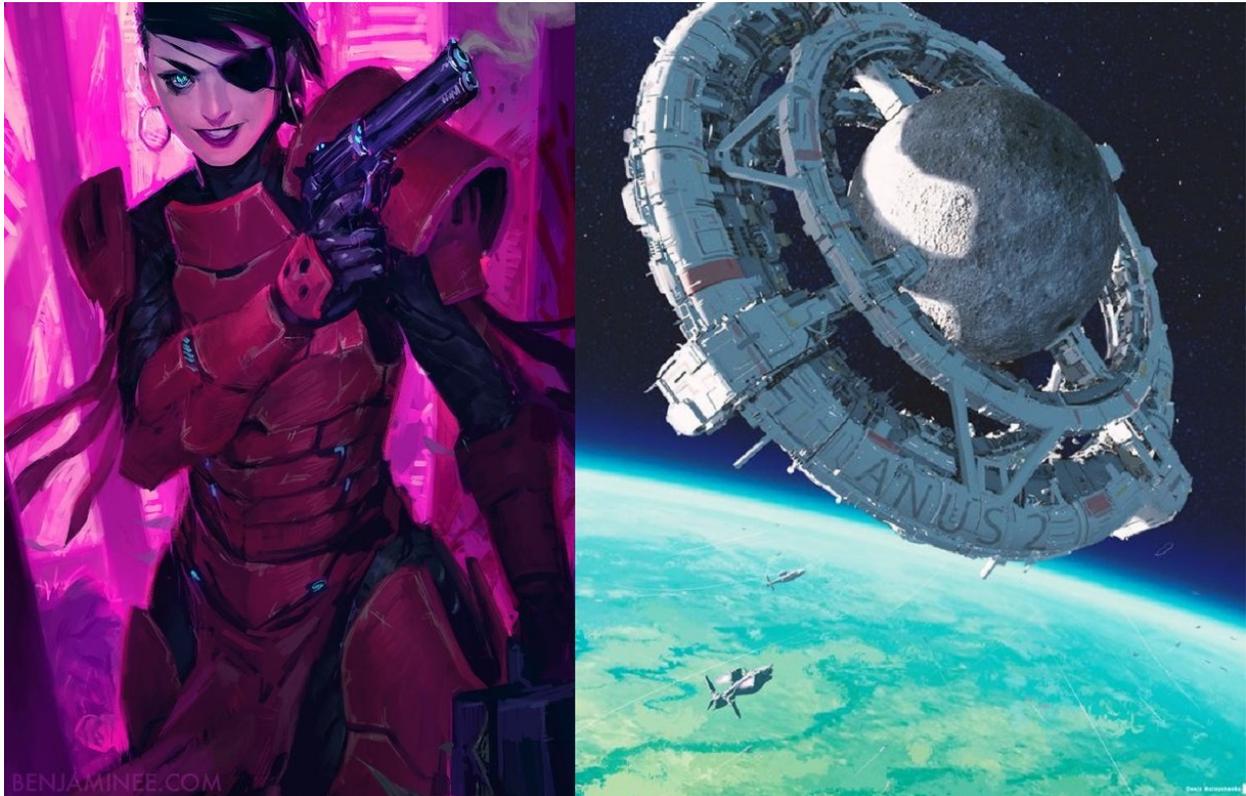


Last Breath (Necromancers In Space) - The Pool, Start File

2022-Nov-15, John Willson, john.willson.peng@gmail.com



Democracy never fell exactly, it just became irrelevant. When a family can control trillion-dollar tech patents, or exclusive trade orbits, or more rare-earth metals in asteroids than exists in all the planetside mines, a prime minister is just one more hand to bribe.



The only law is your personal threat radius, the only justice is retribution. Everything depends on the perceived power of your house. Your family's reputation protects you when there are witnesses, but you have to sleep eventually.

In the Great Houses' pursuit of dominance, nothing is sacred, not even Death. Bodies are workers, bones are weapons, mortal wounds are minor setbacks. As a noble, you either master the energies of death and life, or you protect one who does, with sinew and blade. Yes, swordsmanship once again rules the day, when a careless pistol shot can compromise an entire hull. A duel is often the least destructive way to settle a grievance.

Planetships, space stations, noble houses, power plays, knights, necromancers, swords, skeletons, duels, schemes, romance?, ghosts.

(Any relation between this fictional milieu and any *recent hit novels* is less than purely coincidental (*ahem*), BUT! this game stands on its own. The only the fiction that exists for us is what we introduce here, through character generation, and in play.)

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MAKE UP YOUR CHARACTER

We are playing near-future space opera plus necromancy in all its flavours. Be specific though: what's your specialty? Animator? Bone adept? Flesh magician?

A character is: a 50-word story, and a few Traits, some of which have bonuses. That's it.

Write 50 words or less to describe anything about your character's appearance, their status, their origin or background, their viewpoints, what they can do, their gear or resources, companions, their official mission, or what they want. In particular, say something about what they're after or the situation they find themselves in. I will build the scenario based on your characters only. Whatever you tell me that your character is doing, that's what the game will be about.

- I recommend writing a bunch and then paring it back to 50 potent words.
- Do not use superlatives or front-loading terms.
- Google Docs has a nice word-count feature. Select text, press CTRL+SHIFT-C.
- Make up names and words. Make up and include other characters or past events if you want.
- Underline words or short phrases to define **Traits**, as many as you can or want.
- Give the character a name and title. It does not count toward the 50 words.

Assign bonuses to one or more Traits. It is OK for Traits not to have bonuses. When a Trait is relevant to a conflict you're in, you get its bonus.

- You have 15 dice. You may spend up to 14 of them for Trait bonuses.
- +1 Bonus costs 1 die; +2 Bonus costs 4 dice, +3 Bonus costs 9 dice.
- The remaining dice become your starting Pool.
- My only advice is: definitely buy some Trait bonuses, and definitely keep some Pool dice.

Provide an image of your character if you want to.

AN EXAMPLE CHARACTER

(from another setting.)

Helu, Second Exalt Mentat of The Nenued

HELU's STORY:

My faction visits the material plane of Gwyre: secretly, because we possess corporeals, which is forbidden. I seek a means to make our visits permanent. My daughter Hra has misgivings about subsuming Gwyre minds. She loves a Nevermelt enforcer's son, ignorant of our plans. I can send hallucinations that deceive.

HELU's TRAITS:

- Second Exalt Mentat of The Nenued, +2
- the material plane of Gwyre, +1
- Can possess corporeals
- Seeks a means to make our visits to Gwyre permanent
- My daughter Hra, +1
- A Nevermelt enforcer's son
- Can send hallucinations that deceive, +2

HELU's POOL DICE: 5

FYI, THE RESOLUTION MECHANIC

To resolve a conflict:

- We agree on what's at stake
- You assemble a handful of d6 dice as follows:
 - If you have a trait that applies to the situation: add its Bonus in dice
 - The GM gives you 1-3 Gift dice
 - You may add as many dice from your Pool as you want to.

You roll all the dice.

- Success if any die is a '1'. Put any Pool dice that you rolled back into your Pool. Now choose: Either • you add 1 new die to your Pool and the GM narrates your success, or • choose the *Monologue Of Victory*: you forego the new Pool die and you have free rein to narrate your own success.
- Failure if none of your dice is a '1'. Lose any Pool dice that you rolled, and the GM narrates what happens.

LATER DEVELOPMENT

During play or between sessions, assign or increase bonuses to Traits as you desire using the same method as above; pay the net cost for the new bonus. Bonuses may not be traded back into Pool dice.

After each session, you will add 15 words to your character story, either as new phrases and sentences, or as additions to existing text. You may also revise existing text by changing conjugation, prefixes and suffixes, but don't delete any words. You may add new Traits by underlining new phrases, and assign bonuses to them using the same method as above.

Art Credits

1. Eye-patch pirate in red: #theboyofcheese, <https://theboyofcheese.tumblr.com/post/151182464171/june-everett-aka-the-red-sea-has-been-spotted>
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