



ALIEN FIRES

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Time Lords

Since the time of legend, minstrels, storytellers and clerics have spoken in awe of a small austere planet at the center of the known galaxies. Inhabitants of every world of every star system know this venerable planet by differing names: Ego, Zele, Que[^]ctle, Epethelamikon. The Scilce inhabitants of Vox 5 call this world <~" "}} / ^[{, \ , which is unpronounceable in any other tongue.

But each race's myths and legends concur with respect to the ancient inhabitants of Ego (the name given the planet by humans). Since time beyond the memory of any history or the breadth of any legend a race of powerful beings known only as Time Elders have inhabited Ego. Through eons of scientific and mystical inquiry the Elders attained the secrets of immortality and corporeal temporal transference, the teleporting of physical bodies through the fourth dimension — time. Utilizing these abilities the Elders protected time and space for uncounted millennia, teleporting themselves into combat against any and all threats to the time continuum.

But as they grew older and more knowledgeable, the Elders became less committed to the well being of finite space and life forms, their complex intellects tending towards metaphysical abstraction, and thus became unable to personally protect time and space.

Thus, over one hundred thousand Earth-years ago, the Elders undertook the Great Search, in which they scoured the universe, selecting the noblest and bravest beings from each of the Primary races and brought them to Ego, where they would become the Time Lords.

The Elders endowed each Time Lord with a resurrection factor, granting a Lord semi-immortality and enlightened them to the mysteries of reality in preparation for their mission.

During the preceding Millenium the Lords have served as a fourth dimensional police force, responding to temporal crisis identified by the Elders.

Few beings have actually met a Time Lord; some deny their existence believing them a primitive myth. But across the universe all speak of the power and legend of the Time Lords.

Time Lord Diary 2199 AD

Once again the Elders have summoned me away from my Fourth dimensional investigations. If we Time Lords are to adequately serve the elders we must constantly expand our conception of the universe. Yet the performance of our duty too often prevents our growth as Time Lords.

Once again time is threatened and once again the human race is the cause of the danger. A sixteenth century Earthman named Christopher Marlowe understood better than anyone the limitless bounds of human pride and ambition. And now this ambition, this tendency of mankind to overreach itself, threatens the cosmos.

My duty is to travel to a mining colony on a planet called Galaxy's End, a Babel of alien cultures, rife with smugglers and rogues, existing on the fringe of law and order. Galaxy's End and its orbiting space station are wholly owned and operated by OCTO easily the most powerful intergalactic industrial superpower. The Galaxy's End Subsidiary of OCTO is run by a modern day Faustus, Dr. Samuel Kurtz.

Dr. Kurtz is an epically tragic figure. A brilliant scientist and philosopher, he is celebrated throughout the Milky Way for his genius and benevolence. As a young man he applied himself to bettering the lives of all sentient beings. He cured horrible diseases and pioneered new techniques for growing food in previously sterile deserts. As his scientific successes mounted he began turning his intellect to philosophy and scholarship, translating arcane alien texts and postulating on the essence of being.

But as his brilliance grew, his reach extended. Having mastered the summits of traditional science and philosophy, Kurtz turned to face the sublime mysteries of time and space. Accepting a research position with the OCTO, Kurtz has spent the last decade aboard the space station at Galaxy's End building a time vehicle. Unfortunately he has also grown steadily insane. Whether his insanity is a result of his immensely difficult and frustrating work or is an inevitable result of his genius I cannot say.

But I have no doubt his experiments are dangerous to the time continuum. Kurtz plans on using his time machine to travel to the dawn of time and view the Creation of all that is. The Elders accurately perceive the danger inherent in this mad quest

for ultimate casual knowledge. NO creature, not even the Elders are meant to witness the creation. Were Kurtz to succeed in traveling to the dawn of time he would pierce chronal fabrics essential to the temporal structure thus destabilizing one of the pillars upon which the stability of the universe rests.

I leave shortly for Galaxy's End. I must destroy Kurtz's time machine. Hopefully I can accomplish this task without harming Kurtz. Of course the Elders place no parameters upon how I may deal with the mad doctor. The fate of one Earthman matters little to in the grand scheme of time.

End Diary Entry

Playing Alien Fires

CREATING A TIME LORD

All Time Lords have abilities or skills which you select when you create a new Time Lord. These skills determine the overall ability of your character during game play. There are seven skill values, each ranging from 0 to 99 points. These skills are:

Fighting—The ability of your character to engage in hand-to-hand combat. While your characters fighting skills are integral to his combat success they are not the only factors and other skills contribute to your effectiveness as a warrior.

Marksmanship—The ability of your character in using ranged weapons. Marksmanship is one of the least important skills and can be assigned a weaker skill value in comparison to other traits.

Diplomacy—Determines your character's skill in interacting with other characters in the game. Diplomacy enables your character to successfully gain information from the other characters in Alien Fires, as well as purchasing and trading items.

Dexterity—Your character's skill in performing complex tasks, such as picking locks or disarming nuclear devices. Dexterity also helps you perform more mundane tasks such as climbing ladders. If your dexterity level is too low, your character may fail to perform a seemingly easy commonplace task.

Understanding—You character's ability to use unknown or new items acquired during the game. Understanding helps your character correctly operate dangerous devices like Plasma Rifles. If your character's understanding level is too low, you may not be capable of using certain devices from your inventory. Three failures by your character to use the item results in the item being stricken from your useable inventory. Understanding can also influence your character's ability to accurately aim a weapon.

Tracking—The tracking skill effects your character's chances of seeing hidden objects and detecting traps. Tracking is a comparatively minor skill.

Quickness—One of the more important character skills, quickness determines your character's speed. Quickness is very important in fighting, as it can allow you character to strike the first blow in a conflict and land a greater number of hits. Defeating an opponent in combat often requires more than brute strength. Certain foes can only be conquered with the proper blend of speed and fighting skill. Quickness also increases your character's chances of successfully avoiding a battle by fleeing.

In creating your Time Lord, be sure to use all of your skill points. For your Time Lord to be an effective agent, he or she should be a well balanced combination of the above skills. Alien Fires automatically sets each skill level at twenty points but you can decrease this total. For instance you could set Marksmanship at 15 points and reassign the extra five points to some other skill. In addition to these initial skill points are 99 unassigned points to be distributed among the skills as you see fit. A sample Time Lord,

but by no means a perfect one, would contain the following skills levels:

	Total skill points 0-99
Fighting-	45 points
Marksmanship-	20 points
Diplomacy-	40 points
Dexterity-	40 points
Understanding-	30 points
Tracking-	24 points
Quickness-	40 points

Note: The strength of these skills will go up or down during the game depending upon how well your character has been performing. The decision to raise or lower your character's skill points is the responsibility of the Elder's Council, and is done automatically as they review your Time Lord's success to date.

SETTING:

Once you have created your Time Lord you are ready to begin the game. The opening screen illustrates your view of the Octo space station as you travel to Galaxy's End. To advance beyond this screen press the forward key (usually the "up" arrow, consult the Movement section of the owners card). The second game screen places you in a hallway on the first level of the mining colony at Galaxy's End. The mining colony consists of three levels and the mines. Your objective is to get to the mine level and secure a ride to the Octo space station on a cargo freighter or starship. Once you arrive at the space station you begin your search for the mysterious Samuel Kurtz.

VIEWING YOUR TIME LORD'S STATS DURING THE GAME

You will want to keep constant tabs on your character's stats as you progress through the world of Alien Fires, 2199 AD. You can view your character's stat sheet at any time during the game by selecting the "AF" logo on the control menu. The stat sheet lists the following:

Skills – A list of you current skill values by name

Name – The name you selected for your character.

Level – Your character's current level. The level provides a rough indication of the power of your Time Lord.

EP's – The amount of Experience Points (EP's) your character has. This value increases your overall level

Combat Readiness – An outline figure of your character, with shaded areas indicating where your Time Lord is protected by armor. Below this figure appears a number representing your character's hit points (HP's). Hit points determine the amount of damage your character can sustain during combat before dying. The more hit points your character has, the more powerful he is. (See the Combat section of this manual for more information on hit points and armor location.) The speed of the cycling band of colors below your character's outline varies depending on his performance. The better your characters performance, the faster the cycling occurs.

Item List – The name of the items - up to a maximum of three - in your character's inventory which you are currently using.

Interacting with Characters

Characters are an integral part of Alien Fires, 2199 AD and you will find that your character's success in interacting with other characters in the game will determine the overall success of your mission.

Characters in Alien Fires, like real people, have individual personalities and react differently to various circumstances. Many of the characters possess vital pieces of information which you must obtain by asking the right questions or offering something in exchange for their help. Conversation with Alien Fires characters revolves around your interrogation of the aliens you meet. Generally your questions can be three fold in nature:

Who: Who is Samuel Kurtz? Who is Angel?

What: What is the Hunter Fighter? What is Octo?

Where: Where is the gift shop? Where is the elevator? Where is the bar?

COMBAT

All combat takes place on the special Combat Screen of Alien Fires, 2199 AD. The Combat Screen is comprised of four major elements:

Weapon—The top line of the screen indicates the name of the weapon your character is using in combat. If this weapon is a firing weapon, an ammunition gauge appears next to the weapon's name indicating the number of rounds left in the weapon versus the maximum amount of rounds possible.

Opponent—A picture of your character's opponent appears in the center of the screen

Combatants—The outlines of your character and your opponent's character will appear, with currently armored locations shaded. Below your character's outline, which appears on the left of the screen is a running total of your character's hit points. As your hit points decrease your character becomes weaker. When your hit points reach zero, your character dies.

Options: Combat options appear at the bottom of the screen and include Fight, Dodge, and Panic. Select an option by clicking the mouse cursor on the desired icon (note: if you are using a keyboard interface, consult the users card for combat instruction). The Fight option allows your character to attack your opponent using his fist or a weapon selected from your inventory. Dodge causes your character to take evasive action, making him a more difficult target for the opponent. If you want to avoid combat with a character or retreat from a battle in progress click on the Panic icon. Your ability to run away is based to a large extent on your quickness level. If your quickness level is too low you may not be able to run away from certain characters, particularly if you are in the middle of a fight.

Picking a Fight: There are two ways your Time Lord can get into a fight. One is to let your character initiate the hostilities by clicking the mouse cursor on the opposing character's screen image (note: keyboard users consult users card.) The other method occurs when your actions or presence aggravates the opposing character to the point of violence. Either method will place you in the special combat mode.

Be careful in picking a fight. Not only do you run the risk of being killed but should you defeat your opponent, you must henceforth face the vengeance of your opponent's friends who will be angered by your actions. Thus you risk alienating character's who would otherwise be helpful.

Damage and Armor

Your character has seven locations where he can be damaged: the head, chest, abdomen and the right and left arms and legs. Armor, acquired as you explore the mining colony and space station can protect any of these damage points, but your character can only use two pieces of armor at any given time.

During combat, damage is reported through the character silhouettes on a hit by hit color-coded basis. Every time a character is struck, the location of the hit is highlighted by a color corresponding to the degree of damage done to the character. The more damaging the hit, the closer the color is to red; the lighter the hit, the closer the color is to green. Each hit carries an accompanying numeric damage value, which indicates the actual damage done to the character. This value takes into account the presence of protective armor and damage done to the armor. A character can have all or part of his armor destroyed during combat. Loss of armor is graphically represented by the previously armored and thus shaded area of your character's silhouette reverting to an unshaded area.

RESURRECTION

If your Time Lord dies during the game he or she must face a review by the Elder's council, to determine his or her fate. The Time Elder's grant each Time Lord a resurrection factor, the possibility of being reanimated by the Elders if they see sufficient potential in your Character to warrant continued existence. Resurrection is based on your character's initial hit point total. Each time your character is reanimated by the elders, he carries a lower hit point total, thus making him easier to kill. If your initial hit point total becomes too low, the Elder's will not resurrect your Time Lord. Thus your character can only be resurrected a limited amount of times.

HELPFUL HINTS

- 1) As you wander through the first level of the mining colony be sure to fully question every character you meet. Such intense questioning will help familiarize you with the Galaxy's End community and will prevent you from passing over important information a character might possess.
- 2) Avoid fighting when your character has few weapons and little armor, as even victory will result in major injury to your Time Lord.
- 3) Be sure to fully explore each room you enter for weapons and armor. Such items may not always be visible upon entering the room.

ELEVATORS

The elevators are critical to your ability to move to different levels of the mining colony and the space station. The elevators appear as a set of large, green, graffiti covered doors. To operate the elevator activate the speech mode and type in the word "up" or "down".



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