

THE EXPANSE

SALVAGE OP



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SALVAGE OP

Salvage Op is an adventure for *The Expanse Roleplaying Game*. It is intended for a crew of 4 to 6 1st to 3rd level *Expanse* characters. The set-up of the adventure assumes the crew have their own ship, albeit not necessarily a good one. They discover a derelict ship out in the Belt with the potential to significantly change their lives—or end them.

A belter pirate ship, the *Picus*, was transporting stolen Martian military equipment. Unfortunately, that equipment included a number of semi-autonomous military drones, which were accidentally activated when a crew member got too curious (and possibly greedy). The drones followed their programming and killed off the pirate crew, leaving their ship adrift in the Belt, which is where the player characters stumble upon it. The ship and its cargo are valuable salvage, assuming the characters can survive and deal with the runaway drones and the compatriots of the dead pirates who are looking for them.

THEME

Salvage Op is, in many regards, a “haunted house in space.” The crew is boarding a creepy, derelict ship to discover its crew murdered and that the killers are still there, along with one traumatized survivor. The feeling of the adventure is meant to be tense, the story one of survival against humanity’s own runaway killing machines. Although there is some interaction and the potential for a fair amount of combat, the adventure is primarily a dangerous exploration encounter.

RUNNING SALVAGE OP

The scenes of *Salvage Op* happen in order from most to least important, so you can shorten the adventure to fit time constraints; if you’re running a full-length game, you should be able to do all four scenes. For shorter games, leave off Scene 4 (the conflict with the other pirate ship) or Scene 3 (with the survivors of the previous crew) as needed, focusing on getting on-board the *Picus* and dealing with the drones. On the other hand, if Scene 2 and Scene 3 go too quickly, you can always introduce additional drones, or other hazards or complications, to make things more difficult for the crew.

Salvage Op should be relatively easy to incorporate into an ongoing or new *Expanse* series: The derelict *Picus* is an isolated encounter that can happen while the crew is on their way to or from somewhere between other stories. It’s also a

potentially useful kickoff for a series, since the *Picus* is a sound and useful ship and could set the crew up with a new ship they can rightfully call their own, provided they can capture and hold on to it. In this case, you can start the crew off as miners, asteroid surveyors, couriers, or the crew of a cargo hauler, or even survivors from a ship that has been destroyed, perhaps even by the pirates! Either the survivors followed the *Picus*, coming upon the pirate after the drones disabled it, or they escaped an attack from the *Cybelle*, the ship that shows up in **Scene 4**, and came upon the *Picus* first.

SCENE I

THE DERELICT

EXPLORATION ENCOUNTER

Once the players are ready to go, read or paraphrase the following introduction aloud to them:

You've had plenty of time to get to know one another on this most recent transit through the system, with nothing but days of steady, routine acceleration and occasional course corrections. You skirt closer to the tumbling rocks of the Belt. Mid-way through your day-long shift, things are pretty routine when you notice something unusual on your long-range scans: A metallic body whose composition and shape isn't an asteroid, but almost certainly a ship. It emits no transponder signal, however, and its power emissions are essentially nil at this distance. Its drive isn't active, and it's likely even its reactor is shut down. It's adrift, a ghost ship floating in the Belt.

If this is your first *Expanses* game, after the first sentence of lead-in text, allow the players the opportunity to introduce their characters. They can play out whatever shipboard interactions they'd like to establish how their characters relate, based on their Drives and Relationships (see **Chapter 2** and **CHAPTER 13** of *The Expanses RPG*). If this is not your first game session, then the crew should have an interlude following the end of their last story and prior to the beginning of this scene. See **Interludes** in the **Game Play** chapter of *The Expanses Roleplaying Game* for more information.

INVESTIGATION

Allow the crew the opportunity to investigate the ghost ship. They'll need to change their own ship's course and decelerate to rendezvous with it, eventually matching the other ship's trajectory by using their maneuvering thrusters. Without boarding it, they are limited to what their own ship's sensors and visual readings can tell them, which is somewhat limited. After a short investigation, the crew learns the following:

The other ship is a little bigger than a large ship's boat or drop ship, probably a small modified freighter, about 30 meters long. It clearly has a drive cone for an Epstein drive. A visual scan shows it also has a torpedo launcher and point defense cannons, meaning it is either a military or security ship or a pirate, since civilian ships don't mount such weapons.

There is no registry, name, or related markings on the ship's hull and no active transponder signal. A lack of a transponder could mean it is damaged or offline, or it could be an illegal modification of the ship's systems. The lack of registry markings suggests the ship is a smuggler or pirate.

There are no heat readings coming from the ship, and other energy readings suggest the ship's reactor is shut down.

Any efforts to hail the ship by radio or tight-beam transmission return no response.

The players do not have to make any ability tests to learn these things, although, in order to keep a sense of mystery and tension, you should feel free to roll some dice out of sight before relating to the players what their characters learn. If you prefer, you can roll a **TN 9 Intelligence (Technology)** test for any character using the ship's sensors or a **TN 9 Perception (Seeing)** test for anyone inspecting the visual feed of the other ship from close distance, but such tests aren't necessary.

IF THE CREW REFUSES TO INVESTIGATE

If the crew decides to bypass the mysterious derelict and go on their way, they skip over most of this adventure. Feel free to remind reluctant players that salvage of this magnitude is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Allow other players to convince reluctant members of their crew to investigate. Appeal to the characters's Drives, which are intended to motivate them into action. If they absolutely refuse, you can have Kay Tollen, the survivor from **Scene 3**, manage to send a brief SOS or radio

signal before it is jammed or cut off by the drones, in order to tantalize the players and get them interested in investigation.

If the players stubbornly refuse to investigate the *Picus*, jump on to **Scene 4** and have them confronted by the *Cybelle*, the other pirate ship. The pirates might take them prisoner, allowing the characters the opportunity to try and get loose. They might even send the prisoners onto the *Picus* to investigate, using them as sacrificial lambs, reminding them they have a weapons-lock on the ship and will destroy it at the first sign of treachery. Play things out however seems best given the crew's actions.

BOARDING

If the crew decides to investigate the derelict ship, they have two options for getting on board: they can use thruster packs and vac-suits to cross from their ship to the other and look to open its airlock from the outside, or they can try docking with the other ship and opening its airlock from within a docking tunnel between them. Even in the latter case, the crew is well-advised to wear vac-suits, since they have no idea what the environment on the other side of the ship's airlock might be. (See the **Technology & Equipment** chapter of *The Expanse Roleplaying Game* for details on vac-suits.)

Spacewalking or docking with the other ship is routine (no test required) but opening the exterior airlock requires a **TN 9 Intelligence (Technology)** test. The ship's power is down and the characters need to use an emergency manual override to open and close the airlock doors by hand.

SCENE 2

GHOST SHIP

ACTION/EXPLORATION ENCOUNTER

Once the crew opens the inner airlock door and accesses the *Picus*, read or paraphrase the following:

It's clear that the interior of the ship beyond the airlock is in vacuum. The interior is dark, save for some luminescent strips of emergency lighting. A dark shape looms off to the right as you enter, something drifting in the microgravity past your field of vision.

Ask the players to roll for initiative, a **Dexterity** test. Regardless of who goes first, as soon as the characters get to act they discover the following:

The shape is someone in a vac-suit, their feet still magnetically locked to the deck, but the faceplate of their suit is broken, with small shards floating weightlessly around their head. The person inside the suit is dead, but the vacuum conditions make it hard to tell for how long.

HAZARD: VACUUM

The interior of the *Picus* has no atmosphere, so the crew has to rely on their vac-suits to protect them. If a suit fails or runs out of air, the character may suffocate (see **Suffocation** in the **Threats** chapter of *The Expanse Roleplaying Game*). A character who takes damage from an attack like a gun, knife, or other weapon suffers a suit puncture. The character's air will run out in 2d6 rounds unless the suit is patched, requiring a major action by either the wearer or an assisting character. All of the crew's suits have emergency patches for these circumstances.

If a character's vac-suit is breached, such as the helmet or faceplate being destroyed, the character immediately begins to suffocate and takes 1d6 penetrating damage each round until they are dead or reach a safe atmosphere, which is unavailable inside the ship unless power is restored. A clever character might be able to quickly salvage a spare helmet or other part from the vac-suits of the *Picus*'s dead crew with a **TN 7 Intelligence (Engineering)** test, taking 6 rounds minus the result of the Drama Die to do so.

Since the *Picus* is not under thrust, there is no gravity on board, leaving everything in free-fall. (See **Gravity** in the **Threats** chapter of *The Expanse Roleplaying Game* for details.) Maneuvering may require a **Dexterity (Free-fall)** test from the characters, with the TN based on the difficulty of the maneuver. For the most part, the crew can move about normally by magnetizing the boots of their vac-suits to the deck plating.

THE PICUS

SIZE Large (30 meters long)

HULL 2d6 **CREW** 6 (16)

COMPETANCE N/A

DRIVE Epstein, Thrusters

SENSORS 1

WEAPONS

Point Defense Network (Close Range, 2d6 Damage), Torpedo Tube (Long Range, 4d6 Damage)

NOTES

See the Ships chapter of The Expanse RPG for details on the ship stats and their uses.

THREAT: THE DRONES

Unknown to the crew when they board the *Picus*, there are three military-grade drones on-board. They were accidentally activated from the equipment the ship was transporting and are following their programming to capture an enemy ship: systematically eliminate on-board targets, seize control of the ship's systems, shut down life support and the drive, and maintain control while awaiting further instructions. The drones are in "standby" mode at the moment, but that changes when they detect the presence of additional intruders on-board who lack the proper IFF (identification friend or foe) transponder codes to mark them as "friendlies."

Each drone is a thick disk, roughly a meter wide. They have thrusters to maneuver in microgravity and deployable spider-like legs with magnetic adhesion, which allow it to move along surfaces. Each drone has a built-in slug-thrower and shock-weapon it can use by touch in close combat. Fortunately for the crew, while the drones are tough, they lack any Fortune. They can only take injured and wounded conditions to reduce damage and avoid being taken out of a fight (see **Applying Damage** in the **Game Play** chapter of *The Expanse Roleplaying Game*). Each drone can take two injured conditions and two wounded conditions before they are taken out, however (unlike people, who can only take one of each).

COMBAT DRONES

ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

ACCURACY 2 (GUNNERY), **COMMUNICATION -2**,
CONSTITUTION 3 (STAMINA), **DEXTERITY 4**,
FIGHTING 2 (LIGHT WEAPONS), **INTELLIGENCE 0**,
PERCEPTION 1 (SEEING), **STRENGTH 3**, **WILLPOWER 0**

SPEED	FORTUNE	DEFENSE	AR + TOU
14 (FLYING 18)	0	14	6
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	
BUILT-IN GUNS	+4	2D6+3	
STUN BATON	+4	1D6+4 PENETRATING	

SPECIAL FEATURES

FAVORED STUNTS: Lightning Attack, Skirmish

SPECIAL STUNT—SUIT BREACH: For 2 SP with a successful close attack, the drone damages the target's vac-suit. For 5 SP, the drone breaches the target's vac-suit. See the preceding Hazard: Vacuum section for the effects when this happens.

THREAT: MODERATE

DRONE LOCATIONS

Both the command and engineering decks of the *Picus* have a drone present, keeping watch over vital systems. The third drone on board patrols the main shaft between the command and engineering decks. By default, it is in the opposite direction of whichever way the crew chooses to explore first. If they split up, roll a die to randomly choose the direction in which the third drone awaits. There's a 50% chance of encountering the third drone at each deck: Roll a die when the crew first arrives at a deck. On a roll of 4 or higher, the third drone is on that deck. If the crew traverses the rest of the main shaft without running into it, they automatically encounter the third drone outside of either the command or engineering decks.

EXPLORING THE SHIP

The crew are relatively free to explore the *Picus* however they want. Many of the ship's doors and hatches are closed and have to be opened or closed manually until power is restored. To restore power, someone has to restart the systems in the engineering section. Otherwise, the crew can operate the doors, but during action time, it takes five rounds to open or close one manually.

The *Picus* is laid out like most *Expanse* ships so that while the ship accelerates, "down" is toward the drive. Therefore, it's a bit like a tall building laid on its side. The main lift shaft through the center of the ship is currently like a long hallway running its length with the doors set "sideways" along it. From the top/front end of the ship toward the drive cone, the layout is as follows:

COMMAND DECK

The door to this area is open to the main access shaft. One **drone** is in this area, in standby mode, but it will power up and attack anyone who enters the area. There are also two vac-suit clad bodies in here, one still strapped down to an acceleration couch, the other floating freely. Both of them have been shot multiple times. The displays and controls on the command deck are on minimum power; crew members can use them to get a look at the state of the *Picus*'s systems (functional but shut down) but not much else can be discovered unless power is restored.

GALLEY

Another body is floating freely in this area, which contains a table with benches attached to either side, and standard galley equipment for reconstituting prepared foods. The victim in the galley shows no signs of violence. Since they aren't wearing a vac-suit, they likely died from asphyxiation or exposure to vacuum.

CREW QUARTERS

Double-occupancy quarters for up to twelve people take up the next three decks. The doors to all but one of the rooms are closed. The room with the open door has two bodies inside, both floating free in the microgravity, each killed by several gunshots. One of the closed crew quarters is also the sanctuary of the sole surviving member of the *Picus* crew. If the characters approach this door or open it, go to **Scene 3**. The contents of the crew quarters are fairly unremarkable but, if the crew is in particular need of something, like a sidearm or a spare of something, you might allow them to find it there with a **TN 9 Perception (Searching)** test.

AIRLOCK

This is where the crew enters the ship, discovering the body of one of the *Picus* crew killed after a drone breached his vac-suit. Like the other parts of the ship, the airlock doors are powered down and have to be operated manually. The ship cannot be re-pressurized unless the outer airlock door is closed.

HOLD

The deck below the airlock is a cargo hold with its own larger loading door. In the hold are a half-dozen crates of black-market military-grade weapons. The crates are magnetically fastened to the deck, but one of them is broken open; this is the crate the drones escaped from when they activated. There are two dead pirates in this section, both of them shot and killed by the drones. Neither is wearing a vac-suit, as both were already dead when the drones disabled life support. The contraband in the hold is good for a temporary +2 increase to the crew's Incomes if they were to sell it, although, of course, it would have to be sold on the black market.

ENGINEERING

The engineering section of the *Picus* is located just above the reactor and drive cone. Like the command deck, the hatch leading into this section is open, and one **drone** is positioned here, magnetically clinging to the "ceiling" in standby mode. When intruders enter the engineering section, the drone attacks them. If the crew has access to the controls in engineering, they can reactivate the *Picus's* reactor and power up the ship with a **TN 9 Intelligence (Technology) advanced** test with a success threshold of 10. Each test takes 10 minutes. Once the reactor is operating, the crew can access the other functions of the ship, including the drive and weapons. If they haven't reactivated the *Picus* by **Scene 4**, they may need to do so quickly.

RUNNING THIS SCENE

This scene is the meat of *Salvage Op*, with the crew exploring the ship and dealing with the threat of the drones. They're most likely to encounter the drone in the central shaft first and, depending on how long it takes to deal with it, might face one or both of the other drones at that time. Otherwise, they encounter the drones at their "stations" on the command deck and engineering. The drones are networked and their expert systems are smart enough to communicate threats to each other and to try and gang up on intruders. Otherwise, they slavishly follow their instructions and are not at all intelligent.

RAMPING THINGS DOWN

If dealing with the first drone the crew encounters is especially difficult, you may want to make it a bit easier on the players by not having the drones gang up on the crew. Instead they remain "at station" unless or until someone enters their area. This gives the crew the opportunity for a bit of a breather in between encounters. They can also take shelter in abandoned areas of the ship. So long as they are out of sight of the drones, they're relatively safe, allowing an opportunity to regroup, catch a breather, and plan. You can also give the other drones some existing damage (from when the *Picus* crew fought back) so they're not at full strength, giving them a pre-existing injured or wounded condition, for example, or even both. Keep in mind the drones can take two of each condition before being taken out.

If the crew is really in trouble, Kay Tollen could emerge from her hiding place to help them, or to wave them toward shelter. If, on the other hand, the crew is spending a lot of time dithering and not taking action, it's just a matter of time before the central drone comes across them and attacks.

RAMPING THINGS UP

On the other hand, if the crew walks all over the first drone(s), feel free to increase the number of drones on board the ship by one or two and have them coordinate their attacks to make things more difficult next time.

The drones may try to attack by surprise, magnetically clinging to the “ceiling” above the characters, for example, in order to drop down on them. Since the *Picus* is in vacuum, no sound carries, so Perception (Sight) or (Touch) tests are the only warning characters may get of an impending attack. See **Surprise** under the **Rules and Roleplaying** section of the **Game Mastering** chapter of *The Expanse Roleplaying Game* for guidelines as to whether or not a drone surprises the crew, and what happens if one does.

The feel of this encounter should be tense and eerie. Even once the crew encounters the first of the drones, they have no way of knowing exactly how many of them are on board the ship, how they got there, or what their purpose might be (other than apparently killing everything in their way).

SCENE 3

SOLE SURVIVOR

SOCIAL ENCOUNTER

The sole survivor of the massacre of the *Picus* crew is Kay Tollen, a Belter pirate who has sealed herself in crew quarters. Her air supply is running low, and she has only a couple of rounds left in her sidearm, so her situation is pretty desperate.

If the crew didn't board the *Picus*, circumstances would soon drive Kay out to try and get past the drones that killed her crewmates, even though she knows she has little chance on her own. She picks up on some of the vibrations through the deck when the characters pass by the crew quarters or begin investigating, but doesn't know for certain whether or not it is the drones hunting for her. Initially, she doesn't use comm channels or break radio silence, out of concern that the drones are monitoring them.

If the crew opens the door to the room Kay is in, she covers them with her pistol and demands to know who they are, while also warning them to look out for the drones. If she sees one of the drones, she shoots at it. If she decides the characters are not an immediate threat, Kay tells them to get inside and close the door as quickly as possible, even though it is tight to cram a half-dozen or more people into crew quarters.

If the crew doesn't find Kay, you can have her break cover to see what is going on. She can show up to help them out against the drones; if she sees anyone fighting them, she shoots at the drone with her remaining two pistol rounds. She's a useful character to help turn the tide if a fight is going against the crew.

KAY TOLLEN, BELTER PIRATE

ABILITIES (FOCUSES)

ACCURACY 2 (PISTOLS), COMMUNICATION 0, CONSTITUTION 1, DEXTERITY 2 (PILOTING, STEALTH), FIGHTING 2, INTELLIGENCE 0 (ENGINEERING, EVALUATION), PERCEPTION 1 (SEEING), STRENGTH 1 (INTIMIDATION), WILLPOWER 1

SPEED	FORTUNE	DEFENSE	AR + TOU
12	15	12	1

WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE
PISTOL	+4	2D6+1

SPECIAL FEATURES

FAVORED STUNTS: Knock Prone, Lightning Attack

TALENTS: Living on the Fringe (Novice), Quick Reflexes (Novice)

EQUIPMENT: pistol, vac-suit.

THREAT: MINOR

INTERACTING WITH KAY

If the crew shows even the slightest concern and compassion, Kay is willing to trust them: She has just lost pretty much everyone close to her and is exhausted, hungry, thirsty, low on air, and out of options. She's not suicidal, but desperate enough to cooperate with nearly anyone. Once the crew has demonstrated they're not a threat and there's a moment to talk, she tells them essentially what happened: The *Picus* was transporting stolen Martian military gear to an exchange in the Belt when several military

drones broke out of the hold and started killing members of the crew. She was asleep when things started, and managed to get into a vac-suit and grab some extra air bottles before the drones shut down the life support. She's unclear about exactly how many drones there are, but thinks it's “at least three.” She is fairly sure the rest of the crew must be dead, given how long it has been. She's been holed-up in the crew quarters for at least a day, maybe two, and was reaching the point where she'd have to break cover to get more air or suffocate.

MESSAGE IN THE BOTTLE

Should you prefer to simplify this encounter without eliminating it, the crew might arrive too late to help Kay. They find her as dead as the rest of her crew, having run out of air. However, they also find her hand terminal. It is still functioning and

flashes with a warning message. In the event that anyone finds her, Kay has recorded a brief summary of what happened to the ship and crew. This final message can convey the same information to the characters without the added complication of a survivor with a possible claim to their salvage, or an extended interaction (if the game is pressed for time).

SMALL UNIVERSE

Against all odds, Kay could actually turn out to be someone one of the crew knows, especially if that character has spent time in the Belt or Outer Planets on the wrong side of the law. If one of the player characters has a pirate or criminal character in their background, you can either make Kay Tollen that person, or replace her with that background character. This adds an extra personal stake for the player character in this scene, and can even be used to lure a reluctant crew into investigating the *Picus*. It also makes it more of a challenge for the character when it comes time to decide what to do with the pirate ship and its sole survivor.

NEW PLAYER CHARACTER

If you want to add a late-coming player to the game, Kay (or another pre-generated character replacing her) is also a good way to have the crew find a new, potentially helpful person on the *Picus* partway through the adventure. She's also a good option for replacing a character taken out by one of the drones, if you want to offer an option for that character's player to keep playing.

SCENE 4

CLAIM-JUMPED

ACTION ENCOUNTER

If the crew manages to eliminate or deal with all of the drones, there's nothing to stop them from claiming the *Picus* and its contents as salvage, except for Kay Tollen, who, assuming she survived, is not really in much of a position to bargain. She'll accept whatever the crew decides for her, although obviously she would prefer to at least get a cut of the profits from the weapons to have something to show for everything she has gone through. However, things get a bit more complicated when another pirate ship shows up, looking for the missing *Picus*!

If the crew left someone behind on their ship to monitor, they get warning of the incoming ship pretty much immediately after they've explored part of the *Picus* during **Scene 2**. Otherwise, they only learn about it when power is restored to the *Picus*. Assuming a character is on the command deck to see the notifications, the controls on the command deck indicate another ship is on an intercept course and has been sending a tight-beam transmission toward them. The repeating message is:

"This is Cybelle, we are incoming. Report your status. Over."

HARD CHOICES

The *Cybelle* is another pirate vessel, with the same game stats as the *Picus* and an Average crew quality (see the **Ships** chapter of *The Expanse Roleplaying Game*). When the *Picus* didn't make their rendezvous, the *Cybelle* backtracked to investigate and has zeroed in on the missing ship (and its cargo). If the characters respond to the *Cybelle*'s message, they're told to hold their position and await a boarding party. Any hesitation on the crew's part earns a stern warning to do as ordered or else be fired upon. If she's with the characters, Kay tells them the *Cybelle* isn't kidding: Both the ship and cargo are valuable, but if the other pirates can't have them, they won't hesitate to destroy them. The characters have three options: Allow the *Cybelle* crew to board, try to escape, or fight.

SPACE CHASE

If the crew wants to flee or make a fight of it, use the chase rules from the **Game Play** chapter of *The Expanse Roleplaying Game* or the space combat rules from the **Ships** chapter. The two ships are evenly matched, so it is largely up to the crew to pull off an escape or victory. They might be able to lure the pirates in by pretending to surrender, getting an opportunity to attack them or run before they can easily react.

REPELLING BOARDERS

If the crew allows the pirates to board the *Picus*, a boarding party of six enters to take the ship. Use the same game stats as Kay, but they are armed with rifles that do 3d6+1 damage and have the Automatic quality. It's then up to the crew whether they surrender or put up a fight. The pirates try to kill anyone who fights them, and aren't in the mood to take prisoners, unless you want Kay to convince them to be merciful. If the crew manages to take out all of the boarding party, they have to deal with a skeleton crew of four more pirates on board the *Cybelle*.

SURRENDER

If the crew surrenders the *Picus* and its cargo without any resistance, they may be able to convince the *Cybelle* crew (with Kay's help) to simply let them go with a promise to not say anything. The characters' ship is of little use to the pirates and they are already late in handing over their stolen cargo to their client. Use the **Social Encounters** rules from the **Game Play** chapter of *The Expanse Roleplaying Game*: The pirates' initial attitude is Standoffish (unless the crew has given them reason to be otherwise), if the crew can get three shifts in a detailed social interaction, the pirates agree to let them go because of how they have helped Kay and/or eliminated the problem of the rogue drones.

If you want to take your series in an interesting new direction, the characters could even be press-ganged into *joining* the pirates to replace the lost members of the *Picus* crew, although in that case they're split up between different ships initially, to ensure they don't cause trouble. The series then becomes about whether the crew embraces their new careers as pirates or looks to escape together.

EPilogue

With some luck and skill, the crew should survive *Salvage Op* with a good chance of having control of a new ship. This opens up a lot of possibilities for both them and your *Expanse* series.

REWARDS

The crew can sell a salvaged pirate ship for a permanent +2 to their Incomes or keep the ship(s) and turn freelance, whether that means working legitimate jobs in the Belt or becoming pirates themselves! If they sell their old ship, the Income increase might be only +1, whereas if they managed to capture *two* ships, the Income increase from selling them should be +3.

Additionally, the crew can sell off the contraband Martian military weapons for a temporary +2 bonus to Income each. The weapons have to be sold on the black market. The crew can outfit themselves with a pistol, rifle, and suit of medium armor each from the haul with no decrease in its overall sale value. The Martian gear has the Durable and Fine qualities, and the weapons have the Sealed quality.

LOOSE ENDS

The primary loose ends confronting the crew involve the pirates and their contraband as well. First, the question of whether or not the *Picus* and the *Cybelle* are part of a larger pirate fleet, or might have comrades looking to avenge them, is left for the Game Master to decide. This opens up the possibility of an ongoing enemy for the series, at least until the crew figures out a way to deal with them.

As for the Martian weapons, astute readers of *The Expanse* series may recall that a *lot* of Martian military ordinance (including ships) began going missing following the Eros incident. This may or may not be a part of that larger conspiracy, and may or may draw attention toward the crew, as the GM prefers. Even if there's no follow-up from the Martian authorities, a crew of scruffy freelancers using top-line Martian military equipment might occasionally draw attention in the future.