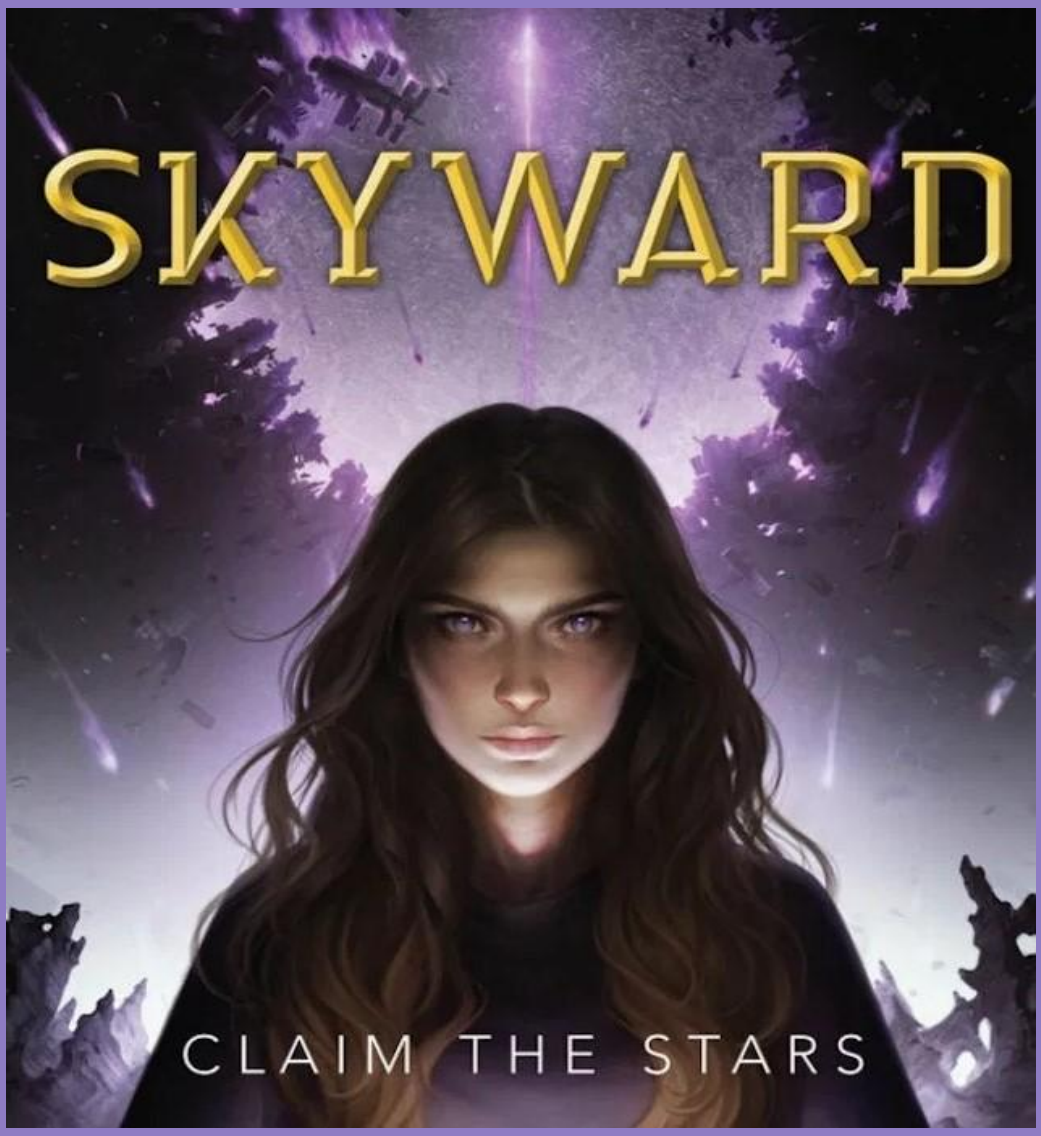


SKYWARD JUMPCHAIN

Books by Brandon Sanderson, Jump by Aehriman

Spensa's world has been under attack for decades. Defeated, crushed, and driven almost to extinction, the remnants of the human race are trapped on a planet that is constantly attacked by mysterious alien starfighters. Now pilots are the heroes of what's left of the human race, and becoming one has always been Spensa's dream. Since she was a little girl, she has imagined soaring skyward and proving her bravery. But her fate is intertwined with her father's–a pilot himself who was killed years ago when he abruptly deserted his team, leaving Spensa's chances of attending flight school at slim to none. No one will let Spensa forget what her father did, yet fate works in mysterious ways. Flight school might be a long shot, but she is determined to fly. And an accidental

discovery in a long-forgotten cavern, an ancient and wrecked fighter, might just provide her with a way to claim the stars. Assuming she can repair the ship, navigate flight school, and (perhaps most importantly) persuade the strange machine to help her. Because this ship, uniquely, appears to have a soul.

Welcome, Jumper to the stars. Or the planet Detritus, one of half a dozen preserves dedicated to keeping alive, and contained, the greatest scourge known to the galaxy- humanity.

The Third Human War all but destroyed galactic civilization. The famously aggressive humans once more boiled from their homeworld, Dirt, to conquer the galaxy, upset by the practice all sapient life has of exiling malcontents and dissidents. This time, they had a new weapon, the delvers- eldritch beings that live in cytonic space, actually rogue AI - and the delvers consumed entire worlds, the only survivors being those who hid any and all cytonics and transmissions.

After the fall, a new government formed, the Superiority, based on holding a monopoly on FTL, and containing the human menace. The KRELL (*Ketos redgor Earthen listro listrins* or human containment unit) employs starfighter drones and occasionally crewed craft to regularly bomb the human settlement on Detritus and a few other preserve worlds. The DDF (Defiant Defense Force) employs fighters to protect them, only the smaller ships can navigate the shell of debris and defense platforms surrounding the planet.

Survival can be rough in this situation. Have **1,000 cosmos points** (cp) to make the next decade easier.

SPECIES

Human (free) Hairless apes from the planet Dirt. Pretty technologically advanced due to discovering FTL *after* metallurgy, but also incredibly aggressive and warlike, judgemental and meddlesome. Hate and fear the humans.

Burl (free) A large, gorilla-like species.

Dione (free) Large humanoid, appearing as if covered in black wire with blue, red or half of each face. When two diones reproduce, they form a cocoon and combine into a temporary person or 'draft.' the half-and-half faces. The draft has enough memories of both parents to function, and spends a month or so discovering their identity and strengths, after which the parents unfuse and decide whether to have that specific child, who will eventually recover memories of their time as a draft, or try again.

Figment (-100 cp) A living gas that can possess technology, and smother individuals. You leave no visual evidence of your passage, only a unique scent.

Heklo (free) An avian species, can't actually fly.

Kitsen (free) A tiny people, like foxes mixed with and the size of hamsters, but with a proud tradition of warrior-poets. The Kitsen were a monarchy but to appease the Superiority have recently transitioned into a full and free democratic society, that just so happens to elect the old monarchs and nobility in a landslide every single time.

Resonant (-100 cp) Something new and different, a form of living crystal. You may lack eyes as such but are very sensitive to vibrations and can grow extrusions in moments for mobility or manipulating objects.

Solquis (free) Blue-skinned humanoids with expressive head-tentacles, and a number of tentacles where humans have arms.

Tenasi (free) A species like large, hairless reptilian bears with a hunched posture. Able to fight and flee without becoming emotional, they are otherwise known for their unique bond to trees. Each Tenasi forms a bond with a tree which grows different fruits based upon their mood over time and character.

UrDail (free) One of humanity's allies in the last war, though they later disavowed that allegiance and claimed to have been occupied and forced. The UrDail of ReDawn are very similar to humans in both culture and biology, looking like nothing so much as lavender-skinned humans with pointy ears, bone ridges beneath the eyes, and white hair.

Varvax (free) Hulking, crablike creatures. In their true form they are shrimplike creatures the size of kittens, but adopt a hulking exoskeleton of mostly stone and quartz. The Varvax are famously peaceful, yet are the foremost species involved in KRELL.

Taynix (-200 cp) Sapient slugs about the size of a loaf of bread with many small tendrils like feathers along their back. All are natural cytonics, with a single power dictated by coloration. Yellow and blue hyperslugs can teleport even across the cosmos and are used in Superiority FTL drives. Blue and green Inhibitors can block cytonics from using their powers. Purple and orange commslugs can communicate over any distance. Red and black boomslugs, when threatened, repel everything in a radius around them and shred them with telekinetic mindblades. These are but half of the known varieties, the powers of the others are a mystery.

Delver (1,000 cp) Rampant cytonic AI, upload/copy of Jason Write's wife, went mad with grief when he died and forked endlessly, filling the Nowhere with malicious lights that are sometimes eyes. In realspace, delvers take the form of a black hole, surrounded by a hollow planetoid shot with tunnels, inside a massive stormcloud in space. Besides being very powerful cytonics who use illusions for defense at short range, delvers can phase through matter, harming or killing things at will, and telekinetically control hundreds of Shards, free-floating asteroids and debris, for defense and attack. Be warned the other delvers will respond violently to one of their own going off-program.

ORIGIN

Commander: It is a terrible burden to send others to die. But if you play the game well, you can win back many lives. Besides, someone else could get it wrong.

Mechanic: Someone has to keep the starships flying, no matter which side they're on, and so a grease monkey you are. It's also nice to have technicians any time you come across alien or forgotten technology.

Pilot: The poster boys for the DDF, or a member of KRELL or even the experimental Superiority fighter unit. You fly the little spaceships very fast, and try to blow the other person up before they can do it to you.

Secret Agent: The Superiority positively bristles with spies as all their vassals scheme to learn the secrets of FTL. Spensa herself becomes one in the second book.

AGE, GENDER & RACE

You can change any of these things about yourself. Nobody really *cares about the fine details past species anyways.*

LOCATION

Pick a suitable location. Detritus is where a lot of the main action happens. Perhaps you'd rather start on Starsight? In the Nowhere, that void of floating rocks? The lost Earth?

WINGMATES

Spin (-50 cp) Spensa Nightshade, lives to fly and recount the warrior stories of old Earth, loves to come up with poetic insults. Hot-headed, has been kept down a lot because her father is the infamous Coward of Alta, and the Admiral tries to drive her from flight school. One of the most capable cytonics to ever exist, particularly after book three.
"When this is done, Jerkface, I will hold your tarnished and melted pin up as my trophy as your smoldering ship marks your pyre, and the final resting place of your crushed and broken corpse!"

Rig (-50 cp) Rodge McCaffrey, Spensa's best friend growing up. Drops out after taking a hit in his first dogfight, realizing flying was always her dream, he becomes her mechanic instead. Cracked the secrets of Taynix FTL after Spensa gave them the hint. Falls in love with FM.
"We grew up together. She's like my sister. Not that I ever had a sister, but if I had one who was, like, terrifying, that's how I think it would feel. "

Jerkface (-50 cp) Jorgen Weight, Spensa's squadron leader. First Citizen privileged family, feels trapped by the weight of his legacy and duties. Is also a cytonic and kinda likes Spensa. In time becomes admiral over the entire DDF.
"You can swear at me all you want, threaten me, whatever. So long as you fly like you did yesterday, protecting the others, I want you on my team."

FM (-50 cp) Freyja Marten, the most confident and outspoken of Skyward Flight. Is part of a 'Disruptor' counter-culture that broadly rejects the jingoistic militarism of every part of Defiant society. Extremely skilled with a light lance.
"Being a Defiant, isn't just about our nationality. It's always expressed as a mindset. 'A true Defiant will think this way' or 'To be Defiant, you need to never back down,' things like that. So, by their own logic, I can un-Defiant myself through personal choices. "

Quirk (-50 cp) Kimmalyn, an excitable girl, big hugger. Religious. Is always quoting "the Saint'' but makes up half the quotes on the spot, either to snark to people's faces or from a sense of humility. Has a great poker face. Drops out, but comes back.
Kimmalyn had the soul of a smart aleck, but the upbringing of a polite society girl.

Mongrel (-50 cp) Matthew Cobb, DDF flight instructor, retired war hero and later admiral. Has a biting sense of humor and no patience for whatever gets in the way of keeping the kids he teaches alive.
"I feel like a munitions man, reloading artillery. I stuff you into the chamber, fire you into the sky, then grab another shell"

Hurl (-50 cp) Hudiya, Spensa's first wingman. And the first cadet to die in training. Prevent this and she could become a heck of a pilot, she almost managed to land her mostly-destroyed Poco.
"A little fear, a little history, those things don't mean anything. Only what we do means anything. "

Sentry (-50 cp) Sadie, Spensa's wingman after Alta Second. Can't really keep up with her when Spensa goes into a cytonic fugue. Clumsy, and tries hard.
"Down with you, vile...space dwelling...ships of...vileness! May you all die painful, fiery deaths!"

Amphi (-50 cp) Arturo Mendez, extremely privileged background, intelligent and kinda pretentious. Easily distracted going into the nuances of dissenting opinions. Was badly shaken and eventually forced to retire.
"Real pilots, the best of the best? They can steer a crashing ship into a salvageable landing, even if they've been shot. Acclivity rings are worth so much that pilots have to protect them, because the pilot isn't worth as much..."

Nedder (-50 cp) Nedd Strong, the easygoing slacker and class clown. Reasonably intelligent when he bothers. Pretty good at defusing tension and getting between his squadron-mates, but loves to wind up Arturo.
"As our resident expert, I'd like to point out that the true coward's weapon is a comfortable couch and a stack of mildly amusing novels."

Bim (-50 cp) Blue-haired Asian guy, extremely eager to fight and to practice with weapons, but not as skilled a pilot as most of the flight. Dies near the end, at Alta Second. Hopefully you can give him a better chance.
"Fly back in? Can't we just turn off the holograms and go grab some grub? "

Morningtide (-50 cp) Magna, a quiet girl who rarely speaks up. She comes from the Vici Caverns, settled by the surviving Defiant Marines and their descendants, and stands as something of a counterpart to the bombastic warrior culture of that cavern. Dies in the squadron's second battle, unless you stop it.

Hesho (-50 cp) Born of a long line of kitsen rulers of Evershore, he was democratically elected his planet's ruler by an enormous margin, because they're totally a democracy now. Flies a fighter for the Superiority squadron before getting lost in the Nowhere, losing his memories and joining a pirate crew. One of the few people who really *gets* Spensa's warrior-poet spirit.

"I have only the instincts of a warrior to guide me. You will not distract me from my current purpose, adversary. Though you have fought admirably, I will defeat you, then compose poetry for your funeral."

"Uh, Hesho? This is nonlethal combat."

"I will defeat you, then compose poetry for your retirement party."

Vapor (-50 cp) a Figment who flies with the Superiority squadron, is secretly spying on Winzik for Cuna.
"Luck is for those who cannot smell their path forward."

Angel (-50 cp) Alanik, an UrDail cytonic and pilot who crashes on Detritus, is impersonated by Spensa, and goes on to help lead a revolution among her people.
"My people were punished because we fought alongside yours. Some on my planet think it is better to go along with the Superiority. To accept their peace. But their peace is a tool to maintain power."

Ironsides (-50 cp) Judy Ivans, hero of Alta, and admiral of the DDF in the first book. Tough as nails, unfortunately racist against cytonics after her squadron-mate lost his mind in the battle.

Other (-100 cp) M-Bot? Buy his ship body or wait until after with this. Want to recruit somebody else? Jason Write? Knock yourself out.

Jumpchain Flight (-100 cp) Bring up to sixteen Companions per purchase with 800 cp of their own to spend. Companions do benefit from the fighter stipend and discounts according to origin, but cannot take drawbacks for more points.

PERKS

From a Poster (-50 cp) You look like you stepped right off a recruiting poster, very nice. You never seem to get scarred or filthy either.

Fighter (Free/50/100 cp) If you're ever facing the enemy with a pistol in hand, something has probably gone horribly wrong. Nevertheless, you should be prepared. For free you have put in enough range time to qualify. 50 cp, and you have the marksmanship and reactions of a combat veteran. For 100 cp, you truly stand out among the crowd, equal to the most elite commandos.

The Defect (-600 cp) Congrats, you're a cytonic! Or should that be, my condolences, you're a cytonic? You have an active Writellum in your brain, linking you to the timeless void beyond the universe called the Nowhere. At base level, you can meditate to enter a state where you process and react to information quicker than even an AI and can communicate telepathically with other cytonics in real-time regardless of distance. With time and practice, you can learn to sense other minds, your surroundings, to teleport across interstellar distances through the Nowhere, astral projection, even to conjure invisible mind blades and mental illusions, and swap bodies with others.

Good Lungs (-100 cp, free Commander) You have a great shouting voice, and a presence that demands attention and respect.

Quiet Voice (-100 cp, free Commander) You remain calm in a crisis and can project that calm over the comms, steadying your subordinates even in pitched battle.

First Citizen (-200 cp, discount Commander) The heroes of Alta are revered by all Defiants, they and their families are afforded special status and privileges. This seems to be the case across the galaxy, even in a democracy like the kitsen's there are citizens and then there are *citizens.* You belong to the latter group, call it an aristocracy, but where privilege exists, you enjoy it. You may choose to have the reputation of a martial hero to justify your fame.

Actually Defiant (-200 cp, discount Commander) The society calls itself Defiant, models itself on sticking it to the Krell. So why are there posters proclaiming 'Obedience is

Defiance?' Why is the Admiral always surprised when people actually, y'know, defy her? Your superiors cut you slack for everything up to and including outright insubordination, so long as you get results.

The Newest Generation (-400 cp, discount Commander) It is the responsibility of every officer not just to lead, but to prepare the next generation of pilots. You are a masterful trainer, able to turn raw cadets into aces in no time, like loading them into a cannon and firing them into the sky.

Keep It Together (-600 cp, discount Commander) Your Flight is your family, they keep you alive. You can easily manage the interpersonal drama of difficult and complex relationships in your unit, but far more than that, you can get people to shelve all the personal stuff and fly. Under your leadership, a squadron operates as the fingers of a single hand, perfectly coordinated, far more than the sum of its parts.

Engineering Corps (-100 cp, free Mechanic) As a rated mechanic, you are skilled in the maintenance, repair and construction of most common technologies of the setting.

Storyteller (-100 cp, free Mechanic) You listened to all those stories of Earth, from the Saga of Napoleon to the dry history of Luke Skywalker. You have a fine memory and the skills to succeed in an oral tradition, how to speak, how to keep your audience enraptured.

"**Home**" (-200 cp, discount Mechanic) You are skilled in designing experiments and tinkering with devices to improve their effectiveness. Sure, maybe you only get another 5% maneuverability out of a starfighter, but that's gotta be worth the fifteen minutes you spent on it, right?

Make Do (-200 cp, discount Mechanic) Use it up, wear it out, make it work or do without. Words to live by when you don't have a lot of resources to go around. You can manage fine with scavenged and incomplete materials, and stretch what vital supplies you do have farther than can be believed.

Banged Out (-400 cp, discount Mechanic) In a constant war for survival, there is never enough *time* to get everything working perfectly. You can fix up any damaged craft in a fraction the time it would take even an experienced pit crew.

Adapt or Die (-600 cp, discount Mechanic) It's hard to always be on the back foot, technologically speaking. Most DDS technicians wouldn't know what to do with Krell hardware or a platform computer if they had one. And the Superiority is similarly behind where their and human civilization was before the Human Wars. How fortunate that you are a master of reverse engineering, able to grasp the basic operations of a strange device at a glance. Given a few hours or days you could replicate, maybe improve upon it.

Situational Awareness (-100 cp, free Pilot) You keep your head on a swivel, half an eye on the scanners and are generally always alert even when tired or distracted. The greatest cause of death among pilots, after all, is things they never saw coming.

Warrior-Poet (-100 cp, free Pilot) A good insult is almost more important than actual combat effectiveness, at least according to Spensa. You have the soul of a warrior-poet, and will compose a beautiful ballad for your foe's funeral, or, being in flight school, their graduation.

Ejector Seat (-200 cp, discount Pilot) The DDF expects pilots to spend their lives protecting the precious acclivity rings of their craft, bringing them home even if it means dying in a flaming wreck. Pilots are simply more replaceable than acclivity stone. But they still provide ejector seats. When you pull the lever, you are assured of making it to safety or being rescued, somehow.

Hear Their Screams (-200 cp, discount Pilot) You have an uncanny ability to grasp the feelings and thought processes of the people trying to kill you. How they maneuver betrays confidence or nervousness, how trigger discipline can betray inexperience. This isn't foolproof, but you are very, very good at predicting your opponents, and by knowing their paths, choosing their fate.

Sniper (-400 cp, discount Pilot) There's no particular art to destructors, it's said. Just hold down the trigger until you hit something, it's not like there's a limit on ammo. You, however, have the perception and reflexes to make each shot count, and hit more distant and fast-moving targets than your fellows could believe.

Claim The Stars (-600 cp, discount Pilot) On a plot, you're the dot making other dots disappear. In space or in atmo, your piloting skills place you firmly among the best there

are. Your reflexes are enough to make people think you're cytonic, you can squeeze performance out of your craft that will make your mechanics weep, as will pilots looking at your confirmed killcount.

Mmmm Mmmm (-100 cp, free Secret Agent) You have a harmless tic that both causes people to dismiss you, and is somehow endearing.

Well Covered (-100 cp, free Secret Agent) You wear a false identity like a second skin, never breaking cover until you deliberately mean to, no matter how safe you might assume yourself to be.

In Plain Sight (-200 cp, discount Secret Agent) No skill is more valuable to a spy than being inconspicuous. You have mastered the art of doing all your dealings, holding all conversations, so a viewer would see nothing suspicious or unusual at all.

Skilled Liar (-200 cp, discount Secret Agent) It's a poor spy who betrays their thoughts with every look, or can't improvise an explanation for their presence in a restricted area, and whatever else you may be, you're not a poor spy in this way. You are a consummate liar.

Wheels within Wheels (-400 cp, discount Secret Agent) Never enter a room without an escape plan. The same general approach applies to things like coups. Whatever is going on, you always have a backup plan ready for if things should go catastrophically wrong. That way you can move straight to that while others are still gaping.

Lynchpin (-600 cp, discount Secret Agent) As if by coincidence, you keep finding yourself around for the pivotal moments where the fate of the galaxy, or at least the direction of society, is decided. Usually with information or leverage to help steer things in your preferred direction. But if anyone asks, tell them you planned it that way the whole time.

ITEMS

Discount one Item at each price tier. Discounted 100 cp Items are free.

Translator Pin (free) A small pin to let you hear any alien languages as your native tongue, works in real time, even. Not as useful for text, unfortunately.

Jumpsuit (free) Some practical clothing, a flight suit and coveralls.

Energy Pistol (-100 cp) A small but deadly holdout weapon. Never runs out of power, has a stun setting.

Light-Line (-100 cp) The baby cousin of a light lance, or tractor beam. This high-tech gauntlet projects a rope of energy that can adhere to anything. Techs used to use them as tethers in zero-G, they're also great for navigating the caves.

Reality Icon (-100 cp) A powerful symbol of your relationships and identity, anything from a dying gift from your best friend to a childhood stuffed animal to a toothbrush. In the Nowhere people hemorrhage memories and their identities fade. As long as you keep this Icon close, you won't ever be at risk of forgetting who you are or your loved ones. Also, in the Nowhere it generates reality sand, a pinch a day helps ward off the memory loss and many communities there use it as currency. Generally these are disguised taynix, but yours can actually be an inanimate object.

Doomslug (-200 cp) A taynix friend. See species for details, but they are very friendly and have a cytonic power.

Drone (-200 cp) A sneaky little reconnaissance drone, capable of sneaking through space or hallways and filching small items, recording data and defending itself with a minimal energy weapon.

Beacon Bomb (-400 cp) The Superiority drilled pilots against the delvers to deliver a nuke inside their labyrinth. This was a lie, the 'bomb' was a boxed cytonic scream, a beacon meant to redirect the delver to a preset destination - Detritus, to wipe out the humans. This works the same way, until they catch on, a way of making space predators and eldritch horrors somebody else's problem.

Grig (-400 cp) A T-Rex or Carnotaur equivalent that feasts on energy. Shooting it with even a ship's cannon is futile. Is a very good boy, loves scritchies.

Lifebuster (-400 cp) A bomb meant to end worlds. Two to three stages. A glowing slime that breaks down all organic life into more of itself, a nuclear charge to spread the slime far and wide. Optionally, it can fire a first stage nuclear shaped charge to burrow deep into fortifications or caverns. Can be stopped by some major terrain features.

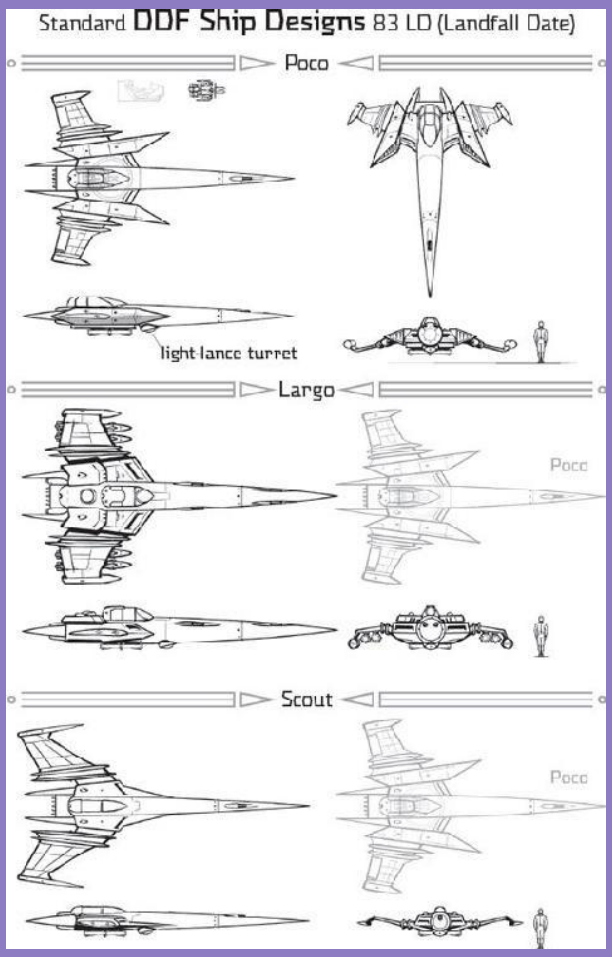
Shell (-400 cp) A network of automated defense platforms, such as surrounds Detritus. Capable of fending off small fleets on their own. Enough platforms to secure one planet.

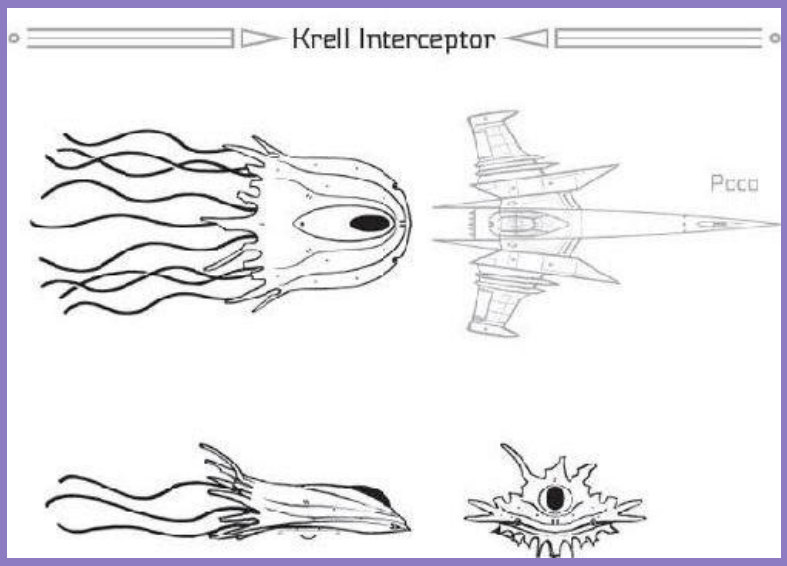
The Path (-600 cp) The Path may have been made up to provide a quest, but does exist in the form of a series of cytonic recordings left scattered around the Nowhere. These reveal the true and hidden history of cytonics, as well as providing personalized lessons/upgrades to any cytonic, sure to make them an order of magnitude stronger with specific and useful skills. A series of ruined walls containing these impressions are yours, and in the future can be used to induct new cytonics.

Planet (-600 cp) A world of your own, similar to ReDawn, Evershore or even Detritus, full of secrets. Can be a massive space habitat like Starsight or Evensong if you prefer.

Shipyard (-600 cp) A large part of the first book revolves around the two halves of the C-137-KJM orbital shipyard, which the Krell first bring down to deny it to the DDF, then

used as a trap. This is the whole and complete deal, a titanic automated facility that can churn out a thousand starfighters a day, given materials. It also comes with a truly priceless treasure, a replenishing stock of acclivity stone rings. The DDF can't produce these, and the Superiority has to mine them from the Nowhere.





STARSHIP

+400 cp just for this section.

Mag is the unit of atmospheric speed for ships, one Mag is 300 miles per hour. Kus is a unit of energy/damage used for weapons and shields both. The standard destructor energy weapon is 30 kus, the standard shield can withstand 80.

All ships have an acclivity ring, made of acclivity stone that produces anti-gravity when charged with electricity, and lift independent of main thrust. This gives fighters VTOL

capability and greatly enhances their maneuverability. Acclivity rings are by far the most rare and valuable component of fighters. The DDS insists if a pilot has to choose between ejecting to live and bringing a ship down to save the ring for salvage, always do the latter.

Poco (free) The basic fighter of the DDS, reliable and easily repaired and mass produced but also clunky, fragile, and full of design compromises for ease of manufacture and use. Max speed is Mag-10.

Val (-100 cp) A scout fighter. Free stealth and enhanced sensors, but no missiles and only a single type 131 destructor, a light version topping off at 18 Kus. Max speed is Mag-10.

Largo (-200 cp) A heavy fighter, free light lance, IMP missiles and six destructors, but slow and lumbering compared to most. Max speed is Mag-6.

Superiority Interceptor (-200 cp) Heavier shields and weapons than DDF Fighters (120 and 70 Kus, respectively) but slower and less agile, lacking missiles or light lance. Max Speed is Mag-6

Superiority Heavy Interceptor (-300 cp) Even heavier shield (160 Kus) and five destructors, carries two missiles and an IMP standard. Max Speed is Mag-4.

M-Bot (-600 cp) A small reconnaissance craft, but one that is massively more advanced than most DDS or Superiority craft. Fast, stealthy, with a light lance turret and mounts for 4 destructors. Can create holographic illusions, and has an AI skilled in hacking, along with sensors far more advanced than anything the DDS has ever seen.

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Air Scoops (-50 cp) With scoops and structural reinforcement, your fighter is 2 Mag faster than it otherwise would be, with oddly a proportional increase in space acceleration. This can be taken multiple times.

Enhanced Grav Caps (-50 cp) Inertial dampening is a thing in this universe, but too bulky for fightercraft. Instead, you have grav-caps which can soak a certain degree of gravity for bursts of about three seconds, for acceleration and maneuvering. These normally can eat sixty Gs, yours can do over a hundred, and you have a gyroscopic cockpit seat that lets you

face the gravity optimally. This can be taken multiple times, each adding fifty Gs worth of inertial dampening.

IMP (-100 cp) The Inverted Magellan Pulse, like the old EMP, is a radius effect. This one destabilizes and knocks out shields and force fields of all types for a small spherical area- and I do mean small, about fifty meters- but cannot help but affect the user's ship as well.

Firepower (-100 cp) Add an extra destructor to your craft, or add 10 Kus of damage to your existing disruptors. This can be taken multiple times.

Reinforced Shields (-100 cp) Adds another 20 Kus to your shield strength. This can be taken multiple times.

Stealth (-100 cp) It's actually really hard, almost impossible, to be stealthy in space. At least you can not look like a fighter, with minimal emissions and a hull that scatters sensors.

Missiles (-100 cp) Your fighter has two smart, homing missiles. A one time impact of 100 Kus, but it has range and fire-and-forget. This can be taken multiple times.

IMP Missiles (-300 cp) Your fighter carries a pair of missiles with an IMP generator in place of a warhead, enabling you to knock out the shields of a small flight if you aim it carefully.

Light-Lance (-100 cp) A signature weapon of humans, this focused tractor beam is like an energy grapnel that a ship can use to make anchor turns around debris, slam enemy fighters into each other and sling around. Very tricky to master, but worthwhile.

Turrets (-200 cp) The kitsen see fighters not as larger species do, but as cruisers with crews of dozens. So naturally they have destructor turrets all over. You also have turrets or guns capable of covering a complete sphere around your ship, though you will need at least one dedicated gunner.

DRAWBACKS

Defending Elysium (+0 cp) Or if you prefer, you could take part in the prequel. Humanity has just accidentally destroyed the first alien visitors, but the Phone Company sorted out the misunderstanding, as the cost of making themselves and their cytonics the sole point of contact between humanity and aliens.

Long Twilight Struggle (+50 cp) Stay another five years. Or another. This may be taken no more than fifteen times.

GAFHOC (+100 cp) You have developed a grand unified theory: people are weird. Doesn't matter what species, you have trouble understanding or relating to others.

Jerkface (+100 cp) You give people the wrong impression. Your resting face appears smug and supercilious. Your affect sounds sarcastic when you're being sincere.

Traitor-Spawn (+100 cp) Your progenitor was an infamous traitor to your side. People will default to suspicion and hostility, imagining the sins of your forebear will repeat in you. You can win them over, given time.

Blind (+200 cp) It seems you cannot see at all. Kind of a problem for a pilot, though creative alternatives may exist.

It Rolls Downhill (+200 cp) You have an enemy and not the shooting kind. The political hateful superior(s) with vast power over you. Like an Admiral forbidding a pilot cadet to eat or sleep in the barracks, or an Assembly that keeps you around just to blame you for everything. Whatever they can do to make your life miserable they will, while never quite crossing a line you could belt them for.

Target Acquired (+200 cp) The Krell focus on the best pilots, as they're the most likely to be cytonics. Whether you are or not, or even if you fly against humans for the Superiority, your enemies mark you as a priority target.

Damaged Memory Banks (+400 cp) Forget everything you know about the Cytoverse and any Jumps. As far as you know, you are transported from the jolly old days of Earth to this setting.

Eyes on You (+400 cp) The delvers hate all organic life, terrified of experiencing loss again. But they seem to really hate you in particular, are drawn to you like a cytonic beacon.

Cytoverse Special (+600 cp) Learn to embrace life as challenge and change, face the dangers of this world without your other powers and equipment, barring the Body Mod, of course.

Notes:

Timeline - At some point in the Bronze Age the first human cytonics visit the Nowhere. *Something* happened and cytonics did not appear on Earth again for a very long time.

First Contact, the United Governments fledgling space fleet shoots down a Tenasi first contact vessel. The Phone Company, which has been experimenting with cytonics and long been aware of alien life, is able to negotiate peace but demands as a price to become an entirely self-governing entity above Terran law. While getting the aliens to accept them as the primary point of contact for all humanity.

Jason Write, a blind man, is the first modern human cytonic. He and the Phone Company suppress for years their discovery of cytonic FTL, until they discover the varvax have been infiltrating humanity to learn the secrets of our military technology. There follows the First Human War, where humanity attempts to conquer the galaxy, disgusted at the lengths most alien species go to in pursuit of peace. We lose, and Jason dies at the close of the war. The AI of his wife is destroyed by grief and attempts suicide in the Nowhere, instead becoming the first delver and copying herself endlessly.

Some time later is the Second Human War. We know basically nothing about it.

The third time around, some clever humans try to weaponize the delvers and succeed in destroying galactic society as the eldritch AIs hunt every source of cytonic and radio transmissions. The war ends some 80 years before the start of the series, with the Defiant fleet, consisting of the battlecruiser *Defiant*, the *Antioch*, the *Yeong-Gwang* and two other ships (and 30 starfighters!) crashing on Detritus.

70+ years later, the KRELL sent a massive force of a hundred fighters to assault Alta Base, previously cloaked to find the DDF's military buildup with equipment

scavenged from Igneous Cavern. The Battle of Alta ensues with forty pilots going up, and fourteen returning. Spensa's father, Chaser, turns on his squadron under psychic influence.

80 years after landfall, Spensa attempts to enter flight school. First she is given a rigged test, but stays behind to secretly retest and gets a perfect score, convincing Cobb to sponsor her. Forbidden from all academy facilities but classrooms, Spensa sleeps and hunts for her meals in an adjacent cavern, where she finds M-Bot and gets Rig to help her fix him up. Spensa is however expelled after being shot down and ejecting to save her life. On graduation day all available forces are sent to preserve half an automated shipyard in danger of falling to the planet, the KRELL having destroyed the previous half earlier, but it's a trap, a distraction while a large KRELL force with a lifebuster makes for Alta Base. Spensa and M-Bot intervene and she is able to fly the bomb away and escape with cytonic FTL. (Skyward).

The DDF learn of the delvers from old recordings. An alien princess, Alanik, crashes where she diverted to visit the "human preserve" on her way to join a volunteer all-species squadron being formed by the Superiority. Using holographic disguises, Spensa and M-Bot go in her place, hoping to steal a Superiority hyperdrive, since at the moment Spensa is the only FTL they have. The squadron drills to fight delvers, but this is a trick of Winzik, who wishes to use the delvers to destroy humanity. Spensa and M-Bot learn the hyperdrive is, in fact, a taynix and talk a delver into sparing Detritus before making peace with the Superiority in the form of councilman Cuna - just in time for Winzik's backup plan, a military coup, to go into effect. To escape, Spensa is forced into a portal into the Nowhere, where dissidents are banished to mine for accility stone. (Starsight)

Various short stories fill in details of the other survivors of Skyward Flight learning the powers of the taynix and exploring the galaxy, rallying others against the Superiority.

Spensa sees her one delver friend destroyed, but a shard survvies and presents themself as a human adventurer. In the Nowhere, realspace is like a dream and memories and identity are fleeting. People retain themselves by grouping up to

slow the decay or with reality dust provided by very valuable reality icons (in truth, taynix disguised as objects to hide from the delvers) She meets some pirates, makes friends, and follows “the Path of the Ancients” learning of ancient cytonics and their lost powers, with only occasional and fleeting contact home. The delvers begin to fear her and even offer a deal, sparing her world and people if she just stops. They also try to kill her a bunch. Ultimately, with the sacrifice of her delver buddy, she is able to return to realspace and Detritus, visibly leaking power and covered in eyes like a delver. (Cytonic)

It’s all set to wrap, presumably when the final book, Defiant is released at some point in the next couple years. Very exciting!