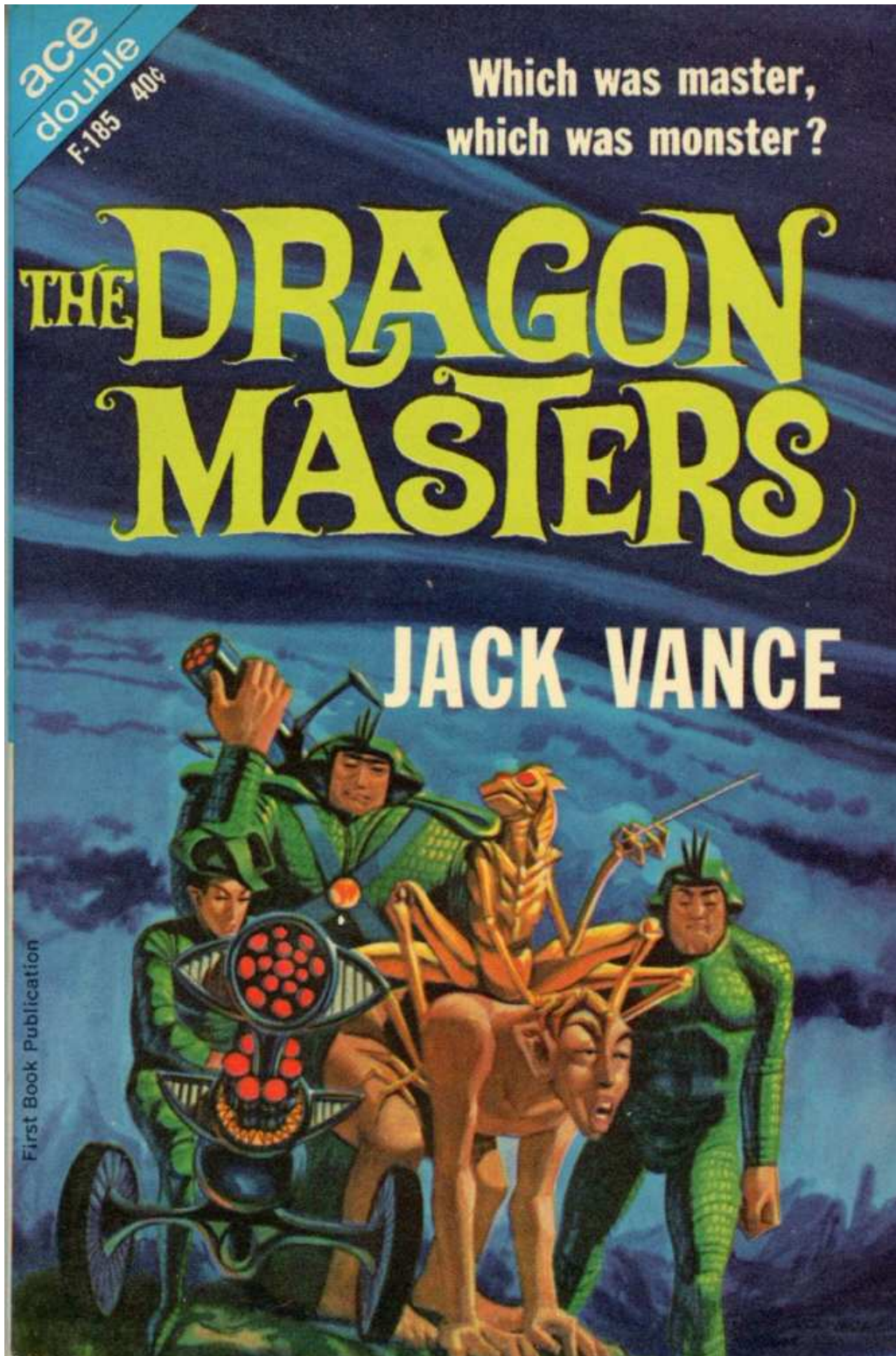


# The Dragon Masters Jump

*Version 1.0.0*



*During the War of the Ten Stars, when the Nightmare Coalition defeated Old Rule, humans came to Aerlith to flee in exile and hide from what would come next. There they found the sacerdots, an older human colony dedicated to religious asceticism.*

*As time passed under Skene, the dazzling bright, minuscule flake of brilliance which passed for Aerlith's sun, the people of Aerlith regressed, falling back into a pre-industrial, feudal state. Perhaps this was helped along by the grephs from the star Coralyne. The greph are an alien race, reptilian-like in appearance with six limbs, which when the irregular orbits of the stars of the local cluster lead their world close to Aerlith attack it in great black ships, landing and using their slave-armies to round up and enslave the people of Aerlith for use as breeding stock to keep their slave-lines strong and healthy, before using heat beams and explosive pellets to blast away at the civilization of humanity, reducing them to rubble, and leaving till the stars next align.*

*It is likely Aerlith is not the only human world they raid thus, but it was during one of their last attacks on Aerlith – generations ago now – that humans captured 16 of the grephs and took them as slaves, reducing them from the revered ones ordained by destiny to rule over all to merely the basics the breeding stock from which war dragons would be born. First the termagants were created, but now they come in many varieties, the murderers – both long-horn and striding – the squat powerful fiends, the agile and viciously intelligent blue horrors, the horse-like spiders, and the titanic juggers, born and bred through the years of warfare between the valley settlements of humanity across this – seemingly hard – world.*

*These dragons have been used in wars by mankind for generations now, their breeding and power shifting the power dynamics of the valley, especially Banbeck Vale, whose lord first captured them, and Happy Valley, which was the hegemon before being broken in the last attack of the basics upon the world. Now once again the lords of these two valleys are preparing for war with each other, Ervis Carcolo still pining over the past glories of his family while Joaz Banbeck frets over how to keep his people safe as Coralyne's orbit brings it near once more heralding another wave of attacks and raids from the basics which may this time doom mankind on Aerlith... where it may be the last bastion of humanity in the universe.*

*You will be arriving here the same day the Minstrel-Maiden arrives at Banbeck Vale. This is one month before the events of the book begin. You will need these:*

**+1000 CP**

*Good luck and good jumping.*

## Origins:

Select a single origin. It will determine who you are in this world and where you fit, as well as providing you with discounts on perks and items. All discounts are 50%, except the 50 CP perk which is Free instead.

If you purchase the **Dragon** perk it will override the background of your chosen origin (unless you chose to drop-in as a sacerdote). You will instead be a dragon, kept as a warbeast by humanity, one of the alien basics – though you may find yourself in a comparative role among their society – or one of their human slaves, kept as war-slaves by the basics.

**Sacerdote:** You are one of the sacerdotes, the original human colonists of Aerith. Naked ascetics, they live inside the hills, in great caverns with strange witch-lights and lightning towers. The sacerdotes contemplate the Final Sentence, following the way of the Rationale, and the Basis, living a religious life of neutrality and distance while they await the extinction of the inferior utter-men who make up the rest of mankind. Alternatively you may be a drop-in with no memories or history in this world.

**Dragon Master:** Well you may not yet hold that rank, but you are a fighting man of your valley. Whether you're merely one of the knights who command the dragons in battle, and play the role of sharpshooters, or you are a dragon master – serving as tactical war council to your lord and potentially commanding entire armies of dragons in their place should they not be a man of war themselves – will depend upon your choices here, but you are part of the fighting men of your valley.

**Lord:** Well you may not hold that rank, but if you don't you are part of the family of the local lord. Maybe you're an uncle, a cousin, a niece, son, wife, or some other position, but you are part of the upper class of this. We mainly find our focus on the lords of the two valleys, but we know Joaz's uncle served as Dragon Master and regent when he was young, so their families do have roles they play.

**Servant:** You are one of the little people. Whether you're a seneschal, or a lesser servant of the lord's house, a minstrel-maiden in his personal employ, a farmer – they exist – or even an itinerant child-buyer who travels between valleys buying and selling children in exchange for dragon eggs or other goods, you are not one of the great and mighty, but one of the common folk of this world.

## **Location:**

You will find yourself on Aerith. If you purchased Anon Valley, you will begin in it, otherwise you may begin in Banbeck Vale, Happy Valley, or another valley community in the world; we see names of several if no details on them. As a sacerdote you may instead begin within their caverns and secret technological society. If you take the **Dragon** perk to be a basic or one of the human slaves of the basics you can instead begin upon the ship journeying to Aerith.

## **Age and Gender:**

If you drop-in your age and gender are the same as at the end of your last jump. Otherwise your age and gender may be anything that fits your origin and place in the jump.

## Perks:

The 100 CP perk associated with an origin is free if you have that origin, other perks associated with the origin are 50% if you have that origin. No discounts on general perks.

**Lordly Polygamy (100 CP):** It's not dwelt upon, but Ervis Carcolo is casually stated once to have wives, and while Joaz's status is less explored he seems to be the same. So it would seem that lords in this world could have multiple wives, and lovers beyond, without it being frowned upon. And now you'll carry it with you. You'll find that in your case polygamy seems to be socially accepted. You'll still have to deal with relationship dynamics and getting people to decide a piece of you is better than all of someone else, but you'll find that when it comes to you people will not consider polygamy, or you keeping additional lovers on the side, as inherently morally wrong or socially taboo.

**Mind Over Chemistry (200 CP):** Joaz Banbeck managed to throw off the effects of an incomplete dose of narcotic gas through "sheer force of will" and now that is something you can do as well. Through focus and will power, you are able to push off the effects of chemicals in your body, forcing your body to continue functioning as normal ignoring the poisons or drugs in your body. The larger the dose, and stronger the effects, the more will and focus it will take.

**Army Breeder (300 CP):** Neither Joaz Banbeck nor Ervis Carcolo are master dragon breeders, but you are. And whatever science or processes were used to develop the breeds of dragons from the basics are now yours. You'll find you can do much the same with other species, just like how the basics managed to breed horse-like riding mounts, 12 ft tall giants, ape-like trackers with hyper-developed olfactory senses and more from humans. The speed will vary by species, but the speed is extreme, allowing you to breed and cultivate new varieties of creatures by modification of existing species far faster than one would think possible. Just something that reached reproductive age in 1 year will be faster than one which does in 20.

The dragons are dumb brutes but smart enough to understand language and obey, and while unruly at night, are highly obedient by day, mostly bullet proof, able to survive weapons of interstellar invaders, and to tear through the armor worn by space invaders with swords, maces, and their claws and teeth. The basics managed to breed everything from riding mounts to engineers from humans, and induce an absolute, slavish loyalty where they were incapable of understanding the idea of freedom from their masters. What will you create?

**Dragon (Varies):** You are not a human. Instead you are one of the dragons. The exact details of these creatures vary. But they are scaled beings with six limbs – according to the illustrations and murderers having both brachs and hind-legs – and are apparently capable of regrowing even such sophisticated and normally incapable of healing body parts as their eyes. For 200 CP you can be a termagant, the most common dragon used. They are red-scaled and are hardy and robust, able to survive more varied environmental conditions and poorer ones than the other breeds of dragon, reproducing the quickest and being the easiest to breed. They are also seemingly the weakest in direct combat, but they are still strong enough that bullets do not harm them except when they strike particularly vulnerable spots, and that they can survive even the advanced energy based weapons of the basics' human troopers. They are strong enough to tear through body armor worn by the heavy troopers with sword and claws, and to beat them to death with a mace or to tear them limb from limb, though 1 on 1 a heavy trooper has the advantage and to tear one apart they'll need someone to help hold them. For 300 CP you can be another breed of dragon other than Jugger. This could be the blue horrors with agility and savage intelligence, the fiends with a great iron ball capping their tail making them the most threatening to a jugger, murderers which seem to be used as shock troops, or even if you wanted a spider, bred into a fully quadrupedal like form of locomotion and to act as a horse. For 400 CP, you can be one of the massive Juggers with immense strength, able to throw boulders, and act as a threat to structures and men alike.

Alternatively 200 CP will allow you to be one of the basics, or as they refer to themselves the revered. These are the original stock from which dragons were bred, but are physically much weaker and more easily menaced and threatened. However they haven't been bred for battle savagery over intelligence. You may take this for free if you took the 1000 CP version of the **Basic Ship** item.

Finally you may alternatively choose to be one of the varieties of human bred by the revered as soldiers and weapons against humanity. They don't seem to possess the dragon's regenerative abilities, and went armored, but their roles are quite varied. For 200 CP you can be a heavy trooper, described as short men with massive shoulders and stern necks, and also as about the size of a termagant. These heavy troopers needed arms and armor, but were strong enough to crush the brachs of a termagant and win one on one in a grapple against them, at least when their armor prevented the termagants from cutting them open. For 300 CP you can be another breed. This could be the mount breed which was used by the basics as horses, or a tracker with their ape-like arms, and posture, and their expanded noses. This could even be a weaponeer, which save for some minor features such as reduced ears and their absolute subservient loyalty to their masters, seem

to be like baseline humans, or a Mechanic which were shown briefly and are short, thin, and have dark hair. This can even be used to be a giant, one of the 12 foot tall beings with dumb smiles, which are used for their sheer raw power – though inferior to a jugger's – and to carry and wield heavy weapons too large for a normal man.

Whatever you choose post-jump this form becomes an alt-form.

## Sacerdote Perks

**Cloudy Answers (50 CP):** You may not be sworn to answer any and all questions put to you truthfully, but like a sacerdote you know how to answer questions truthfully but uninformatively. This isn't perfect – allow someone smart enough to interrogate you long enough and they'll get information from you – but you are good at finding responses that are unquestionably true that also give no real information.

**Meditative (200 CP):** The sacerdotes seem to dedicate themselves to an ascetic life of wisdom and contemplation on the Rationale. You need not be a participant in their religious devotion, but you do find that meditation comes easily to you, and the discipline of mind needed to focus and concentrate wholly upon such contemplation. Your mind is focused, disciplined, and possesses good concentration and an ease of clearing your thoughts. This makes you heavily resistant to boredom, able to stare into a meshwork of metal for hours or days simply contemplating the sublime meanings of its complex shape, as well as able to maintain a detached and emotionless calm.

**Telepathy (400 CP):** The sacerdotes are telepathic. Exactly how much is unclear. Joaz Banback's mind was difficult to read, and couldn't be done so clearly, but they also task as if they can see the shape of the mind and elements of its nature. Beyond that they can communicate telepathically among each other, and their leader was able to send his mind into another's dream, shaping it and communicating to them – and allowing them to communicate to him – through their dream. You now possess all of these telepathic powers, and the skills to use them.

**No More Than Inconveniences (600 CP):** To a sacerdote only their inner, personal world matters. Hunger, thirst, pain... these things do not matter. A sacerdote can, comfortably, walk naked through terrible storms, or the cold of winter, no more affected by it than by a warm spring day. You now share these traits. You can turn off discomfort and pain. You remain aware of them, or at least that you should be feeling them, if you bother to turn your recognition to it, but there is no urgency or need, and should you wish to ignore it entirely it will fade until something causes it to intensify at which point you'll have again a mild awareness. You can allow yourself to fully feel these things, but they are purely optional to you.

Beyond allowing you to turn off and ignore discomfort and exist comfortably in terrible conditions, this hardens you towards hypothermia, hyperthermia, starvation, hunger, disease, and the general lower end dangers of living in the wilderness naked and exposed. In all of these regards your resistance is more than a human should possess.

## Dragon Master Perks

**Knight (50 CP):** You are a trained knight such as is found among the armies of Aerlith. This seems to be less of a medieval knight, and more of a dragoon – riding spiders and using what’s called a musket or rifle to shoot at foes serving as a highly mobile sharpshooter – though they do seem to be still trained in hand to hand combat with swords. While dragons are mostly immune to bullets, they’re not entirely, and these knights and riflemen do sometimes bring one down.

**Dragon Languages (200 CP):** Each army of dragons has its own, secret dragon language. It is through this language that they command their dragons in battle, and by learning a rival’s language one could take command of their dragons.

You are a master of these languages, able to construct, with relative ease, conlangs, ciphers, and codes. You’re good at figuring out and deciphering ciphers, codes, and unfamiliar languages as well. And you’re not limited to languages designed purely for directing troops in battle, though you could create an efficient language for such a purpose.

**Dragon Handler (400 CP):** You are an expert in the handling, raising, and training of individuals for war and battle. Whether they’re animals, sapients, or somewhere in between, you know how to train and mold them into warriors and soldiers. You can mold a being whether beast or sapient, into an obedient soldier, ready to respond to commands quickly and efficiently, and with the discipline to act and obey and how to impart combat skills; a semi-sapient brute might not become a master of some spiritually enlightened style of sophisticated swordplay but you could teach them to handle a sword and a gun.

And as one doesn’t train an entire army personally, this includes directing others in doing so. And yes, this includes knowledge of how to raise humans from the ground up as soldiers if you wanted to; dragons with their scales and strength probably work better.

**Master of War (600 CP):** You have an understanding of how battles are fought. You are easily a match for either Joaz or Ervis as a military commander, and both were far from poor ones. You seem to be best at recognizing the use and strengths of differing troop types, even against alien forces, and at making use of the terrain and whatever advantages you may have to minimize the benefits an enemy gains from their technological superiority. In fact one way or another your enemies’ technological superiority seems to provide them with less advantages against you than it should, even more so than the mere fact that you are good at tactically minimizing it and working around it explains.

## Lord Perks

**Noble Words (50 CP):** Whether you're dealing with merchants, fellow nobles, or the common people, it's important to know how to speak with others. You have skill with your words, and your speech, able to talk diplomatically and convincingly. This is nothing superhuman, but it is a measure of charisma and speaking experience.

**Good Lord (200 CP):** You have all the skills expected to be a capable ruler of a feudal domain whether it's medieval, modern, or a colony from an interstellar civilization reduced back to a pre-industrial state. This comes with basics of military command and defense, though not at the level of Master of War, and basics of diplomacy, administration, management of underlings, and so forth. You're not a master at anything, but you're competent. This also improves your judgment when it comes to what would be good for your people, and recognizing potential long term threats to them.

**Decisive Action (400 CP):** A single man's bold and decisive action can be the difference between life and death not only for themselves, but for their civilization and even species. It was such action which allowed mankind to capture a group of grephs. It was such action which allowed a greph ship to be captured. You have a good sense for the opportunity for such action, able to recognize when there's an opportunity which such action could possibly exploit. While you will always have a good ability to judge when there is a risky opportunity that could possibly be seized by bold action, there will be times where you get a clear and strong urge to take advantage of the opportunity and when this happens it will pay off.

**No Such Limits (600 CP):** Most men obey a small set of mostly identical behaviors. You see no such limits. You are smart and clever, with an able mind that is skilled at thinking outside of the box and the usual patterns. You are able to come at problems in new and creative ways finding innovative solutions to your problems. This helps you with general problem solving and intelligence as well, your mind adaptable and keen, and adept at performing intuitive leaps.

This combines to make you hard to predict. Attempts to determine how you will behave in a certain situation tend to be less effective, and your mind is likewise difficult to read, your thoughts confusing and obscure to telepaths and mind readers.

## Servant Perks

**Courtesan's Beauty (50 CP):** You're pretty good looking. You're good enough looking to catch the eye of nobility, and to have the rich and powerful consider keeping you around for your looks alone.

**Itinerant (200 CP):** You possess the capabilities of a true traveler, able to easily find some means of making yourself useful and desired wherever you go, identifying which of your myriad skills could ingratiate yourself into local societies and make yourself useful. You're especially good at finding ways to make yourself useful to the upper echelons, and maintaining impartial business dealings with multiple sides of a conflict; even when people swear they are ideologically absolutely opposed you have a way of finding how you can sell to both sides – whether goods, information, or services – without being punished or struck down by either. In fact you might find it easy to present yourself as an indirect means of communication between two foes who have no direct contact.

**Minstrel-Maiden (400 CP):** It's unclear exactly what a Minstrel-Maiden is expected to do. The most explicit is coquetry and massage, though the name minstrel probably indicates that musical skills are involved. But you are a fully trained and proficient minstrel-maiden, which seemingly involves being a good companion. Some of this is likely carnal, but some means things like holding engaging and enjoyable conversations – even in topics you don't care about or comprehend – and likely the arts, and various means of being entertaining.

But more than that, minstrel-maidens seem to be expected to be perfect companions. As such you possess a keen eye for what it is that someone finds pleasant and attractive, able to easily match your actions and observable behaviors to their desires and easily work your way into their life and heart. The closer you are to someone the easier it will be to predict their behaviors, and desires, and to understand what it is you would need to do to please them. Once you are close to someone you can tell when they're growing stressed even before they do, and predict what ways you can best comfort them. You could be the perfect servant or lover, recognizing exactly what those who you keep yourself close to need even before they do.

**Seeing Sacerdotes (600 CP):** Phade arrives in Banbeck Valley only 1 month before the events of the story, and then she manages to kick off events by accidentally happening into the sacerdot while he's trying to hide. You seem to have similar luck to Phade in arriving at places where important and major events are about to happen, and simply stumbling into secrets and important parts of these events. You'll find seemingly random

events guiding you towards major events – such as arriving at the same place the aliens will attack in what might be the battle to decide the fate of your world – and to find important information about them. You can toggle this on and off, if you don't want to find random chance and events trying to pull you into major events.

## Items:

You may purchase multiple copies of items. Purchases of an item after the first are discounted (50%); this does not stack with other discounts. You may import similar items into those you purchase here merging them together, or even combine similar items purchased here.

**Clothing (50 CP):** You possess a suit of clothing appropriate to this world. Much of the clothing we see would fit into a medieval world, leather pants or fur robes, though possibly made from unearthly animals. The holiday clothing of Banbeck maidens however is “a tight-fitting sheath of dragon intestine, with muffs of brown fur at neck, elbows and knees” so there’s definitely clothes made from parts of dragons.

Whatever you choose it is resistant to damage, and stains, and will clean and mend itself when not worn. After all, it’s easy enough to get clothes; if you’re not a sacerdote you almost certainly already have it.

**Globes of Eden (50 CP):** This is a small, yellow marble, globe of Eden, or maybe Tempe, or Earth whatever mankind’s half-mythical homeworld was named. It’s small enough to hold in a single hand, but has the continents of humanity’s home world carved into it.

You won’t get just one of these globes, but a similar one for your home world in each and every jump you have visited, and will get another at the start of each jump you visit. And yes this will give you a globe of Aerlith as a human in this setting, as well as one of Earth (presumably before jumping you came from Earth). For non-globe shaped homeworlds it may be a small relief map of similar over all area.

**Musket (50 CP):** Or maybe it’s a rifle? This is a gun such as the men of Aerlith use. It’ll maintain itself and reload over time.

**Sacerdote Wig (50 CP):** This is a long, waist length wig. It’ll hide your real hair when worn, and will clean and maintain itself when not worn. Now you won’t have to shave a sacerdote if you want to disguise yourself as one.

**Spider (50 CP):** This is a spider, that is a type of dragon bred to be ridden. They seem to be fairly fast, and have fairly good endurance – able to carry a man back and forth between neighboring valleys in what is an exhausting and hard march multiple times without substantive rest. It is loyal and obedient, and yours won’t even become poorly controlled at night.

**Celestial Armamentarium (100 CP):** This appears to be a ball of crystal mounted on a black box. By manipulation of controls on the black box you are able to dictate time and scope, and the crystal ball will demonstrate all stars and planets in the scope selected – out to a limit of tens of thousands of light years – at the time selected. Since you're buying this with CP it will even include undiscovered planets, and update to your local position putting it at the center. Identifying specific stars is on you, but it does have them scaled somewhat by size and colored based on their spectra.

**Heavy Pistol (100 CP):** This is one of the firearms carried by the basics' heavy troopers. While giving precise descriptions of power is hard, they burned their foes, indicating it's a sort of energy weapon, and were strong enough to kill dragons fairly reliably. Yours will maintain itself and reload or recharge itself as appropriate when not in use.

**Reliquarium (100 CP):** This is a room of somber magnificence, designed to house various archives, mementos, and trophies you have obtained in your journeys. While the room for each world you visit is limited, the archives only having so many shelves for records of that world, and there being only so many display stands and cases for mementos and trophies from it, you will find that this reliquarium expands with each world you visit, growing larger and grander as you fill it with more relics of your glories.

This building by default is a warehouse add-on, and if you leave objects in either it or your warehouse to be placed within it they will do so automatically when your warehouse door is closed, placing themselves in cases or on stands for best viewing and enjoyment. If you'd prefer this can be a structure that inserts into settings, in which case it will only automatically sort things when it is empty and the interior unobserved.

**Torc (100 CP):** This is a golden torc such as the sacerdots wear. Like the sacerdots you will find that people will accept this as your only clothing, and that when you go naked along with it you will escape persecution for breaking any nudity taboos.

**Dragon Eggs (150 CP):** This is a shipment of 10 dragon eggs, and you didn't even have to sell off children to get them. You'll get a new one every year. The eggs are most likely to be termagants, but have a chance of being other breeds, with juggers being the least common. The hatchlings can follow you between jumps and worlds as followers, but will not respawn if killed; you'll have to raise new eggs for that.

**Fields (150 CP):** This is a set of three fields. One grows vetch, one grows bellegard, and one grows spharnagum. Vetch is a word for a type of flowering legume, bellegard peaches and lavender are things, and spharnagum is a completely made up word. What is known is that these are staple foodstuffs on Aerlith, and regardless of name are probably not any Earth-plant you're familiar with. These fields will tend and care for themselves, producing these alien foodstuffs, though you will have to harvest them yourself.

You may choose to insert these fields into a future jump or have them exist as either a single warehouse add-on or each field as a separate one.

**Heat Gun (150 CP):** This is a larger and more sophisticated energy weapon than the **Heavy Pistol**, being used by the basics' trackers. It seems to be more powerful, and possess varying power settings and the ability to focus and condense its 'flames' at differing intensities or better to hit differing ranges.

**Brooders (200 CP):** This is a dragon brooders, or a facility built to raise, and train, dragons. It comes with a staff of followers, and they seem to be highly skilled in raising and training other forms of beasts, semi-sapient, and even sapient beings into warriors. You'll receive one similar in size as to what would be expected from such a facility in one of the valleys of Aerlith; though both valleys seemed to have multiple such sites.

**Viewing Screens (200 CP):** This is a set of screens installed in a room. You'll get one set of screens for each contiguous property you possess that was provided to you directly from a jump document, as well as your warehouse. These screens can be used to pick up information from hidden receivers all across the property in question, allowing you to view it from a wide variety of angles and directions. One might even say you could see anywhere in the property in question, though it'd be something of a hyperbole.

**Anon Valley (300 CP):** This is a valley all your own similar to Banbeck Vale or Happy Valley, though it won't be as large or prosperous as Banbeck Vale. You are recognized as its rightful lord, and its people are your followers. It is in a similar pre-industrial level, though memories of being a colony of exiles fleeing a devastating interstellar war still remain and technology varies; buried phonelines exist and 'rifles' but people carry swords and mounts are used instead of vehicles. There are defensive caves dug within the valley just in case the basics return.

While here you presumably have some dragons or else you'd be conquered easily, but your forces are not the equal to Banbeck Vale or Happy Valley, and these dragons will not follow you into future jumps like the human inhabitants.

This valley will insert into future jumps, and will maintain changes including to its population. You may choose to have it sit out a jump – it and all its inhabitants being put into stasis and non-existence till after the jump – instead of inserting or may, at the start of a jump, choose to reset it to its original default state from when it was purchased.

**Dragon Army (300 CP):** This is an army of dragons to match those of Banbeck Vale or Happy Valley. At the head of this you are a major local power. The forces Ervis Carcolo attacked Banbeck Vale with consisted of: “... almost three hundred Termagants, eighty-five Striding Murderers, as many Long-horned Murderers, a hundred Blue Horrors, fifty-two squat, immensely powerful Fiends, their tails tipped with spiked steel balls, and eighteen Juggers.” This likely did not include broodmothers, which you will also possess.

This army will follow you into future jumps as followers. Should any dragons be lost from these initial numbers they will be replaced over time with fully trained dragons, though while their progeny may follow you, they will not be replaced if killed and you will be wholly responsible for their training and upkeep.

**Secret Cavern (300 CP):** This is a network of secret caverns and tunnels. They are focused around one particular mountain formation, built up within as a hollow mountain. This will not come with sacerdots which would normally inhabit such a cave system, but it will come with their machines. It took them a long time more than 800 of Aerlith’s years, but they did build a spaceship here, while living as ascetics waiting for the inferior utter-men to go extinct so these wise philosophers following the Rationale could go forth and populate the universe, and you have the machines and manufacturing tools in their final stages so it should be a lot quicker. It does come complete with smelters, workshops, and electric lighting a rarity in this world.

It is also well hidden, enough that your secret passages in and out of these tunnels could remain hidden for centuries if no one catches you using them, and shielded well enough enough that it won’t be casually or easily picked up by the sensors of a spaceship.

**Tand (400 CP):** A *tand* is a tangled mess of gold rods and silver wire which serve to the sacerdots as a physical representation of their soul and self, a proof of their understanding of the Final Sentience, Rationale, and Basis. They are each made as imitations of the original *tand*, the design serving to show your interpretation of the Final Sentience, Rationale, and Basis. This may be your *tand* or a perfect replica of the original *tand*.

By contemplating this *tand* you will find it a source of revelation. It will focus your mind onto insights about the universe and reality, philosophy, and enlightenment, helping you to develop your soul, your spiritualistic discipline, your self-control, and other meditative and enlightened skills and aspects of your being. And it will serve the same for others, allowing them to find their own insights. It is a tool to aid in meditation, the refinement of the soul, and cultivation of powers such as the sacerdots' telepathic abilities.

**Basic Ship (600 CP/1000 CP):** This is a damaged, but repairable, ship such as the grephs, or as they're now known the basics, use. It does not come with its army or the weapons and gear for such an army, or any crew save for a small team of Mechanics, humans bred into the role, and has been damaged in its capture, but it should be – with time – repairable by the Mechanics and once repaired a functional spaceship with energy weapons capable of melting through cavernous structures built into hollowed mountains, and explosive pellets – likely missiles, rockets, or bombs – capable of blasting apart any surface structure on Aerlith, and damaging underground tunnels. It will also be capable of interstellar flight, though the basics only invaded when the movement of stars in their cluster – with a highly irregular orbit – brought Aerlith and their world close together – though they would invade then in raids over the course of multiple years – so it is not likely great FTL. The Mechanics will serve as followers, joining you in future jumps, and while unlikely sufficient to fully man the ship they are capable of repairing and maintaining it.

For the higher price of 1000 CP, the ship comes fully crewed, and manned. This will include a full army of heavy troopers, weaponers, trackers, and giants, along with the machines of war and weaponry for them. This crew – both its basics and mechanics – as well as the army will all be your followers, joining you in future jumps.

## **Companions:**

**Companion Import (50+ CP):** For 50 CP you can import or create 1 companion with 600 CP; they gain an origin as normal. For 100 CP you can import or create 3 companions with 600 CP. For 200 CP you can import or create up to 8 companions with 600 CP. If you want more than 8 companions you can pay an additional 50 CP per companion to give them 600 CP (and ability to get an origin). You may pay 150 CP to import 4 companions if needed.

If you desire to give a companion more CP you may transfer CP to a companion at a 1 to 1 ratio. Each companion is given CP this way separately.

**Canon Companion (50+ CP):** For every 50 CP you pay you may recruit 1 canon character.

## Drawbacks:

*Need more than 1000 CP, you may take drawbacks for additional CP. All drawbacks fade at the end of the jump.*

**Ambition (+100 CP):** You wish to rule. To spread your domains across the valleys of Aerlith, and potentially even other worlds. This is no mere desire for the common weal of your species, no desire for human prosperity; you desire to rule. And you will find this desire shaping and guiding your actions.

**Bound Dragon (+100 CP; requires Dragon):** You are locked into the form you purchased with the Dragon perk. You cannot enter into the form of other alt-forms or otherwise change your species or shape. You must have selected a variant of dragon – or human – which is substantially physically altered from that of the human or basic baseline; that is to say while a heavy trooper, tracker, or giant is fine, a weaponeer, or mechanic is not, and while the Aerlith breeds of dragon are all acceptable a basic or revered one is not.

**Caught in the Storm (+100 CP):** You have a tendency to find yourself caught out in terrible storms unexpectedly. Whether it's somehow failing to pay attention to the slow approach of dusk or dawn, something slow enough on Aerlith to have a perpetual storm along the line due to the difference in temperatures, or just freak storms that form around you, these will be powerful, terrible storms, which somehow seem to hit you at the worst possible moments.

**Diurnal (+100 CP):** Like a dragon you grow uncomfortable, moody, and irritable at night. This leaves you unfriendly, and somewhat erratic during the night hours. Even if you're outside of a regular day-night cycle – such as living deep underground or in a spaceship – you'll find this irritability still plaguing you by night. As a reminder Aerlith's rotation around its axis is a good deal slower than Earth's with people waking and sleeping many times during a single day or night.

**Lonely (+100 CP):** You have a hard time connecting to other individuals. Maybe your intelligence alienates you, or maybe you're just an introvert, but you will find that you have difficulty making close emotional connections and bonds, and have a way of pushing people away and holding yourself aloof and apart; even as a caring lord who honestly sought the best for his people and dedicated himself to them you'd manage to be seen as unusually standoffish for a feudal lord to his peasantry.

**Rival (+100 CP):** Whatever your social position and status in this world, you possess a rival, someone of similar position and status whose goals run cross purpose to yours. They are not necessarily your equal – they have no such powers from other worlds – but they have enough crass cunning, ruthlessness, resources, and downright luck to make them a thorn in your side. They won't truly scale to you, and are limited to the means of this world, so it's certainly possible to deal with them, and you likely will, but the further you stand beyond them the more quickly some new rival at least as irksome will replace them.

**Vowed to Give Only Truth (+100 CP):** Like a sacerdote you are compelled by your religion, or something more, to tell only the literal truth. Moreover, you are similarly compelled to answer all questions given to you. You can maybe obfuscate things – when asked why you're doing something explaining brain chemistry and neural impulses which led to you deciding to do the action – but you have to give a truthful answer.

**High Crusade (+200 CP):** The jump no longer ends after a decade. You will now remain in this jump until humanity is re-established as an interstellar species in charge of its own destiny, and the dragon masters which have ruled mankind as slaves, breeding the concept of freedom from the minds of men, have been purged and reduced to a state where they no longer possess any command or mastery over men. You will find that whatever Joaz's hopes, mankind has fallen, only scattered, pre-industrial worlds remaining of what once was a great interstellar empire spread throughout the wide universe. Perhaps you can unite these, perhaps you can choose one and lead them to the stars, perhaps you can steal the sacerdotes' plan and wait till the utter-men go extinct so that you can lead the superior sacerdote race to repopulate the cosmos, but the basics must no longer rule over men in any form. If you manage this in less than 10 years... fine you've earned your early departure if you want it.

**Path of Rationale (+200 CP):** You are a firm, religious believer in the sacerdote religion and their cult of the Rationale, the Basis, and Final Sentience. This means, among other things, that you are sworn to non-interference with events, only actively influencing what will be if sorely pressed and even then you might allow yourself to die first; it'd take something like a direct attack on your entire species and way of life to get you to do something like use a weapon that could save all of humanity.

**Short-Sighted (+200 CP):** You are extremely short-sighted, and unable to plan beyond your immediate goals. And you're not good at picking even these goals; as you will pursue petty and truly immediate goals, with no planning for the future. You could have good reason to believe that an alien race with vastly superior capabilities and a history of

destroying your civilization and enslaving its people over and over again will be back soon, and instead of creating escape routes, or buried hide aways to maintain your people and power, you'd focus all of your resources into war against your neighbor because you want what is his.

**Soft (+200 CP):** You're a good guy. You are moral and upstanding, and unable to do things like kill a captured prisoner, execute an enemy simply because he's in your power, or other dishonorable, or wicked acts. Even in the face of dishonorable opponents, people who have shown time and time again that they are ambitious and seek power beyond all things, or alien menaces who threaten to enslave or exterminate your entire species reducing you to their soldier-race you will be unable to make moral compromises. And this does mean you prioritize not getting your hands dirty, over end results; even if you knew sparing someone would lead them to start a war that could destroy your species down the line you still couldn't kill them in cold blood.

**Basic Arrogance (+300 CP):** You possess power far and beyond this world's capabilities. And you possess the same arrogance that allowed the basics to lose to a pre-industrial society while attacking it with spaceships and advanced energy weaponry not just once but twice in a row with time between to analyze what happened. You make sloppy, arrogant mistakes like parking a spaceship directly next to a canyon which would hide a ground assault until it was all the way up to the open entrance to your ship, or going forth in the face of a storm that will cut you off of air support as if you're certain of your inevitable destiny of victory. No matter how powerful or perfect you are, you seem to have a way of making crippling mistakes out of the sheer impossibility of your defeat. After all you're Jumper, destined for a spark, if it was possible for you to lose you couldn't possibly be a Jumper, you'd have to be something else.

**Nightmare Coalition (+300 CP):** Airlith was colonized by exiles from the War of the Ten Stars when the Nightmare Coalition had apparently defeated the Old Rule. But what happened next is unknown, and even the nature of the Nightmare Coalition remains unstated. Were they men, some rebellion within Old Rule, or were they some alien enemy? You will be finding out. The Nightmare Coalition is present and in full power. These are not the grephs, struggling with spaceships to maintain a war on feudal primitives, limited to traveling between stars when they are particularly close in their orbits, this is a true interstellar empire in full power and full sway. And it is expanding, and growing more powerful, and you will find that Airlith, or whatever planet you choose to flee to, is directly in their path and that they are opposed to your goals.

Taken with High Crusade and their dominion over the stars must also be broken before you can leave.

**Underdog (+300 CP):** The humans of Aerlith are definitely, even by the end of the book, the underdogs in their fight against the basics. Only the smug superiority of their opponents and quick thinking, extreme bravery, and tactical acumen allow them to succeed. They do not have the tools or power to challenge an interstellar foe head on. And now neither do you. You are stripped of all your out of jump powers, abilities, perks, items, followers, and resources, being reduced to your body mod and having no access to your warehouse. You can keep your companions if you import them, but they will likewise be reduced.

**Weaponer (+400 CP):** You are a weaponer of the graph. Well if you purchased the Dragon perk and chose another human species it allows for you can be them, but if you chose another option – such as an actual dragon or a basic – you will be unable to enter that form till after the jump. Worse, you are every bit as subservient and loyal to the revered ones as your fellow weaponers, the very concept of freedom from them being absolutely impossible and foreign to your mind. The revered ones are your lords and masters and you will serve them utterly and loyally to the best of your abilities during your time here, every thought, action, and deed you perform being for their betterment and glory. This is incompatible with High Crusade, and provides only ½ CP when taken along with Underdog.

## Outro:

*Your time here has come to an end. Whether through failure, or success, it's time to leave this world behind, and to make the final choice of a jump.*

**Go Home:** The only option if you failed your chain. Return home, time resuming on your home dimension and every one you visited on your chain. You get to keep what you had gained on the chain at least.

**Stay Here:** You've grown to like it here. You're definitely not leaving. End your chain, time resuming on your home dimension and every one you visited on your chain. You will remain in this reality, no longer a jumper, but you will keep what you gained from your chain.

**Continue:** You can't just throw away the gift of a chain. You'll leave this world behind, passing further than even the nexus of all-realities might allow you, continuing on to another world and another jump. Proceed to your next jump.

## **Notes:**

Jump by Fafnir's Foe

Aerlith humans may have transparent skin. The sacerdots were described as such and while we don't have a description for the other humans' skin coloration, Joaz was confident he could pass for a sacerdot. Of course transparent might be poetic, or it might be an adaptation to Aerlith's sun Skene which seems to be smaller in the sky than Earth's sun, though of a more brilliant white color only shifting to bronze and yellow instead of red at the horizon.

No Such Limits will not make you Joaz's equal as a military commander, at least not on its own, but it will make you generally his intellectual equal. Combined with Master of War you'd be better than him at war, similar to Ervis Carcolo if he was smarter like Joaz.

The basic ship is fairly big. "A great black ship, half the valley wide." It is repeatedly described as a "great black ship" and destroyed a large field of farmed crops by landing on it. But we don't get any specific size description.

I have no idea if the basics have FTL or not. Given humanity had a cluster wide civilization and a War of the 10 Stars, and Vance's other space opera stories have FTL, I assume they had some form of FTL instead of relying on relativistic time dilation. And stars can move fast relative to each other in a star cluster depending upon where it is (we live in a quite part of the galactic neighborhood) so a century or so could actually produce light years of difference in journey distance. But we're not really told how far they are, so who can say what sort of FTL they might have only it's probably not on the scale of making a day trip to Alpha Centauri.

## **Changelog:**

Version 1.0.0: Released.