Dr. Who: Shilhar's Stone
Rush 2006
Basic Rules

The following are the rules for *Dr. Who: Shilhar's Stone*, a real-time, real-space roleplaying game sponsored by the MIT Assassins' Guild. You are responsible for knowing these rules. Many of them are nigh-impossible to enforce and rely upon the honor system. Do not cheat. Do not abuse loopholes. Play fair. Be your own harshest critic.

The **gamemasters** (**GMs**) run the game. If you have any problems or questions concerning the game, contact a GM. Rulings they make are final. They may violate the letter of the rules to preserve the spirit. The GMs promise to be as fair and reasonable as possible. Neither they nor these rules are perfect.

This game is intended to be fun. Getting into character, roleplaying, being dramatic, and playing competitively can all increase the fun of the game. Do not take the game too seriously. Even if you are losing, keep a good attitude. When the game is over, the real winners are the players with the best stories.

This is only a game. Everyone involved should act with courtesy, sportsmanship, patience, and taste. The GMs may expel anyone they believe to be violating the spirit of the rules or the game. Emotions may run high. If you think things are crossing the line from game to reality too much, or if you are just getting too stressed, calm down and maybe take a break. Stay in control. Use common sense. Always, play safely, then play to have fun.

This game is a work of fiction. Although it may refer to things in the real world, it does so only for the sake of the scenario. It does not represent the opinions of the GMs or the MIT Assassins' Guild. These rules are modifications of those used in previous games.

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1 Scenario

It is the year 3998 of the Galactic Empire.

In the Nyrellian system, around its twin stars, orbits a large asteroid. The Nyrellians, a developed humanoid race and members of the Federation, have an old myth about Shilhar, the goddess of rivers (hence the goddess of trade, travel, and fishing), who once came across a large mountain which deliberately blocked a strong river by sitting across it. Shilhar was greatly displeased by this, and politely asked the mountain to leave. It politely refused. Shilhar then ordered the mountain to leave, and cease its senseless hindrance to the river, and the mountain again refused. Shilhar, knowing that mountains tended to be stubborn, decided to give this one, whose name she did not yet know, one more chance.

Shilhar spoke with full power, threatening the stubborn mountain with the wrath of a goddess of all moving water. Her voice boomed and echoed through the valleys. When she was done, the mountain stretched its summit to the sky and its roots out as far as it could in defiance. It claimed that the goddess and her rivers were no more to it than the light winds which flowed over its crags, and that it would never move for her.

Shilhar was terribly angered by this. In a fit of utter rage, she picked up the mountain, which to her was like a small stone, tore it from the ground, and hurled it far into the sky, where its only companions would be the constellations. She believed this fitting, since the constellations, being only the dead remains of warriors, heroes, and beasts, would offer it no company, and it would be forced to wander, aimlessly and alone, among the dead. According to the myth, ever since then, the object known by the Nyrellians as "Shilhar's Stone" has circled the sky, shunned by the planet-gods, as a dim but visible traveler.

Once the Nyrellians began to expand into space, they considered Shilhar's Stone a significant target to be explored by early spacecraft, if for no other reason than the myth. It was soon discovered that the object was a large, irregular asteroid. In fact, it was the single largest non-planetary object in orbit around the binary star system. Basic exploration found that the asteroid was rich in various minerals, and that the orbital placement was ideal for ships entering and leaving the system to use as a refueling station. Once they advanced far enough to begin colonizing other planets, they set up a small base there, as an exploration base and low-output mining facility.

Once the Nyrellians became part of the Galactic Federation, Base 413, more commonly known by the system locals as Shilhar's Stone, became a layover station capable of supporting up to 50 people. The mining was kept at a low level, serving effectively as a mild economic resource.

Now, Shilhar's Stone is a small, out-of-the-way way-station for travelers and miners. Every few days or so, a ship will dock, taking and bringing wanderers and travelers of all races, supplies, interesting stories, or just plain gossip. Base 413 has a semi-permanent staff of 12, including the artificial systems.

It's a nice, quiet life....

The Federation Passenger Vessel, *The Blue Gossamer*, has docked with the Base for a five-hour layover after droping to sub-light in the system. Its next destination is Nyrell. An entirely automated ship, it has shut down all primary systems for replenishing for the duration of its stay.

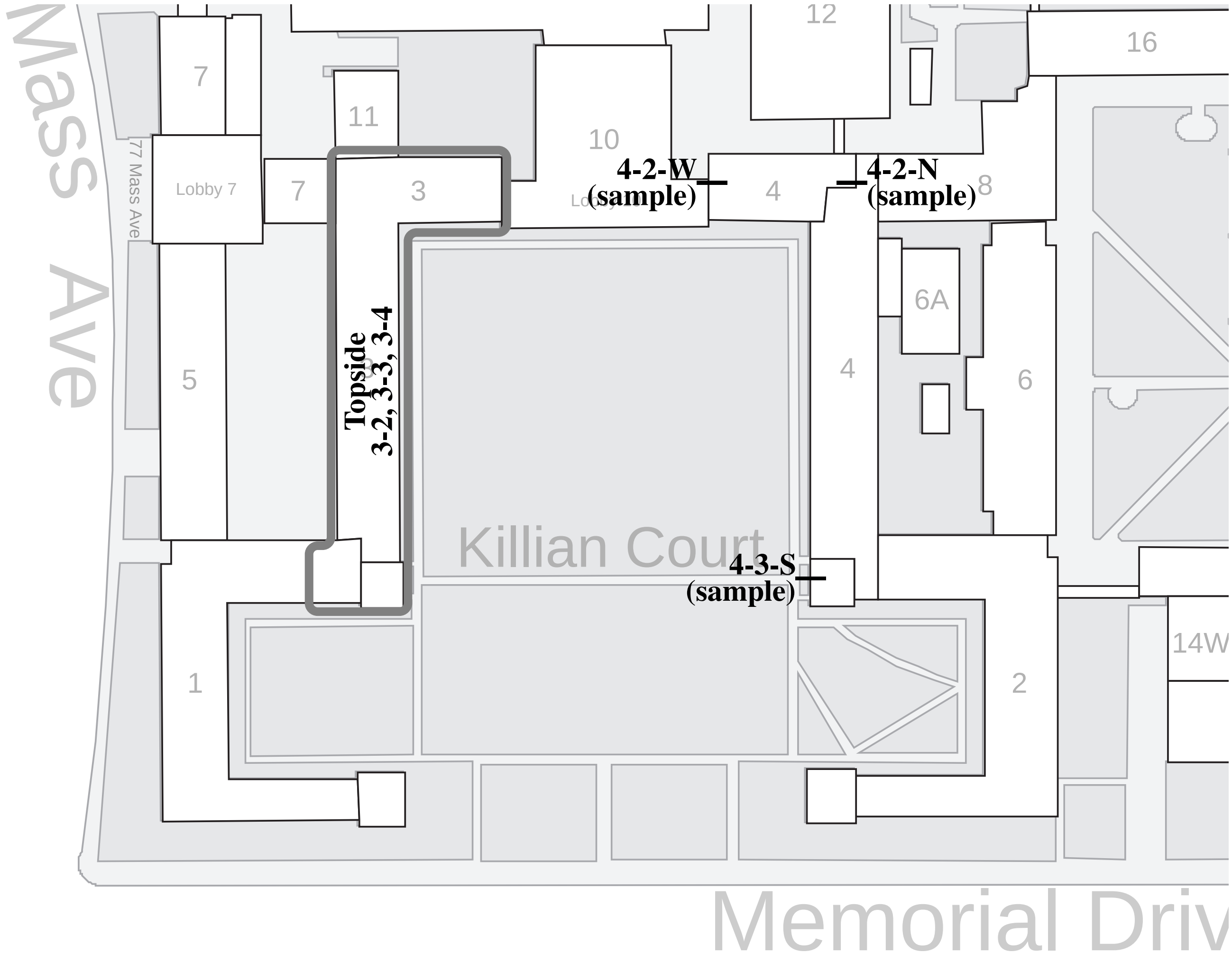
Shortly before the docking of *The Blue Gossamer*, there were some small cave-ins in the mines due to a mild metor shower. No one was hurt. However, in light of this, the Base staff will be unable to give tours of the mines. Much of the Staff may even be busy clearing out the cave-ins. Though the Base Proper (also know as "Topside") has full life support and artificial gravity, the mines are a low-grav environment with generated temperature and atmosphere.

1.1 Doctor Who?

Doctor Who is a (recently revived) long-running British sci-fi show. This game is mostly based on the 1970s incarnation of the show, especially the "Fourth Doctor" era starring Tom Baker. It is somewhat campy and low-budget, with lots of inspiration from classic science fiction and horror.

Unless your sheets say otherwise, your character knows nothing about various *Doctor Who* concepts, like Time Lords, what a TARDIS is, Gallifrey, and such. However, you have heard (vaguely, at least) of various alien races that might get mentioned. Everyone in game is aware that the Galactic Federation includes many races, for example.

1.2 Game Area



- The second, third, and fourth floors of building 3 are the "**Topside**" (the Base Proper). This also includes the bathrooms just around the southern corner into building 1.
- The "Stone's Throw" pub is room 3-343. The Quartermaster is room 3-270. The Base Bridge and staff quarters are on the fourth floor. *The Blue Gossamer* docked about an hour before game start, and is scheduled to leave at the end of game. It is docked at 3-370.
- Areas outside of Topside are the **tunnels**. The tunnels are dark, spooky, and without significant gravity. However, it is low-budget weightlessness, so you can walk and run normally (there's just eerie, electronic, atmospheric music).
- To enter and traverse the tunnels, you must use **nodes**. A node is a small sign (about four by five inches) taped to the wall at approximately waist height. A node will specify what other nodes you can get to from it.
- Nodes will generally be located at stairwells and hallway intersections. They are labeled by building number, floor number, and either **N** (north), **S** (south), **E** (east), **W** (west) or **C** (center). The map shows a few sample node locations for building 4.
- When travelling between nodes, take the most direct route. Nodes are placed such that you will not pass any intersection or stairwell between adjacent nodes. The space between nodes is in-game. You may play as normal in it. There may be other non-node signs to see.
- If you find a blocked node (one with no listed adjacent nodes), you may always go back the way you came.
- If you are being chased through the tunnels, you may call a **ten-second** localized halt when you reach a node, in order to locate the sign, read it, and see where you can go. Do this by holding up your hand, palm facing your pursuers (don't call a full halt). You may do this only once per visit to a node. Do not use this if you are not being obviously chased; it should not be used to protect against ambushes or other surprises.

- If you are chasing someone through the tunnels and they hold up their palm to you when they reach a node, keep your distance and do not attack, so they can read the node. You may resume chasing them once they drop their hand, once they start moving again, or once ten seconds has passed. You may choose to follow them instead of reading the node yourself.
- Avoid places it is illegal for you to go, areas under construction, etc. Don't take game actions in bathrooms, private offices, activity offices, and other places not all players would be allowed to enter. Game action is not allowed in Athena clusters. Don't hide in them, either. You may not use Athena or phones for any in-game purpose.
- You may not use elevators or go outside for in-game purposes.

2 Getting Started

2.1 Character Packets

Your character packet is a big manila envelope. It contains your role: who you are, what you're up to; everything about your part as a **player-character** (**PC**) in the game. Read all the contents and generally keep them with you during the game. If you are missing something or find something which doesn't seem to belong to you, tell one of the GMs. Character packets are confidential. Game materials which cannot be given to other players are marked "Not Transferable," whereas things which can be given to others are marked "Freely Transferable" or "Game Item."

Name-Badge: A name-badge with your player name, character description, and **badge number** on it shows that you are in the game; wear it visibly while you are playing. It represents your character's body in-game. Badge numbers are not in-game information. See the *Character Bodies* and *Badge Numbers* sections for more details.

Character Sheet: Your character sheet describes who you are and what you are up to. It contains a list of everything else that should be in your character packet. Do not show or read your character sheet to other players.

Bluesheets: A bluesheet describes information common to members of a group. When in conflict, character sheet information overrides bluesheet information. Do not show or read a bluesheet to other players.

Greensheets: A greensheet describes and expands abilities, mechanics, or in-game knowledge. Do not show or read a greensheet to other players.

Stat Card: Your stat card lists your statistics. You might not know what all of your stats mean. Do not show your stats to others. The reverse side is a **death report**; fill it out and give it to the GMs when your character dies.

Ability Cards: An ability card explains a special ability your character has. The front side describes the effects; show it to players when you use the ability. The reverse is the rules of use and must not be shown to other players.

Memory/Event Packets: A memory packet is an envelope or stapled piece of paper with a **trigger** which describes when to open and read it. If the trigger is a number, open the packet when you see something with that number. If it's a quoted phrase, open when you hear or read it in-game. If it's a symbol, open when instructed. Do not take game action based on an unopened trigger. Do not show or read a memory packet to other players.

Items: In-game items may be transferred from character to character, and should be marked as such. See the *Items Etc.* section for more details.

2.2 Reality and Game Reality

There is a big difference between reality and game reality. Players must treat each other with courtesy and explain to each other what their characters perceive in confusing situations; e.g. "My character's hands are covered in blood," an **out-of-game** statement. Characters are under no such restrictions, and may do what it takes to further their goals; e.g. "Uh, hi Bob. Just got back from the butcher shop," an **in-game** statement.

Metagaming is inferring in-game knowledge that is inappropriate for your character from out-of-game information. Do your best to not metagame and especially to prevent the risk of metagaming. Be your own harshest critic. For example, do not follow a GM who looks like they know where something interesting is happening, and do not give out inappropriate information, like your memory packet triggers.

Halts: A halt pauses game action. To call one, say "game halt" in a clear and audible voice; other players around a corner should hear you, but you shouldn't scare some poor grad student. End a halt by saying "three, two, one, resume." Call a halt for one of only three reasons: because a rule instructs you to, for safety and similar out-of-game issues, or to pause game and fetch a GM (which you should avoid).

Not-Here: You may go not-here by turning your name-badge around so the "I'm Not Here" side is showing (or by removing your badge entirely, if you are leaving game). Putting a hand on your head, visible from a distance, helps if you're near other players. Go not-here for one of only three reasons: because a rule instructs you to, to leave game, or to fetch a GM while in a halt (which you should avoid).

When you are not-here, your character is not there. Your character cannot see, hear, or remember any game actions or information you (the player) happen to encounter. Avoid other characters, common game areas, game signs, or any sort of game interaction.

Non-Players: Use tact and common sense when dealing with non-players (**NPs**). You are encouraged to spread the gospel of real-time, real-space roleplaying; however, many NPs prefer to sleep, study, or work undisturbed.

NPs may not knowingly affect the game. They and their rooms may not be used to hold items or information. They may not help you kill. Do not use the presence of NPs to hide from rampaging mobs that want your blood.

Avoid conspicuous or threatening game actions in front of NPs. Shooting your friend outside of a classroom one minute before class lets out is a bad idea, as is screaming bloody murder down a hallway. If, despite your most valiant efforts, some NPs do get upset, call the GMs who will help calm them down.

Observers: An observer is someone not playing the game who has agreed to watch. They generally wear an observer headband or an observer name-badge. Observers have traditionally been called "ghosts." They should stay out of the way; you can always ask an observer to leave. If a friend who is not playing wants to observe game, send them to the GMs.

Non-Player-Characters: Non-player-characters (**NPCs**) are characters in the game's universe not played by a full-time player. They are minor characters, bit parts, or random people. Some may have name-badges; sometimes called "GM plants," these are often not readily distinguishable from PCs.

Mechanics: Many actions your character can take, such as walking, talking, and general interaction with other characters, are represented by you doing them. Others, like combat, are performed via abstract mechanics, which are described in ability cards, greensheets, and rules. The abstract information for mechanics (like badge numbers) may not be discussed in-game. If you want to do something special for which there is no mechanic, ask a GM.

Become familiar with your mechanics before game starts, especially those which occur under time-pressure (like combat). Game action will not stop for memory packets, greensheets, or such.

A **kludge** (and derivative forms like "kludge-ite") is something impervious to logic and cleverness, usually for game-balance. You can't affect a kludge without a specified mechanic.

Zone of Control (**ZoC**) is a rough distance measurement. You are within ZoC of someone if your outstretched fingers can touch their outstretched fingers. Double-ZoC is twice this distance, triple-ZoC is three times, etc.

Headbands represent obvious visual effects; wear them visibly on your head. If you see a headband and don't know what it represents, ask. If you are wearing a headband, tell people what their characters see.

Safety: This is a game. Real violence is unacceptable. Game action should cause no real-world damage, either to people or property. If something dangerous is happening, call a halt. Stay in control, use common sense, and do not endanger yourself or others. You should not run or otherwise force your way into or through someone else's ZoC, and you should not make physical contact with another player without permission.

3 Items Etc.

Many in-game items are represented by little white cards with a number and description. Item cards may be shown to others, passed around, stolen, etc. The **item number** on the card is not in-game information and may not be discussed. Not all in-game items have cards or numbers; whatever they are represented by should be clearly marked "in-game item" or "freely transferable."

Use common sense. You can't carry a hundred rocks in your pocket, fold a sword in half, or hide a life-sized statue in a fire hose. You can't stop a bullet with a set of blueprints or rip apart a metal safe with your bare hands. Even if your bag can carry a shovel in it, the shovel noticeably sticks out ("you see a shovel sticking out of my bag").

Written Information: If you write in-game information down on a piece of paper, that paper is now an in-game item and must be clearly marked as such. Don't write in-game information on out-of-game documents (character sheet, etc.). Don't write out-of-game information (like memory packet triggers) on in-game documents.

Envelopes: Some items and locations may have an attached envelope (or just be a labeled packet or folded paper). The envelope may include directions for when to open these ("open packet if you press the big red button" or "open packet if you eat this"); otherwise you may only open them if instructed. Close them when you are done. Open and close packets gently.

Signs: Some locations and other game materials are represented by signs or packets posted throughout game area. You may read any signs and must follow any rules printed on them. If a sign or packet doesn't have some sort of in-game description (it only has out-of-game mechanics information, like a number or just a colored dot), then your character doesn't even see it or know that anything unusual is there.

Bulkiness: A bulky item is too big or heavy to be carried or concealed freely. Bulkiness is measured in **hands** or **dots** (how many hands it takes to carry it). If you are carrying a bulky item, make it clear to onlookers (hold the card). A hand carrying a bulky object may do nothing else. With one hand less than required, you may drag a bulky item at a slow pace.

Props: Some items may have props (physical representations or **physreps**) associated with them. The card and physrep should be kept together. If they are separated, the card is the real item. Prop items are as bulky as the physrep. They can be carried in bags that can hold them, on straps that are attached to them, etc.

Containers: Some items, like crates or personal bags, have a **capacity**. Capacity is measured in dots or hands; this is how many dots of items can be stored within. You can put as many non-bulky items inside as is within reason. A container may have a capacity bigger than its bulkiness; use common sense when nesting containers. Put contained item cards inside the envelope attached to the container card.

Character Bodies: A body is two hands bulky and usually represented by a name-badge. It must be willing or unable to resist for you to carry it. Carry the badge conspicuously. Onlookers can't tell if it's dead without close examination, unless it would be obvious (like headless).

3.1 Searching, Stashing, and Stealing

Places: To search a place, search it. Normal items can be stashed in any reasonable, legal place. Don't put items behind locked doors, inside ceilings, in construction sites, or in hacking locations; consequently, don't go rummaging through such places for game items. Don't stash or search in places that are not in-game; see the *Game Areas* section for more information.

People: All searches of characters or their belongings are conducted via player dialogue. Someone must be willing or unable to resist for you to search them. You need at least one free hand to search someone. Anyone within ZoC of either you or your victim can prevent the search by saying "I stop you" or an equivalent phrase.

You can perform a **pat-down search**, which will only reveal the presence of weapons. This takes as much time as it takes your victim to tell you what you find. If you're the victim, do this at a reasonable pace.

A **total search** is an invasive, complete search of a character's clothing. This reveals all in-game items, and takes as long as your victim spends handing over possessions. If you're the victim, hand over items at a reasonable pace.

Bags: To search a bag in someone's possession, say "I search your bag." This proceeds just as a total search.

To search a bag that is obviously in-game (has an attached, displayed item card), search the physrep. Item cards in the bag must be in reasonable places. If the item card has a capacity and an envelope, the bag is just a prop and all in-game items should be in the packet.

To search a bag that is not obviously in-game (no visible item card attached), spend thirty seconds by the bag, put a "searched (see a GM)" note on the bag, and come tell a GM. Tell any onlookers that they see you searching through the bag. Search an attended bag via player dialog with the owner; they must be willing or unable to resist. If someone searches a bag you are holding, hand over all game items inside at a reasonable pace.

If you find a "searched" note on your bag, come see a GM. To declare a bag out-of-game, label it "no game items."

4 Violence, Damage, and Death

4.1 Hit Points and Health States

Characters have a **Hit Points** (**HP**) stat. Your HP may not go below 0 or above its starting value. Average humanoids have six HP. Your HP is tied to your health state. If you have more than one HP, you are **fine** and may act freely. If you have exactly one HP, you are **weak**, and if you are weak, you are reduced to one HP: you may not run for more than a short burst, and your carrying capacity is one hand's worth of bulkiness less than normal. If you have zero HP you are **knocked out**, and if you are knocked out you are reduced to zero HP: you are unconscious and will wake up in five minutes; when you wake you have one HP and are weak. When you are **wounded**, you are knocked out, bleeding, and will die in five minutes. When you are **restrained**, you are helpless and may do nothing but talk. When **dead**, you are dead.

When knocked out or wounded, fall down and drop anything you are holding. Just lie there. You won't be doing much of anything until you wake up. Do not listen to conversations going on.

Dead men tell no tales. If dead, do not give out any information about your character or death to any players. You may remain on the scene to play the part of your corpse; describe obvious information to onlookers ("I have a gunshot wound in my back"). When you leave, place the front of your name-badge with a description of the body's obvious state. Take the "I'm Not Here" side to wear. Stack your items with your body. Fill out your Death Report. Make sure the GMs know about your death. If your death becomes generally known to the other characters, you may be able to become an observer. Until the game is over, you may not convey game information to any player.

4.2 Weapons

All weapons have both a physrep and an item card; keep these together. Weapon effects are on the card. To use a weapon, you must have it in your hand and unobstructed. Display it in an obvious manner. You cannot hold more than one weapon in a hand. You may only use one melee weapon at a time.

4.3 Killing Blow

A killing blow will kill a helpless victim. Your victim must be within ZoC and either unconscious or restrained. You must use a weapon (melee or ranged). Clearly incant "killing blow one, killing blow two, killing blow three" at a reasonable pace. During the incant, if you are attacked or if someone within ZoC says "I stop you" or an equivalent phrase, you are stopped. To stop a killing blow, either attack the person doing it or say "I stop you" within ZoC.

4.4 Ranged Combat

Ranged combat is real-time and mostly based upon player skill at firing and dodging physreps. Keep it safe. Hits to anywhere on the body count the same; don't aim for the head. If a projectile hits clothing or long hair such that it would not hit the body when passing through, it doesn't count. Hits to an item you hold count as a hits on you, not the item. If there is a conflict over whether or not a projectile hit, the shooter calls the shot.

A **rubber dart** hit makes you weak if you were previously fine and wounded if you were previously weak. A **foam dart** hit wounds you. Darts generally represent ray-guns. Ammo is unlimited.

4.5 Martial Combat

All characters have a **Combat Rating** (**CR**) stat. This represents your basic skill in martial combat; you use the same number for attacking and defending. Someone with a CR of one can't fight very well. Someone with a CR of three is somewhat burly or skilled. When using this stat, you may pull your punches by using a lower number.

To martial-attack someone, clearly state your attack and CR ("Damage 2", "Restrain 2", etc.) from within ZoC. You need the ability card for any attack you make; you don't have to display it. Your attack must resolve before you make another; otherwise, you may act freely. If an ally directs **Assist** at you after you attack, you may, within 2 seconds, restate your attack with the Assist's CR added ("Damage 3", "Assist 2", "Damage 5"). Assist does not change your CR for defense. You may ignore an Assist.

When martial-attacked, resolve by comparing the attack against your CR. If your CR is lower, take the effects; else, say "**resist**" and the attack has no effect. If you neither say "resist" nor state your own attack within two seconds of the incant's end, you are surprised and the attack just works. The attack begins when the incant begins; until you resolve, all of your actions other than martial attacks are interrupted; serial attacks don't prevent simple actions (talking, weapon-drawing, ranged attacks) in-between. Resolve all attacks alone, in the order they occur; choose the order if it is unclear. If you are attacked with "**waylay**" instead of a CR ("Restrain waylay"), the attack just works.

Martial Attack Abilities: Here is a list of attack abilities. Everyone has Damage, Restrain, and Assist. Only some people will have Disarm. Other attack abilities may exist.

Damage is special in that the amount of HP you lose is based on the margin of victory. If your CR is higher than the attack's, it does not heal you. If you are surprised, take the attack's full CR's worth of damage. "Damage waylay" knocks you out.

Damage: You can damage someone as an attack. Say "Damage" followed by your CR plus one.
Effect: I try to cause damage. Subtract your CR from this attack's and lose the result's worth of HP.

Restrain: You can restrain someone as an attack. Say "Restrain" and your CR. You may freely drag, attack, or (if you have a weapon) killing-blow them. To do anything else, or if your health state changes, incant "release" and let them go.
Effect: I restrain you. You are restrained until I incant "release."

Assist: You can assist someone else's attack. You must be within ZoC of both the attacker and target. Within two seconds of an attack, direct this at the attacker, saying "Assist" and your CR. *Effect*: I assist your attack.

Disarm: You can disarm one item from someone as an attack. Say "Disarm" and your CR. Point at the item you want to disarm. If the attack works, they must drop that item. *Effect*: I disarm that item.

4.6 Waylay

Stealth abilities represent sneaking up on a victim with obvious intent to invade their personal space, probably to attack them by surprise or to pick their pocket.

To use a stealth ability, you must be within ZoC of your victim. Form the sign of the devil (index and pinky fingers extended, thumb holding other two fingers down) and extend it along the direct, unobstructed line from your shoulder to the victim's head. Hold this position for the time specified by your ability. Before this time is up, the ability is thwarted if anyone attacks you or if the victim notices the symbol. If they react in any way to the symbol, they have noticed; you (the attacker) make the call.

If you notice someone using a stealth ability on you, make it obvious. "I notice you" is unambiguous; use it if you can. Once a stealth ability is finished, you may not retroactively have noticed.

Waylay: You can attack by surprise as a stealth ability. You must hold the symbol for five seconds. If you succeed, you may replace your CR with "waylay" for a single immediate attack on your victim.

5 Miscellaneous

Headband Colors: A **white** or **yellow** headband represents an observer. A **black** headband represents an android. A **grey** headband with a sparkly "**H**" on it represents a hologram. A **blue** headband represents a small maintainance droid. A **red** headband represents someone driving a DR12 Drill Machine.

Badge Numbers: The first digit of your badge number is your character's apparent age in decades.

Locks: In-game locks are only openable by the people listed on the lock (the lock uses thumbprint-scanning and similar to identify people). Anyone can break a lock by shooting it with a dart gun.

Game Times: Game runs from 6pm to 11pm on Sunday. Surviving PCs are expected to be in-game for the entirety. Game may end early. Cleanup and Wrapup will immediately follow the end of game.

Game Mommy: Denish (Dennis Perepelitsa) is the "base drunk" and a Game Mommy. You can talk to him about your secret plots and ask for advice.

Closing Notes These rules are imperfect. The GMs may violate the letter of the rules to preserve the spirit. We hope these rules are reasonably clear, but if you have any doubts about your interpretation, talk it over with us in advance. We should also add, as much as we hate to admit it, we GMs are human: when all of our carefully laid plans are going haywire, we may lose our cool. The best way to deal with people is remaining calm and friendly, especially when everyone is tired and hungry.

We hope you have lots of fun. Good luck.