

DAWNING STAR



Sample file

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Author's Note: The velin myth that appears at the beginning of Chapter 5 is a re-imagining of a Cherokee Tribe myth.

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THE SALUTATION OF THE DAWN

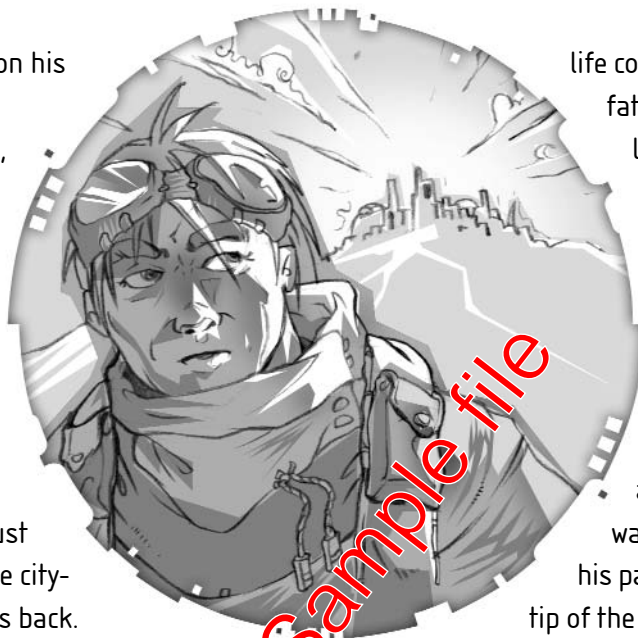
*Listen to the Exhortation of the Dawn!
Look to this Day!
For it is Life, the very Life of Life.
In its brief course lie all the
Verities and Realities of your Existence:
The Bliss of Growth,
The Glory of Action,
The Splendor of Beauty;
For Yesterday is but a Dream,
And Tomorrow is only a Vision:
But Today well lived makes
Every Yesterday a Dream of Happiness,
And every To-morrow a Vision of Hope.
Look well therefore to this Day!
Such is the Salutation of the Dawn!*

The Salutation of the Dawn was originally written in Sanskrit. The author of the poem is unknown, but many scholars attribute it to Klidsa, a Hindu dramatist and lyric poet of the fifth century A.D.

INTRODUCTION

THE BREAK OF DAWN

Diego rested his chin on his clenched fist and sighed. Sitting in this quiet plain, it occurred to him that this was the farthest he had ever been from Dawning Star in ... well, in his entire life. As the sun crept over the mountain range before him, he looked back over his shoulder and could just make out the gleam of the city-ship, a familiar star to his back.



His belly rumbled. Diego pulled a plump, rose-colored pectar from his backpack and took a large bite from its flank. It was high season for pectar, and this one was particularly juicy and smelled as sweet as it tasted. He chuckled, thinking how his abuelo could not stomach them, holding out for a terran apple or nothing at all. A few feet away, Diego's murcow grunted and clicked its hooves on the rocky path. Diego took a few more bites from the pectar and tossed it back to his mount.

Then, it happened. The first few rays of the white sun were cast down from the mountains, instantly bathing the field in their brilliance. Diego squinted, not wanting to turn away, his eyes tearing up. Life inside Dawning Star could be comfortable, safe, even cosmopolitan, but how could it match the beauty of the dawn itself? At that moment, Diego knew he had made the right decision, eschewing a

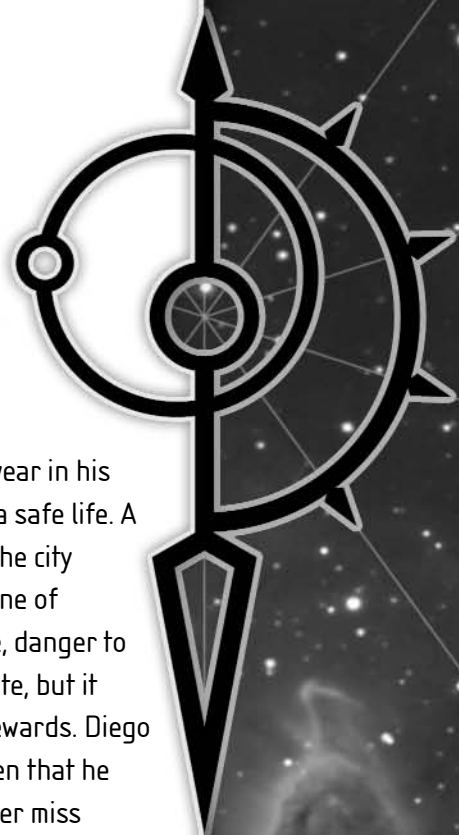
life cobbling footwear in his father's shop, a safe life. A life outside the city walls was one of adventure, danger to be accurate, but it had its rewards. Diego vowed then that he would never miss another sunrise so long as he drew breath. He watched as the sun marked his path, skirting the southern tip of the Omec Mountains and

turning south to the Bergan Lowlands, to the Council Ruin and whatever danger it might harbor, whatever treasures it might yield.

Diego looked at his forearm and read the Homeric hymn tattooed on it. From the day he first read it—a passage from one of his mother's prize collection of books—it held a special meaning with him. He knew the words by heart, of course, but there was something reaffirming in seeing them imprinted on his skin:

**EOS THE EARLY-BORN WAS RISING
FROM DEEP-FLOWING OCEAN,
BRINGING LIGHT TO MORTALS.**

Diego rose, stretched his arms, and took a position in the saddle upon the murcow. There was farther yet to go.



IN CREATING THIS WORLD, WE ADHERED TO TWO RULES

1 IT MUST BE FUN
Some settings are so preoccupied with impressing you by the detail of the campaign world that they forget it's supposed to be fun. DAWNING STAR goes further. When considering each element of the setting—from the overarching concept to the last feat—we asked ourselves: Is this contributing to an enjoyable gaming experience? If the answer was "no," it was cut. If our playtesters found something to be boring, it got reworked. Everything in this book (and the soon-to-be-released DAWNING STAR: HELIOS RISING) is in here because it got a firm "yes."

2 IT MUST BE BELIEVABLE
Among the first people brought in on the project was our technical advisor, Robert J. Grady. He played an instrumental role in shaping the background for the setting to ensure a level of verisimilitude necessary to a science-fiction setting. Everything in this book is theoretically possible. Some of it may seem wild or even far-fetched, but it is, in fact, the result of studied reasoning. You may have heard the term "hard science." This normally refers to a setting that is utterly grounded in science. Unfortunately, strict adherence to the iron grip of science can make role-playing tedious. That's why we refer to DAWNING STAR as a "firm science" setting. It's hard science up until it encroaches on **Rule 1**; then, we take a step back. The result, we are confident, is a science-fiction setting that will provide you with years of role-playing enjoyment.

THE BREAK OF DAWN • • •

Blue Devil Games is proud to present DAWNING STAR: OPERATION QUICK LAUNCH, the first volume of and the introduction to the DAWNING STAR: CAMPAIGN SETTING, focusing on the planet Eos in the Helios system. DAWNING STAR is a science-fiction setting of high adventure, carefully constructed to provide a myriad of possibilities for players and GMs alike. It was built on the rules from D20 MODERN, including the recently released rules for future settings, and is published under the terms of the Open Game License and the d20 System License.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK • • •

DAWNING STAR: OPERATION QUICK LAUNCH is an introduction to the setting as a whole. It focuses on the planet Eos, the site of the new human civilization. As you will soon learn, it operates admirably as a standalone product. It was designed to allow you to launch your campaign on the planet of Eos and enjoy a rich role-playing experience. When DAWNING STAR: HELIOS RISING is released, a host of new material will be added, which will permit you to take your existing DAWNING STAR campaign in new directions. Alternatively, having gotten a feel for the DAWNING STAR world, you might decide to begin an entirely new campaign. Within that broad boundary, there is still a lot to choose from.

It is recommended that, if you have not done so already, you familiarize yourself with the D20 MODERN rules. Additionally, players and GMs alike should read the first six chapters of this book. (Players wishing to maintain an air of mystery would do well to avoid reading the vaasi section in chapter 6.) Chapter 8 includes a full adventure for 1st level characters and provides a good introduction to the setting. However, you may find that it does not suit the type of campaign you wish to run. If so, feel free to create your own adventure. In doing so, try to accentuate the defining features of DAWNING STAR, highlight the differences and similarities between Eos and Earth, and above all commit to high adventure.

You will note that some chapters, particularly Chapter 5, are not fully detailed and that some material refers to species, places, and other data not fully explained in DAWNING STAR: OPERATION QUICK LAUNCH. All of this information will be incorporated into DAWNING STAR: HELIOS RISING.

However, if you can't wait that long, some of this information will be released as previews on our website, <http://www.bludevilgames.com>. You can also post any specific questions on the Dawning Star message boards located at:

<http://p212.ezboard.com/fbludevilgamesfrm8>.

The Dawning Star creative team frequently appears on these boards to answer such questions.