

# The Upperdecks

## *Destiny Cost: 3*

Say what you will about the people in the Underdecks, but they never need to wonder if they're doing the right thing. Those below, they know their job matters, that working means surviving, and that doubt, like most luxuries, is one they can't afford. The Upperdecks are not a place of certainty, nor a place of union where brother bands together with brother to serve the common good. The Upperdecks are guaranteed survival in the short term in return for the possibility of a greater calamity in the future. To fight here, for humanity's survival, is to construct a house of cards, watching your work teeter, second guessing every placement, and knowing that so many who don't deserve to suffer for your incompetence might perish should it all come tumbling down.

Now, on the plus side, it looks gorgeous up there. They have real, actual trees, construction that doesn't entirely consider function over form, and even an artificial sky that lets people see out into the stars during something they call "night". Don't mistake all of the nice things for silly luxuries, either, because part of Upperdeck's job is to remind everyone that being alive is more than just surviving. Music, dancing, food that doesn't taste like nutrition, all of it comes from there, and even if they get it a bit more than everyone else, they celebrate what they have, loud enough to remind the things chasing up that we haven't given up hope.

## *The Political Theatre*

Equality is a dream of the truly mad. This has been true since the dawn of time, and it remains true at the end of it. The apparency of this is quite prevalent here in what was once called The Great Hall, now more bitterly referred to as The Political Theater, for there are only four or so people on the Last Refuge with opinions that actually matter. Of course, to know futility is not to submit, for if that were the way of humanity, then the Last Refuge would surely have never existed.

A large, and certainly ostentatious building, The Political Theatre serves as a meeting place for the many persons who ideas for improving the situation earth's last survivors have found themselves in. Gathering there are old gods, Exalts, enterprising mortals, and even the odd Teodozji. Competition for "the spotlight" is fierce, for all desire a chance to plead their case to those in actual power, and both the time and patience of those individuals is incredibly limited.

**1+ Involvement:** A great and terrible misfortune has befallen you, for your story is tied to politics! Whether by foolish choice, or an inadvertent fall into the vast web of conspiracies, your actions have begun to create ripples across this landscape of ambitions. Will you manage to

create some sense of peace, or will you be the straw on the camel's back, inciting disastrous rebellion?

**5 Disadvantage: Within the Web** Somehow, each of your actions has become incredibly important to Last Refuge's volatile political climate. The manner in which you drink tea becomes a harsh criticism of WAL's excesses, your way of making love a disastrous insult against the Neomah, and the smallest act of kindness a full endorsement of a group you may not even be aware exists. You receive Destiny whenever you are meaningfully inconvenienced by the numberless eyes watching your actions for deeper meaning.

## ***The Inner Wilds***

At the core of the Last Refuge you will not find a sun. Indeed, a sun is a simple thing, a pure thing, making sense in its habits, and ultimately behaving according to physical expectations. A sun cannot choose to be held, nor can it rebel out of boredom. The shell that holds WAL within is not a cage of steel, essence, magnetism, or any other such force. It is a prison made of obligation, affection, satisfaction and, ultimately, illusion.

Around this creature that is not what it seems, the world also is bent away from its own certainty. In places like Underforge, the manifestation of this can be quaint, if occasionally dangerous, but in The Inner Wilds, what is can evaporate in a moment, the landscape twisting wildly as it is ravaged by the storms of WAL's emotions. Far from some literal wilderness, however, this place is a great network of towering capacitors, resistors, power couplings and important power stations that actually need to be maintained and monitored in order to keep the lights running. Also the air pumping, engines running, temperatures survivable, and shields functioning.

Complicating matters further is the inconsistent geography. Larger from the within than from the without, things, and even locations, have a habit of moving around when unobserved (though by the grace of WAL, never breaking the circuit or actually decoupling anything), the space is a confusing navigational nightmare, the crossing of which often ends up being more of a first time exploration, even to its seasoned engineers. The danger level being what it is, the place is not considered habitable, though WAL often complains about not receiving enough interesting visitors, which has led to some attempts to set up semi-permanent residences.

**1+ Involvement:** Some strange circumstances or fate have tied your story to the Inner Wilds. Whether this is as a resident semi-stabilized sections, or through the machinations of WAL's reactor goblins, you can only hope your struggles to come keep the land's mistress happy.

## ***Sanctuary***

Symbolically, no one building stands more against the notion of death than a hospital. It is quite simply the most sacred of battlegrounds in which mankind has warred with disease and decay; the place where the hourglass may be turned once more on its head to halt the inevitable. Michael Florentine understood this, perhaps more than anyone, and this building, of his own design, is one of his strongest weapons in preserving the last remnants of life.

Carefully quarantined from the rest of the ship, Sanctuary is a place seeking to cure the most vicious of maladies spread out by the Abyssals, a process which understandably involves samples of said pathogens. The danger of such undertakings considerable, security measures within are some of the most stringent on the entire station, with any outbreaks isolated and obliterated within moments of even the idea of escape. It is quietly whispered, though, that the security serves the additional function of preventing news of what the doctors are up to from escaping.

This isn't to say that Sanctuary is not a true hospital, for indeed it does take actual patients (if only the worst off), and the doctors are certainly not without compassion, no matter how much distance the situation forces them to take. It is the quiet tragedy of the medical profession that those who most wish to help people are so often the ones who watch them pass away. Here, in ivory halls, humans and Exalts struggle desperately to remember why they continue to fight. This is a place that does not abandon, nor does it forget those who pass.

**1+ Involvement:** Nothing good comes of having your story tied to a hospital, but you'd better make the most of it. You may have a relative with a dangerous malady, have fallen under some terrible ailment yourself, or even be tracking down one of its rare fugitives.

## ***Pandora Bay***

It was a terrible time to be alive when magic was revealed for reality. The horrors of the Neverborn crawled on the earth, devouring the disbelieving masses in their homes while impossibly virulent plagues stole the breath of the most innocent on a scale never before seen. All seemed to be in despair, but as the architects of man's greatest works looked on to the crumbling world, they saw something shining in the darkness, a glimmer so captivating that it gave momentary relief from their terrible revelations. In that moment of absolute defeat, they saw what the forces of oblivion had desired most to take. Hope.

While many were commandeered to work on Last Refuge during its initial construction and design, many more of our greatest minds stumbled onto the ship, dreaming of wonders that are only now beginning to see the light of day. For this reason, there is never pause in the great workshops, for none who remember the price of their inspiration can sleep knowing their visions are yet realized. To the scientists and engineers of Pandora Bay, each moment purchased against the Great Void is the potential to unlock the great new weapon to deliver humanity from

its end. Optimism, however rare a thing it has become, is present here, and those who work alongside these enthusiastic men and women have learned to support even the strangest thoughts, for what is today fantasy might tomorrow be victory.

Physically speaking, Pandora Bay is a vast workshop taking up what many consider to be an unreasonable portion of the ship's better real estate. Any who look inside, however, will see the often vicious fights for every inch of space by competing engineers and their obsessively supportive assistants. So packed is it that the only clearly permanent structures are its vast fabricators, forever turning out precise components, and forever being fed more blueprints for various experiments which absolutely have to be done now. Those who can find the floor will notice vast magical runes which carry electrical power from the ship's core to power the various devices strewn about the place, the connecting to of which can happen wirelessly. Of note, also, are the massive bay doors out which lead directly into the star ports, allowing for the post-production deployment of smaller cruisers directly into battle.

**1+ Involvement:** The lure of what might be has drawn you in, and so your story will be tied to the Pandora Bay. You may have some connections with one of its great wonders, or an involvement of some sort to one of the many strange minds that tinker within.

**0 Fortune:** If you have 3 or higher Involvement with Pandora Bay, you will not be able to escape the interest of the Machina Guild. You may purchase their Loreshet at a -2 cost.