



## **Backstory:**

“Dark fluid” is a form of exotic matter with negative mass, among fringe / pseudo scientists negative mass was theorised as a single explanation of the cosmological anomalies we currently attribute to both dark matter and dark energy. The theory gained no traction within the scientific community, its very existence breaks the laws of physics, negative mass allows for infinite energy, faster than light travel, wormholes, and even time travel.

The theory gained significantly more traction when the rogue moon P-11 drifted into our solar system and was captured in orbit around Jupiter in 2034 where it sits, occasionally vomiting out globs of stuff found to be primarily dark fluid, somehow held together in a manner beyond our understanding, the experts expect there is a tiny negative singularity at the core of P-11, but what manner of singularity we may never know for sure, and nothing that goes near it ever returns.

Regardless, within a few short years we harnessed these globs of condensed dark fluid surrounding Jupiter to create short range wormhole generators and all manner of infinitely efficient new spacecraft drives. Mining the asteroid belt soon became very lucrative, a literal gold rush - but gold was only the beginning, all kinds of rare metals and exotic mineral salts were there for the taking, and of course the dark fluid itself used to create wormholes, among other things. Wormholes under construction have only one exit into this reality, leading to tiny pocket dimensions, known as dArcSpace, where negative mass is often plentiful. When a second wormhole is created inside a pocket dimension it creates a permanent point to point wormhole in this reality that can bridge almost instantly between any space and time, but it is very difficult to find a specific destination from within dArcSpace, the exits lead to a random space and time, sometimes fatally.

Then the Nadji arrived from out of dArc Space, and the “squid wars” began. Nadji is Korean for a “small octopus”, it’s a diminutive slang term for the very octopus-like aliens.

Muhanbu Ltd was and is the leading space mining corporation, with unlimited resources they quickly gained more net worth than every government on Earth combined. They call the shots. They run Yumuhan Academy Station, where pilots are trained for the squid war effort, both to mine in the hazardous conditions of the asteroid belt, and to fight off the squids, usually both. The war has raged now for over 200 years.

Student pilots are born at the academy, in vats. They graduate with their ship and a ton of debt to pay for the cost of their childhood years of mandatory training, with the distant promise of freedom as soon as they settle their debt. Of course, in that basic ship it would take a lifetime mining to earn said freedom, so the only way out is by upgrading, at your own expense, sending you deeper into debt, and deeper into danger.

## **Voiceover Characters:**

### **Main Characters**

#### ***Unnamed protagonist / player.***

His short monologues before levels explain the backstory / setting, and the hopelessness of his situation. Starts out hoping real life will be better than the Academy, quickly becomes resigned to his fate, and kinda over it. Too young to be so jaded, but very good at what he does (assuming the player progresses through the game).

#### ***Chief McPerson: Chief Induction Officer, Muhanbu Corp.***

Corporate stooge. Provides instruction, sets objectives, grants promotions, a fair amount of banter based on player actions. For example, if the player shoots a friendly pilot by mistake, McPerson is quick to inform them that nothing is more precious and valuable to the company than human life, and that the cost to replace the pilot has been added to the player's debt, of course.

Deeply cynical and sarcastic, with a shiny veneer of corporate professionalism and condescension. He is well aware that it is his job to send teenage human slave drones to their doom.

*"Let me go ahead and make this very clear. We do NOT negotiate with calamari."*

#### ***AI 'Skavvy' Turner.***

70's male, the best slugger pilot of his era (according to him). Decades ago his whole squad was destroyed, he was captured by squids and returned a few years later in a (now discontinued) prisoner exchange deal. After voicing very strong pro-squid opinions he was fired by Muhanbu corp and outcast. Now hides out on the fringes, buys and sells grey market parts and upgrades to survive. Skavvy pities the young pilots as well as the squid pilots who also die needlessly. Resentful and suspicious of Muhanbu corp. Knows what's up but doesn't give much away before building trust. Gives the player alternate and questionable objectives throughout the campaign. Heavy Scottish accent.

#### ***Captain Black:***

Takes over from McPerson, not a nice guy at all, on the dark path. Doubles as race announcer. Australian or South African accent.

#### ***Colonel Coutard:***

Even less nice than Cpt Black. Upgrade Center liaison. French accent.

#### ***Wonsu Flange:***

CEO of Muhanbu, also not a nice guy, Vehicle Design Center. End game stuff.

#### ***Ship Computer AI voice 'Joy'***

Provides feedback and reaffirmation of objectives. Authoritative. British. Posh. Emotionless. Stern yet sultry, like a robotic module built from voice samples of Kate Beckinsale. Sentences will be strung together from individually sampled words so she sounds detached and a bit off.

“Welcome. Welcome to. Zone. Area. Cadet. Rookie. Pilot. Chief. Captain. Hotshot. Killer. Commander. General.”

“Darkspace. Jupiter. Io. Europa. Saturn. Titan. The belt. Mars. Deimos. Phobos. Earth. Planet.”

“Dark fluid. Asteroid. Asteroids. Gold. Metal. Metals. Mineral. Salt. Crystal. Crystals. Exotic.”

“Offensive. Defensive. Construction. Combat. Non-combat. Utility. Vehicles. Vehicle. Craft. Spacecraft. Ship. Ships. Unit. Units.”

“Target. Targets. Eliminated. Destroyed. Killed In Action. K.I.A.”

“Base. Under. Attack.”

“Requisition. Processing. Reinforcements. Arriving. Arriving in. Has arrived. Arriving in.”

“Retreating. Escaping. Escaped.”

“Resources. Depleted. Available.”

“Module. Weapon. Weapons. Storage. Upgrade. Upgrading. Upgraded.”

“Extremely. Extreme. High. Low. Sufficient. Insufficient. Excess.”

“Maximum. Minimum. Cargo. Reaching. Limit. Reached. Exceeded. Exceeding. Confirm. Confirmed. Jettison. Jettisoned. Overload. Overloaded. Overloading. Deposit. Collected. Account. Balance.”

“Shield power at. Shield. Power. Depleted. Fully restored. Warning. Sustained. Damage. Critical. Explosive. Decompression. Imminent. Oxygen. Fuel. Ammunition. Structural. Hull. Integrity. Level. Levels. Online. Offline. Nominal. Initiated. Initiating.”

“Distress signal. Located. Updating. Primary. Objective. Updated.”

“Pilot. Rescued. Captured. By. Enemy. Alien. Squid. Engaged.”

“Return to. Portal. Base. Warp. Wormhole. Factory. Docking station. Anomaly. Anomalous.”

“Deployed. Deployment. Deploying.”

“Scanning. Scanned. Tracking. Detected. Detecting. Location. Confirmed. Unknown. Follow. Indicator. Arrow.”

“A few. Several. Some. Many. All. Million. Thousand. Hundred. 90. 80. 70. 60. 50. 40. 30. 20. 19. 18. 17. 16. 15. 14. 13. 12. 11. 10. 9. 8. 7. 6. 5. 4. 3. 2. 1. Zero. Negative. Positive. Minutes. Seconds. Percent. Chance. Probability. Meters. Kilometers. Tonnes. Gravity. Mass. Credits. Funds. Debt. And counting. Please. Exit. Immediate. Immediately. Thank you.”

## Support Characters

### *Friendly Pilots / wingmen.*

Each ship type should have a different voice, with a few lines of feedback for each, responding to team orders given by the player and providing the player with info about things happening on and off screen.

**Utility/Scavenger:** Callsign "Bugsy" teen male, "the new noob"

**Utility/Medic:** Callsign "Ambo" 20's female, compassionate, competent, in a hurry. "Don't worry, I got you." Australian accent.

**Utility/Repair:** Callsign "Stitch" 30s Male, Overworked, anxious. "I'm on it, I'm ON it!"

**Scout:** Callsign ?? 20's, male, over confident, can-do, gung ho. "Doin' it to it" English accent.

**Interceptor:** Callsign "Vector" Same voice as main protagonist, only without the morose introspection. American accent.

**Tank:** Callsign "Griz" 40's, male, Jaded, begrudgingly accepts tasks, "Been there, done that, got the scars." His life is where the protagonist is headed. American or Eastern European accent.

**Archer:** Callsign "Longbow" 30's, male, sneaky and sadistic, "They won't see me coming." French or Eastern European accent.

**Freighter:** Callsign "Eddie" 30's, male, helpful, cheerful, quietly confident. "Back in time for lunch?" Maori / Pacific Islander accent.

**Warp Hauler:** TBD: Will have more lines than the others. Possibly multiple voices for different zones/missions? One is 40's, female. Demanding, respected matriarch. Soon to be promoted to Corporate after years of loyal service. Sceptical of new players ability, pleased to be proven wrong. Korean accent.



**Generic script / game events for all friendly pilots:**

Comms	Examples
Comms opened	[Tank] Here / What's up? / Ready
General affirmation	OK, OK boss / Roger that / No problem / Certainly
Move to position	On my way / Heading to position
Follow (combat unit)	Got your 6 / Squad Assemble
Follow (support unit)	Defending / Protecting / They're safe with me.
Follow (me)	Be right there / Forming up
Come rescue (me)	Comin' to getcha. / Hold Tight.
Return to base	Heading home
Hunt Enemy	Let me at 'em / They won't see me coming
Scavenge / Collect loot	Scavenging / Collecting / Show me the money
Retreat / Hide	Falling back / Retreating / Good idea
Recycle / Retire / Trade in	It's been fun / See you next time
Upgrade your...	"I hope its a ___" - units could suggest best upgrades per ship type
Upgrade your [item]	Oh, shiny! / Nice! / Yes! / Thank you! / Money well spent! / Okay... I'll take it. I'd buy that for a dollar.
... more to come...	

<b>Game Events</b>	
Enemy spotted	Enemy spotted / We're not alone out here / Here they come! / Uh... you might wanna see this?
Crit damage from bullet	I need help / Under heavy fire
Destroyed	Ejecting, ejec... <static> / Not like this, not lik... <bzzt>
Ice Heal, from below 25%	Phew / That was close
Ice heal to above 110% ?Also upgrade installed?	Powered up! / Feeeeels good man! / Ooooooh, yeah!
Pilot Rescued Player from space	Welcome aboard / Wanna take the wheel? / Howdy captain! / Cold out, is it? / Back to base?
Player Rescued Pilot from space	Am I glad to see you?! / Thanks boss. / Put me back in coach. / I'll get 'em next time. / Brrrrr... sure is cold out!
Pilot stranded in space, 30 (of 90) seconds left to live	Hello? / Can you hear me? / Anybody? / I'm dyin' out here. /
Pilot was abducted by alien ship	I'm being abducted! / Oh, no! Not the probe! / Oh my God. It's full of squids.
... more to come...	

### **Plot and Missions:**

The campaign game starts on your graduation day, when you are awarded your first “free” ship for basic flight training, one short warp from the academy. Surprise squids appear during your training, and for showing such an aptitude for combat (assuming you survive), and also due in part to a sudden recent staff shortage you are promoted immediately to combat division, a reasonably quiet posting behind the front line, scavenging for scrap ship components after a battle, where you first encounter **Skavvy**. But the zone doesn’t stay quiet for long.

The player progresses quickly to squad leader, commanding a small fleet of mining, shipping and combat vehicles, the mission select screen is mostly on sequential rails, but sometimes choosing their missions from a connected map of available options. Missions mostly are a combination of resource collection, combat and other objectives, including escort missions where a particular vehicle or structure must survive, pilot rescues, area clearing, eventually enemy warp assault and enemy base assault.

Over the course of the game the origins of the squids becomes clear, they are entering the wormholes from a system somewhere in the very distant future. Once their planet is located the science boffins manage to target a wormhole at it and deploy a “dark nuke” deep into the squid planet’s past, to a time just moments from our present, in order to destroy the squid planet before their species ever evolves. Unfortunately, in the process we discover the squids came from Earth’s distant future all along, and so the boffins nuke Earth. Game Over. Well done. Planet Destroyed. Enemy Eliminated.

There is an alternate ending where the player listens to Skavvy, reverse engineers and constructs an alien translator, finally understands what they hear over squid comms and eventually defects to the squid side through a warp, driving a freighter full of captured squid POWs, only to find that the squids only ever acted in self defence. They were originally on a mission to preserve us from extinction in the first place, their motives are the same as if we were to go back and resurrect dinosaurs and dodo birds if we could. The player discovers all the pilots who were captured throughout the course of the game have been living happily in a squid governed utopia.



