A GAME BY MARCEL KRAATZ & GEORG ARNOT

RULEBOOK



# KNEEDEEPIN HEXES

A GAME BY MARCEL KRAATZ & GEORG ARNOT

2 PLAYERS • 30 - 45 MINUTES • AGE 14+ • COMPETITIVE

# RULEBOOK V 1.02



# **KNEE DEEP IN HEXES**

is a deck-driven 2-player strategy game.

You play the remnants of humanity, who, after a long odyssey on huge continental ships, reach the center of the Hexa Nebula.

Large quantities of a mysterious, omnipotent resource called God's Hand are stored there: with its help, humanity is to be restored to its former glory. But after the continental ships Gondwana and Bukseon have reached the orbit of Hexes 6 and the first troops have set foot on the planet, inexplicable events occur that irreparably undermine the trust of the ships' generals in each other: Scouting parties disappear untraceably.

Attempts are made to mediate diplomatically, but soon the stench of war is in the air...

# **VIDEO TUTORIAL**

On our YouTube channel.



German game publisher.











4x / Ressource Tracker



























4x Orange Companion Cards



32x/ Orange Faction Cards



4x Blue Companion Cards



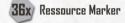
32x/ Blue Faction Cards



18x Neutral Faction Cards









14x / Terrain Cards



# **KNEE DEEP IN HEXES**

The game board in Knee Deep in Hexes consists of three parts:

- · the battlefield.
- the scrapyard and
- 2 resource trackers for each player for 🚯 & 🎇.

The battlefield consists of 31 sectors:





- All fields that do not contain mountains, resources, parts of the HQs or own or enemy vehicles or structures, are considered as empty fields.





Vehicles can be deployed onto a valid adjacent field.

Vehicles are unable to move through. Structures cannot be build here.

# Ressource Tracker

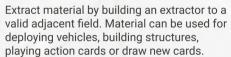
At the beginning of an active player's turn, count all resources gained via companions and friendly extractors adjacent to resource

Move Resource tracking marker accordingly.

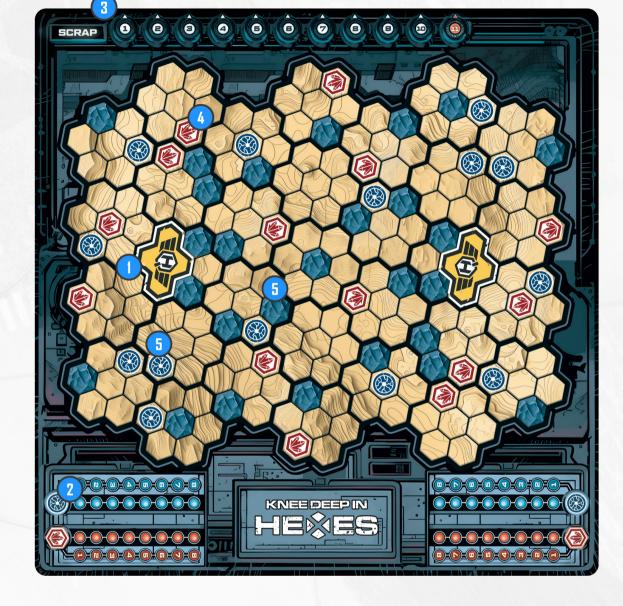
Scapyard Tile

Place vehicles and structures destroyed during war here.





Vehicles are unable to move through material resource fields. Structures cannot be build here.



# 5 Energy Ressource Field

Extract energy by building an extractor to a valid adjacent field. Energy can be used for moving or recycle a card.

Vehicles are unable to move through energy resource fields. Structures cannot be build

Mountain Field 🚳

Vehicles are unable to move through. Structures cannot be build here.

# GOAL OF THE GAME

# **HOW TO WIN**

Knee deep in hexes ends immediately when either a player's HQ is destroyed or the Scrapyard is completely filled with vehicles and structures.

You win either by destroying the opponent's HQ first or - in case both HQ's remain intact - if the total number of health points of your vehicles and structures on the SCRAPYARD is lower than that of the opponent.

If there is a tie on the scrapyard, the player, who has reached the number of said enemy health points by destroying a lesser amount of vehicles and structures wins.



Headquarter



Scrapyard

# SETUP

# **CHOOSE A FACTION** AND TWO COMPANIONS

1) Choose your faction: Every player first chooses one out of the two factions Bukseon/ Blue and Gondwana/ Orange. 2) Choose two companions:

Each faction has one of the following character

Each player lays down their 2 chosen companion character cards face up on the table in front of them.









**Trickster** 



Each companion is represented by an individual character card.



# SET UP THE CARD DECKS

Every player starts with a deck of exactly 25 cards.

A deck consists of **16 strategy cards**, which are provided through both chosen companions (Base Deck) and additionally a set of **9 neutral strategy cards**.

The set of neutral strategy cards is identical for each player.

It consists of 6 War Cards:

2x Sling

2x Barrier 2x Skirmish

and 3 Action Cards:

1x Improvised Turret
1x Improvised Extractor

1x Improvised Factory

The players shuffle their cards and place them <u>face</u> <u>down</u> on the table in front of them.

The deck is from now on referred to as draw piledraw pile.

Used or otherwise discarded strategy cards are placed next to the draw pile. This pile is from now on referred to as the discard pile.

# **BASIC RULES: CARDS**

A) Card texts have priority over rule texts.

B) Vehicles or structures mentioned on the card text refer to the active player. Unless it is explicitly designated as <code>,enemy'</code> or <code>,opponent'</code>.

# EXAMPLE

"Place a factory beside a vehicle" has the same meaning as "Place a factory beside one of your own vehicles".

C) If a draw pile is depleted during the game, it is gone: discarded cards will not be shuffled in it again. Therefore take good care of your cards!



Neutral Strategy Cards

# DECK BUILDING PREVIEW

## **Basic Deck and Authority**

In addition to playing with the pre-built casual decks, Knee Deep in Hexes has other deckbuilding variants that offer more strategic depth and are particularly suitable for tournaments: Simple Deck-building and Advanced Deck-building.

Both of these deckbuilding variants are based on the basic deck. A basic deck consists (as described on page X) of a total of 16 strategy cards from the two Companions that a player has selected from their respective faction.

Further cards are added to this base deck: In Simple Deck-building, the addition works via a draft mechanism. In advanced deck building, cards are added via authority, or more precisely via authority points.

The following applies to both variants: All cards beyond the basic deck must be added or acquired individually - adding or acquiring a card does not mean that you automatically add or acquire its double.



**Authority Points** 

Companion's Signature

An **in-depth guide to deckbuilding** will be included in the final version of the printed rulebook.

# SET UP THE SUPPLY

Each player has the following supply of vehicles and structures:

6 ACVs

5 Tanks

3 Palozzas

4 Extractors

3 Turrets

2 Factories

according to the faction's colour.

In addition each player puts their war zone marker to their supply.

# NOTE

Vehicles and structures in the supply are **each unique.** If they are destroyed in the course of the game, **they will not return to the supply.** 







3x / Palooza

4x Extractor











# IN DEPTH: THE COMPANIONS

Choose your companions wisely.
They will stick with you for the entire game.

It is not possible to switch companions during a running game. Your decision is therefore final.

Each companion has its own character type. This character type determines the general strategic orientation of a companion.

These strategies are represented by individual set of strategy cards. Each companion comes with their own unique set.

A total of 8 cards: 2 War Cards and 2 Action Cards, each of which is present twice in the set. You can easily match the cards according to the character type symbol.

Each companion provides the resources 📦 & 🍪 at the start of the game.

These are added to your resource pool at the beginning of each of your turns, no matter what.

Each companion adds a certain amount of health points to your HQ as indicated in the HQ symbol.

And last but not least: Each companion has a special ability. This ability is valid throughout the entire game - and is very powerful.

Make sure to use them! But always keep an eye on the special abilities of the enemy companions as well. It is vital for survival!



The **GENERAL** overlooks the battle from the fleet's main ship in the planetary orbit.

They suddenly intervene in battle with extremely long-range weapons or support the ground forces with supplies from space.



The **COMMANDER** leads his troops directly on the battlefield. They draw on many years of experience in combat and adjust their tactics rapidly.



The **TECH** constantly improves the technological capabilities of their troops. They gain an advantage through steady innovation.



The **TRICKSTER** surprises his opponents with fancy maneuvers. Their power lies in their unpredictability.

**Character Type Symbol** 



HQ Health Points



5



LARVEKITE E-COMPOUND



# TURNS OVERVIEW

Pick a starting player at random.

Each player draws 3 cards from their drawing pile.

Free Mulligan: Before the start of the game, each player has a one-time opportunity to discard and redraw all 3 hand cards drawn before.

## The game is played in rounds.

Each round consists of the turns of both players.

A turn consists of the following phases. These phases must be executed by the active player in exactly this order:

- 1) Power Up (Resources + Card Draw)
- 2) Actions (Move, Build and Play Action Cards)
- 3) War Zones: Resolve enemy war zone marker
- 4) Place own war zone markerwar marker
- 5) Exhaust (Reset resource trackers) After the starting player has completed his last phase, it is the next player's turn

# BALANCING NOTE

In the **very first round**, the starting player does not draw a card and removes 1 from their resource pool.

# **PHASE 1 - POWER UP**

## 1) Gain resources:

There are two resources in Knee deep in Hexes:

Material 📦 & Energy 🛞

At the beginning of their turn, the active player gains:

- a) all resources shown on the players two companion charakter cards.
- b) all resources from resource fields adjacent to own extractors (see also .Extractor').

To track resources gained, use the corresponding resource trackers.

# EXAMPLE

Example of gaining ressources.

# NOTE

Resource fields adjacent to more than one extractor of the active player are counted once per Power Up phase only. So building two Extractors adjacent to the same resource field won't provide any benefit.

This rule does not extend to enemy Extractors, meaning those will be ignored in the active player's Power Up phase.

## 2) Gain a hand card:

The active player draws a card from their deck. The hand card limit is 6 cards. Excess cards must be discarded immediately. The choice is up to the



# **PHASE 2 - ACTIONS**

The Action phase is the main phase of a player's turn. The actions available to a player are as follows:

- 1) Deploy vehicles
- 2) Move vehicles
- 3) Build structures
- 4) Play Action Cards
- 5) Draw a card
- 6) Recycle a card

Player has as many actions available to them as their resources and hand cards allow - in no particular order, as often as they like.

There are 3 vehicle types in Knee deep in Hexes: ACVs, Tanks and Paloozas. Use vehicles to move around the map, build structures and attack enemy vehicles, structures and HQs.

Vehicles have the following stats:

cost measured in

the vehicle's costs).

- the range of hexes a vehicle may move for every spent on its movement.
- the combat damage the vehicle does in war, · and the health points (which are always equal to
- Vehicles in detail:

Costs, Movement, Combat Power, Health Points.

# ACV

A very fast construction vehicle with almost no firepower.

Only vehicle in the game with build ability.





Movement: 3 per (2) Health Points: 1



# **Next to Factory: OK**



# Robust standard unit with medium firepower and medium ovement.

Combat Power:

**TANK** 





Costs: 📦

# **PALOOZA**

The **fearsome battle** behemoth.

Slow movement, but provides the highest firepower in the game.

Costs: (i) (ii) (iii)

Combat Power:

Movement: 1 per (3)

Health Points: 3

# 1) Deploy Vehicles

To deploy a vehicle, a player must first remove 📦 amounting to the vehicles cost. To do so, lower the resource counter by the amount of to be paid.

After the costs have been paid, the player may take the respective vehicle from their supply.

A vehicle may then be deployed on an empty field

- is located directly adjacent to HQs or factories
- on which there are no mountains or resources
- · on which there are no enemy or own vehicles or structures.

# Next to HQ: OK





# On a Mountain: WRONG





# 2) Move Vehicles

As an action, a player may move vehicles up to as many fields as the vehicle's movement points allow. For every movement action the active player must remove one ( from his resource pool. You can't stack movement.

Fields where vehicles are allowed to move and end their movement on are furthermore fields where there are

- no mountains
- no resources
- no enemy vehicles or structures
- Vehicles are not allowed to move through HQs.

A moved vehicle always must end its movement on an free field. On its way it may pass through fields occupied by own vehicles or structures, but it is not allowed to end its movement on them:

One field - one unit!

The player may repeat this action with a vehicle that has already been moved in the turn. The action sequence, including the issuance of energy points, starts anew.

## BASIC RULE

A player may spend multiple 🛞 within a turn to move a vehicle, but not multiple (3) at once!

A vehicle must always have completed its movement before it can start its next one.

For example, it is not possible to spend 🚳 🚷 to allow a Palooza to pass a friendly vehicle or

Each triggered movement must comply with the ground rule.

# EXAMPLE

**Moving Vehicles** 

To move this ACV one time in order to reach the designated field, a player must pay (3)





.. since an ACV has 3 movement, it is able to move up to 3 fields for being spend.

# 3) Build Structures

There are 3 structures in Knee deep in Hexes: Extractors, Factories and Turrets. Use them to exploit resource fields, deploy vehicles beyond the HO or build defenses.

The HO is NO structure!



# EXTRACTOR

Extracts Resources out of adjacent resource fields such as Material and Energy.

Costs: 📦

Health Points: 2

Resource fields adjacent to more than one extractor of the active player are counted once per Power Up phase only. So building two Extractors adjacent to the same resource field won't provide any benefit.

This rule does not extend to enemy Extractors, meaning those will be ignored in the active player's Power Up phase.



# EXTRACTOR

Produces vehicles.

Costs:

Health Points: 2

Only structure in the game with deploy ability.



# **EXTRACTOR**

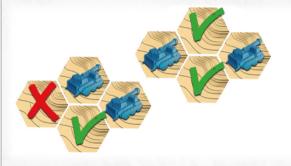
Defense structure

Costs: 📦

Combat Power:

**Health Points: 2** 

Only structure with combat power.



To build a structure, a player must first remove

amounting to the structures cost. To do so, lower

the resource counter by the amount of the to be

After the costs have been paid, the player may take

The structure may then be placed on an empty field

adjacent to at least two own vehicles with build

ability. Vehicles with build ability remain on the

the respective structure from their supply.

battlefield after building a structure.

Marking ressources on the board



# 4) Play Action Cards

Each deck consists of two types of strategy cards only: War Cards and Action Cards. While War Cards can only be played during battle, Action Cards can only be played out during an active player's action phase. Action Cards cannot be played during war.

An Action Card can be identified by a cogwheel in the upper left corner as well as the card type title stating ,Action Card'.

To play an Action Card, the active player must first remove from their resource pool amounting the sum indicated in the Action Card's upper left corner. If the cogwheel is empty the effect of the Action Card can be introduced to the game for free.

More than one Action Card may be played during an active player's turn, as long as as enough is available.

An Action Card is resolved by exactly following the card's instructions. In order to play a card, all conditions specified on it must be met.



# **Card Type**



**Card Text** (Stating the effect of the card.)

(Points that can be used for deckbuilding in the later full version of the game.)

In order to play this card, all conditions specified on it must be met: In this case there must still be at least one tank available in your vehicle supply as well as a valid field remaining, meaning the tank cannot be placed on a resource field, nor on a HQ field, nor on a mountain, or a field neither occupied by an enemy vehicle or structure own vehicle or structure.

# 5) Draw Card

The active player is allowed to spend 📦 to draw the top card of their draw pile.

Until the end of the player's turn, the hand card limit of 6 cards does not apply.

# 6) Recycle Card

The active player is allowed to spend (3) to first discard a card from their hand and secondly draw a new card from the top of their draw pile. This action can be taken multiple times, as long as the resource supply allows.

If a player cannot discard a card they are not allowed to take this action.

Until the end of the player's turn, the hand card limit of 6 cards does not apply.

# **PHASE 3 - WAR ZONES**

Wars in Knee deep in hexes are fought with a spicey delay: that means you can't just rush in and throw punches. You use your round to make your moves, then you declare a war zone at the end of your turn and your opponent still has their entire turn to react. Only at the end of your opponent's turn will your fight be triggered in the war zone you declared - and their fight at the end of yours.

Let's have a detailed look:

All battle in Knee deep in Hexes are taking place in so-called war zones.

A war zone consists of exactly three sectors, which are determined by placing a war zone marker at the end of the active player's turn. The war zone marker must be placed exactly on the intersection of three sectors. The outer lines of the sectors then define the war zone.

A battle takes place when a war zone marker is being resolved.

# NOTE

But here comes the big twist: The resolve of a war zone marker does not happen at the end of the active player's turn who placed the war zone marker, but at the end of their opponent's

Meaning: The opponent has their whole turn to react. A badly placed war zone marker may lead to losing the game!



This means, before the active player can place their own war zone marker, the enemie's war zone marker - placed at the end of the opponent's last turn - needs to be resolved first.

If at least one vehicle or structure of both factions are in the war zone, the two factions commence

A war - the resolve of a war zone marker - always constists of the following 5 steps:

Step 1) Playing War Cards -> see page 12

Step 2) Reveal War Cards -> see page 13

Step 3) Calculate Combat Power -> see page 13

Step 4) War Result -> see page 13

Step 5) Assign Damage -> see page 13

If there is not at least one vehicle or structure of both factions or a HQ within the war zone, the war zone marker immediately returns to its original supply without further follow.

A war is won when a player's vehicles and structures within the warzone, plus additional bonuses from war cards, accumulate more combat points than those of their opponent.

After a war is won, excess combat points can be applied as damage within the war zone to the loser's vehicles and structures. Damage is applied against vehicles and structures by offsetting them against the health points of vehicles and structures that the victor intends to destroy.

In case of a draw at total combat points nothing further happens. But we get to all that later. Lets look at a war scenario step by step!

# a) Declaring a War Zone at the End of your Turn

The Bukseon player plans to declare the following war zone with their war zone marker at the end of

They want to attack the two Gondwana extractors, which have given the orange player an advantage in resources of +1 and +1 every turn so far.

Each extractor has a total of 2 health points and 0 combat points to defend themselves.

To destroy both Gondwana extractors the Bukseon player needs a total surplus of 4 combat points at the end of the war in this war zone. To achieve their goal, the Bukseon player moved 1 ACV and 1 palooza to the planned war zone within their turn.



The total number of combat points of blue vehicles in this war zone is now 4 (3 per palooza and 1 per ACV). The current result after the targeted war would be 4:0 for blue.

The Bukseon player feels so sure of themselves that they finally places their war zone marker at the end of their turn and officially declares the three sectors as their war zone.



# b) The Enemy's Response

Since a war zone marker is not immediately resolved at the end of the Bukseon player's turn and the war thereby isn't triggered, the Gndwana player still has their entire turn to react.

The Gondwana player reacts first by using some of their to move a tank from a neighboring sector into the war zone.

The comparison of combat points in the war zone has now converged to 4:2.

In addition, the Gondwana player spends 📦 to play their Action Card ,Carry All' from their hand cards. The card allows them to move a vehicle already on the map to an empty field of choice. The Gondwana player chooses to place another tank from far away adjacent to the 1st.



But that's not all: the Gondwana player also plays the neutral action card ,Improvised Turret' for two more

This card allows the Gondwana player to place a defense turret next to only one vehicle (instead adjacent/ inbetween two ACVs) on an empty valid field, even if this vehicle does not have the build ability (like a tank or a palooza).

The Gondwana player decides to build the turret next to the 2nd tank.



The balance of power within the war zone has changed: The Gondwana player's tanks and turret now have a total of 6 combat power.

According to the current status, the Gondwana player would have a surplus of 2 combat power, which could be applied as damage to the Bukseon player's units after the war is over.

Since the palooza has 3 health points, there is no way it could be destroyed. But 1 of the 2 damage could be applied to the the Bukseon player's ACV and send it to the scrapyard. Most importantly, the two extractors would be defended!

The Gondwana player has made all the preparations. They see the time as having come to resolve the Bukseon player's war zone marker and start the war in the war zone.

# **RESOLVING WAR ZONES**

# **Step 1) Playing War Cards**

Both players are allowed to play one war card from their hand deck per war.

A war card can be identified by a crosshair in the upper left corner as well as the card type title stating .war card'.

The attacking player (the one the resolved war zone marker belongs to) may chose one war card from their hand and lay it face down onto the table.

The defending player may decide to play a war card of their own in response by also laying one face down onto the table.





# Combat Power (Amount of combat power being added to the player by playing this war

# **Authority Point Costs** (Points that can be used for deckbuilding in the later full version of the game.)

00

In order to play this card, all conditions specified on it must be met: In this case the player playing this card must have three tanks within the war zone.

# EXPLANATION

## **Neutral War Cards**

Some war cards only hand out a combat power bonus if a certain vehicle formation is established by friendly vehicles within the resolved war zone.



# BARRIER

Three friendly vehicles must stand in a straight line of parallel fields within the war zone.



SLING

Weaker version of the barrier, but easier to achieve - Two friendly vehicles must stand in a line of parallel fields with one field inbetween them either free, occupied by mountain, resource, a friendly structure, an enemy vehicle or an enemy structure or a friendly vehicle or structure.

> Three friendly vehicles must stand in a pyramid/ arrow formation within the resolved war zone.

In our sample war, the Bukseon player chooses to play one of their neutral war cards from their hand. In order to do so, the Bukseon player lays down the card face down onto the table.

According to the number given in the crosshair, the card provides a bonus of 3 combat power, but only if the formation indicated on the card has been taken by friendly vehicles (structures explicitly do not count).

As we can see, the Bukseon player has been aiming to play of this war card from the beginning and has positioned its veihicles accordingly.



At this point, the Bukseon player has a total of 7 combat power in the war zone and would take the lead with 7:6.

Regardless, if the war were to turn out like this, the Bukseon player would not be able to destroy any units, because not enough damage would be generated. But at least no unit would be lost either and the position in the zone could be better developed for the next attack.

At this point, of course, the Gondwana player doesn't yet know that for the Bukseon player it's all about damage limitation. They still fear a big blow!

The only war card in hand is ,War Bots' - only adding 2 combat power. Will it be enough?



# **Step 2) Reveal War Cards**

Both players reveal their war cards. The defending player upholds the initiative. Their war card effect is resolved first.



The moment of truth. After the two players have revealed their battle cards, the war result is determined:

7:8 - The Gondwana player defended its sectors and access to resources via their extractors successfully - and even has a surplus combat power.

Not much, but enough to apply a damage point to the Bukseon player's ACV.

The ACV will now spend the rest of the game in the scrapyard - the blue palooza remains unharmed.

# **Step 3) Calculate Combat Power**

Both players count the combat power of their vehicles and turrets within the war zone.
Both players add combat power bonuses given by special abilities or war cards.

The player with the higher number of combat power wins the war.

In case of a tie, the war zone marker is resolved with no further follow.

# Step 4) War Result

Determine by how many combat points the winner exceeds the loser of the war.

The winning player now can transform the exceeding combat points into damage.

These damage points can now be assigned among enemy vehicles or structures within the resolved war zone.

# Step 5) Assign Damage

As soon as a vehicle or a structure is assigned damage equal to their health points it gets removed from the battlefield and placed onto an empty field on the scrapyard track.

# NOTE

Leftover or unassigned damage will immediately be forfeited. Vehicles or structures are either destroyed or not - there is no ,partially destroyed' in Knee deep in Hexes!



ACV
Health Points: 1



TURRET
Health Points: 2



TANK EXTRACTOR
Health Points: 2 Health Points: 2



PALOOZA
Health Points: 3



FACTURY
Health Points: 2

# Assigning Damage to the HQ

The HQ has no combat power.

The HQ only has health points equal to the number of the added HQ points found on the two companion cards chosen by the player.

The HQ eplicitly does not count as a structure!

# EXAMPLE Added HQ Health Points



To destroy the HQ, a number of damage points equal to the added HQ Health points must be fully assigned to the HQ - in this case 4.

If a HQ is destroyed the games ends immediately.

# **PHASE 4 - PLACE**

# Place your own war zone marker

After the enemy war zone has been resolved, the active player is allowed to place their own war zone marker - in our sample case it's the Gondwana player.

This war zone marker then will be resolved after the action phase of the opponents turn.

# **PHASE 5 - EXHAUST**

The active player must remove all unused material and energy from their resource pool tracker.

Cards excessing the hand card limit must be discarded.

# **END OF THE GAME**

# Knee deep in Hexes immediately ends if:

one of the HQ's gets destroyed

OR

 the scrapyard tile is completely filled with destroyed vehicles and/ or structures

The player <u>destroying the opponents HQ</u> or having vehicles and structures <u>with less total health points</u> on the <u>scrapyard</u> wins the game.

If there is a tie on the scrapyard, the player who has reached the result of destroyed health points by destroying less opposing vehicles and structures wins.



As he shuffled between bombed-out ACVs, Shad Basset wondered what madness he had landed in. Ever since they had been forced to leave Earth, generations of people on Gondwana had sworn to protect them. To be the Protectors. That was what they had been raised to be. It was their sacred duty.

For centuries, the Gondwana had followed the main ship of the fleet, the Bukseon. The guiding principle was: In Xeno we trust. The Bukseon's command software had scanned the universe ceaselessly for God's hand until it found it in the Hexa Nebula. It had finally felt like the fulfillment of a fading promise: a new Earth, a new home. That the people of the remaining Continental Drifters would meet again face to face on a new planet should have been a joyous occasion.

But there had been shadows, Incidents, Accusations, Mistrust, And...

Basset stared into a rocket crater in front of him and whispered: "We left a whole world to start anew.

But the only thing we started over with is what we wanted to leave behind in the first place





