"In the eyes of the Prophets, we are all children..."

—Kai Opaka

INTRODUCTION

Elias Cunningham stared out the starship window, idly rubbing the new rank badge on his shirt collar—a half circle, complementing the three full circles he already wore. He was now a Commander in the Starfleet Diplomatic Corps. His elation at gaining this long-desired rank, however, had quickly diminished once he learned what his first posting was to be: Starbase 375 in Bajor Sector, the most troubled sector of all. The Tholian tensions and the Romulan Neutral Zone had nothing on this sector.

Commander Cunningham smiled nonetheless. "Sure," he thought as he looked for familiar stars in the passing void, "it's a lot more challenging than I expected, but I didn't join Starfleet for the travel perks. Trying to maintain proper relations with our allies—even our new allies, such as the Romulans—is an important duty, especially now that there's a war going on." The Dominion/Cardassian alliance had changed all the rules and posed the greatest threat to Federation territory and ideals in Cunningham's lifetime.

His musings were interrupted by Captain Pallamedes' voice coming over his combadge. He tapped it and responded: "Yes, Captain?"

"Report to the bridge immediately, Commander," the Captain replied. "I think your first duty as a diplomatic officer in this region is at hand."

Cunningham wrinkled his brow. "Sir?"

"We've picked up a hail from a Bajoran impulse ship. It seems a Klingon B'rel-*class scout believes them to be Dominion spies and is threatening to blow them to* Sto-Vo-kor *if they don't surrender."*

"But the Bajorans and the Klingons are allies in the war!"

"Exactly, Mr. Cunningham. And it's your job to ensure that they stay that way..."
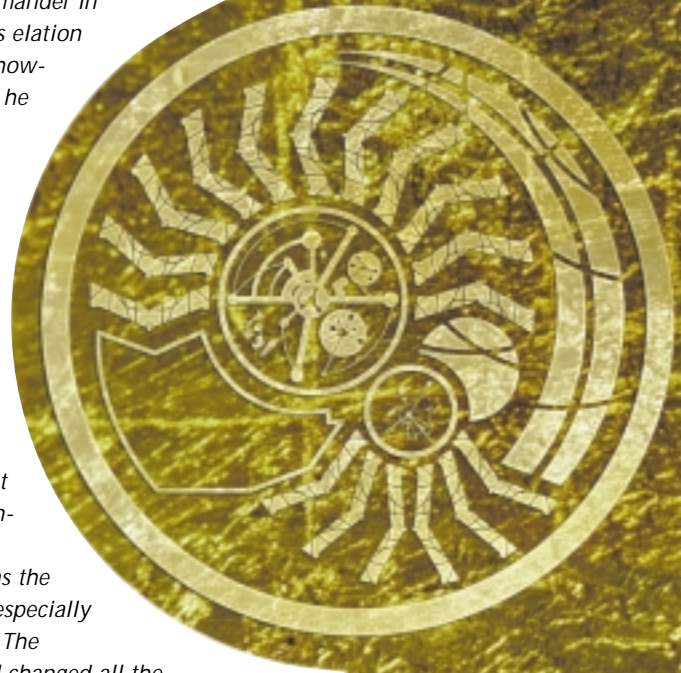
THE FRONTIER AWAITS...

Welcome to a grand adventure! If you're reading this introduction, you probably fall into one of two categories—either you're a *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* fan who's curious about this whole "roleplaying" thing, or you're a game fan who's been waiting years for a roleplaying game (RPG) set in the *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* universe. Either way, the book you now hold in your hands will answer all of your questions.

If you're a *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* fan who's new to roleplaying games, prepare to experience your favorite universe in new and exciting

ways. Ever wonder what it would be like to command your own space station? To smuggle Saurian brandy across the Cardassian Demilitarized Zone? To fight to protect your home quadrant from a powerful enemy intent on total dominatiion? Using the guidelines found in this book, you'll be able to experience these things and more.

If you're a game fan who's been waiting for a *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine RPG* for years, we hope this book (and the supplements that will follow) represents the answer to your prayers. In its pages you'll find detailed rules for creating characters and adventuring in one of the greatest science fiction universes ever created. As an experienced player, you can probably skip the remainder of this introduction and get right to business. Turn to the "Character Creation" chapter, create a character, and prepare to experience the shadowy universe of *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine.*

WHAT ARE ROLEPLAYING GAMES?

Chances are, you already know the answer to this one, although you may not even realize it. After school, when you were young, you'd watch *Star Trek* on television and then join your friends for a backyard phaser battle. A vacant lot became Vulcan, phantom starships zoomed above you, and your bedroom became the bridge of the *Enterprise.* With a roleplaying game, you can do all these things, and you don't even need the vacant lot (or the bedroom…). Better yet, we also give you a way to tell if you hit those hapless Romulans.

Roleplaying games resemble a television series in many ways, but more than anything else a good roleplaying session encourages the participants to tell a good story. Players take the roles of the main characters—the heroes and (sometimes) antiheroes of the *Star Trek: DS9* universe. In the *Star Trek: DS9 RPG*, your characters are the Siskos, Kiras, and Worfs of your own adventure series. Rather than read someone else's script, you write your own lines and set your own stage directions.

One person takes the role of Narrator, becoming the game's director, producer, and set designer; she decides what this week's episode will be about and acts out the roles of the episode's supporting cast—the guest stars, villains, and "extras" that the players encounter during the course of the game. She also interprets the rules, so that everybody knows what they can and cannot do. Did the phaser blast hit its target? Did the shields hold under fire? Your Narrator will let you know. In a good roleplaying game, there are no winners or losers; everybody wins because everybody has a good time playing.

Unlike its sister game, *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (which concentrates on Starfleet characters), the *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine RPG* allows you to play pretty much any character you can dream up—swarthy Klingon pirates, oily Ferengi traders, refined Trill diplomats, and intrepid Human colonists only scratch the surface of the countless possibilities. The "Character Creation" chapter contains everything you need to begin your journey; if you would rather play a Starfleet character, the "Appendix" (page 285) contains additional material that you'll find useful.

WHAT IS THE STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE RPG?

It's all of the above, complete in one book but as expandable as a Ferengi's bank account. This is your chance to explore the wonders of the *Star Trek: DS9* universe on your own terms and in your own way. Although it can occasionally be fun to recreate favorite episodes or characters from the show, the fun of the game lies in creating your own adventures and going beyond what you've seen on television. Think of the *Star Trek* universe as a grand stage, with you and your friends as the actors. You're playing original characters, having adventures of your own. And you can tell any story you want.

Getting Started as a Player

Players can start right away with the Archetype characters provided on pages 35-41; copy them onto your own character sheet (found at the end of the book), or use them out of the book, and dive right in! The "Tactical" chapter (pages 101-124) tells you pretty much everything you need to know to play the game. These rules are designed to be simple and fast, and to stay out of your way while you enjoy the game.

As you become more experienced, you'll probably want to create your own characters from the ground up. The character creation rules (pages 34-60) take you through the process step by step. Experienced players will eventually want to familiarize themselves with the ship-to-ship combat rules presented in the "Rules of Engagement" chapter, as well.

Remember that you and your fellow players—collectively known as the Crew—will be working together toward common goals. Think about how your characters came to work together during the creation process; after all, if the characters clash or the concepts don't mesh properly, the whole point of the game—telling stories as a group—becomes secondary to the conflict among the players.

Getting Started as a Narrator

In many ways, the Narrator has the most demanding job in the game. He needs to be able to wear several hats at once and keep each element of an episode—story, supporting cast, rules, descriptions—in constant motion. It's a big job, but once you get the hang of it, it can also be the most rewarding role in the game. The Narrator should eventually become familiar with the whole book, but you only really need a love of *Star Trek*, a good imagination, and a handful of dice to get started.

We give Narrators plenty of advice in the "Missions on the Frontier" and "Keeping the Peace" chapters. "Idol Threats," a complete, ready-to-run adventure, will help you get your game off the ground quickly. We also give you the tools necessary to paint your own *DS9* canvas and define your own vision of this fascinating universe—these additional chapters cover everything from alien technology and starships to strange creatures and far-flung space stations. It's all in here, and it's all out there, somewhere just beyond Bajor Sector, on the edge of the final frontier…

THE ICON SYSTEM™

There are no winners or losers in a roleplaying game. Although the *Star Trek: DS9 RPG* may be unusual compared to the games you're used to (like chess or backgammon, for example), it does have something in common with these decidedly more traditional past-times: It has rules that govern what you can and cannot do. However, while traditional games are often shaped entirely by their rules, the *Star Trek: DS9 RPG* takes its shape from the stories players tell. The rules exist only to enhance an episode or series and allow it to flow more smoothly, and to prevent any misunderstandings that might crop up along the way.

The *Star Trek: DS9 RPG* uses the Icon System, a basic rules system that attempts to explain and account for the random occurrences your characters will face during the course of an episode. The Icon System was designed to be simple, elegant, and easy to use. It was also designed to be open-ended and flexible; experienced players often enjoy tailoring systems to their own tastes and the tastes of their group, and the *Star Trek: DS9 RPG* encourages this kind of modification. All Last Unicorn roleplaying games use the Icon System, so players already familiar with other Last Unicorn titles will find the *DS9* rules to be friendly territory.

THE GOLDEN RULE

The guidelines presented in this book are yours to use or modify as you see fit. If you don't like something, change it. If you think something is missing, make it up. This is your game now and the story, never the rules, should always remain the primary focus.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

In addition to pencil and paper, you'll need some six-sided dice to play the *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Roleplaying Game*. You can find dice in any good book or hobby store, or you can simply steal a few from a couple of those dusty old board games lurking in the back of your closet. Make sure that one die is a different color than the others.

IT'S A BIG UNIVERSE...

If you like what you see in this book, guess what? There's plenty more on the way! Although this volume contains everything you need to play and enjoy the *Star Trek: DS9 RPG* for years to come, Last Unicorn Games also produces many other *Star Trek* products. These include *DS9*'s sister games—the *Star Trek: The Next Generation* and *Star Trek* roleplaying games—as well as an entire universe of dedicated *Star Trek: DS9* adventures, sourcebooks, miniatures, and boxed supplements.

While none of these products is required to play the game, each of them is designed to expand and enhance your *Star Trek* gaming experience. Look for them at a book, game, or comic store near you.

GLOSSARY

The following game terms appear throughout the *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Roleplaying Game*. Each of the terms is described more completely in the appropriate section of the book; they are collected here for ease of reference.

Action: Almost anything a character does can be described by an *action*. Making an attack, dodging a blow, and using a Skill are all actions. Actions are divided into *Immediate Actions*, which take no time in combat (for example, dropping a weapon), and *Timed Actions* (actions which take time in combat and must be declared; for example, making or dodging an attack).

Advantage: A special ability, benefit, or advantage which a character possesses. Examples include having a Contact in Starfleet Command, being especially adept at Engineering tasks, or having a particularly acute sense. Advantages cost a number of Development Points equal to their value; for example, a +2 Advantage costs 2 Development Points.

Attribute: A character's innate capabilities, such as his agility or intelligence. There are five attributes: Fitness, Coordination, Intellect, Presence, and Psi. Attributes range in value from 1 to 5 (and, rarely, higher).

Attribute Test: A Test (*q.v.*) made using only an attribute (no skill is involved).

c: The scientific notation for the speed of light. For example, a starship moving at .25*c* moves at one quarter light-speed.

Combined Test: A Test made by several characters working together. The best Test Result acts as a base, and each additional successful result adds +1 to it; failures may subtract from the total or delay completion of the task.

Courage Points: Courage represents a character's bravery, ingenuity, and fortitude in the face of adversity. Characters use Courage Points to improve rolls and increase Test Results. A character's overall Courage Point total is sometimes referred to as his Courage Pool.

d6: A six-sided die. Six-sided dice are used to make all Tests in the *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Roleplaying Game*.

Development Points: Points which characters use to buy Attributes, Edges, and Advantages. Characters receive a certain number of Development Points at each stage of their Background History.

Difficulty: How easy or hard it is to accomplish a task. Each task is given a Difficulty (or Difficulty Number) indicating how hard it is—the higher the number, the harder the task. Difficulty Numbers are organized into *categories* (from lowest to highest, Routine [3-5], Moderate [6-8], Challenging [9-11], Difficult [12-14], and Nearly

Impossible [15+]). When trying to accomplish a task, a character rolls a Test (*q.v.*); if his Test Result equals or exceeds the Difficulty, he succeeds.

Disadvantage: A limitation, hindrance, or other problem which afflicts a character. Examples include having a Sworn Enemy, being Physically Impaired (for example, blind), or hiding one's emotions.

Drama Die: When a player rolls a Test, one of the dice he rolls is a different color. This die is called the Drama Die. If the Drama Die rolls a 6, it indicates a great degree of success; if it rolls a 1, it may indicate a great failure.

Dramatic Failure: A failed Test which is 6 or more below the Difficulty Number (for example, a Test Result of 5 when the Difficulty is 12). This indicates a grievous failure which may have terrible consequences for the character.

Dramatic Success: A successful Test which is 6 or more above the Difficulty Number (for example, a Test Result of 12 when the Difficulty is 5). This indicates an amazing success which may have especially beneficial results for the character.

Edge: Aspects of attributes which represent a character's particular level of talent (or lack of talent) with some functions of an attribute. For example, the edges associated with Intellect are Perception and Logic. Edges range in value from +2 to -2, and act as modifiers to related Tests.

Extended Test: A Test which requires an extensive amount of time, or which is broken up into segments so that the Narrator can gauge the character's progress by requiring multiple Skill Tests.

Initiative: Determines who goes first in combat or similar situations. Characters must make Initiative Tests based on the Skill they are about to use, modified by their Reaction edge.

Level: A character's level of ability in a skill or attribute. For example, a character who buys a skill has a level of 1 in that skill; as his ability improves, the level increases to 2, 3, 4, and so on.

Opposed Test: A Test (*q.v.*) which another character opposes or resists. For example, a character who uses his Stealth skill to sneak past a guard will engage in an Opposed Test with the guard, who uses his Search skill in an attempt to locate the character. The character who rolls the highest Test Result in an Opposed Test wins the Test.

Overlay: A character creation tool which represents the character's profession, such as Engineer or Doctor. Each Overlay includes the basic skills and other abilities needed to perform the profession.

Renown: Renown measures how well known a character is. Renown has five Aspects (Initiative, Aggression, Skill, Discipline, and Openness), and can be positive or negative. Each character starts the game with 1 point of Renown in one Aspect (player's choice).

Resistance: A character's ability to withstand damage. Resistance equals a character's (Fitness + Vitality). If the character wears armor or other protection, it will add to his Resistance.

Result: Test Result. See *Test*.

Round: A measure of time in combat, equal to five seconds.

Skill: A character's learned abilities, aptitudes, and knowledges. Examples include the ability to fire energy weapons, the ability to diagnose illness and perform surgery, and the ability to operate ship's sensors. Skills range in value from 1 to 5 (and, rarely, higher). Most skills have specializations (*q.v.*).

Skill Test: A Test (*q.v.*) in which a character rolls a number of dice equal to the attribute upon which a skill is based, and adds the highest result on any die to his skill level. If the total equals or exceeds the Difficulty Number for the task, the character succeeds.

Specialization: Areas of particular expertise and ability within a skill. Many skills require a character to specialize, since they are so broad that few characters will ever learn all aspects of the skill in depth.

Template: A character creation tool which represents the character's race or species, such as Human or Vulcan. Each Template includes the basic attributes and other abilities common to an average member of the race.

Test: Tests are dice rolls used to determine whether a character succeeds with a particular action. Most Tests are based on a skill + an attribute, but there are also Tests based solely on an attribute. Typically, the highest die rolled in a Test is added to the relevant skill level; if that total, or Test Result, equals or exceeds the Difficulty of a task, the character succeeds.

Test Modifier: Circumstances which modify a Test. These include edges, poor visibility, using the off hand, being wounded, or trying to perform tasks in zero gravity.

Wound Level: An indication of a character's current injury status. There are seven Wound Levels: Healthy, Stunned, Injured, Wounded, Incapacitated, Near Death, and Killed. A character can withstand a number of points of damage equal to his Resistance per Wound Level; when he takes more damage than that, he drops to the next level.