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Families As They Really Are (Second Edition) Mobi Download Book



WHAT IS ECLIPSE PHASE?

In *Eclipse Phase*, you play a secret agent protecting the scattered remnants of transhumanity from threats that could wipe it out once and for all. You are transhuman. You are genetically modified, physically and mentally augmented, and functionally immortal. Your mind can be digitally backed up, like a save point. If you die, you can be brought back, your ego—both consciousness and memories—physically restored. You may also copy your mind and download into a body of your choice. This new body—your *morph*—can be biological, a synthetic robotic shell, or a digital info-morph. Your body is essentially gear that you customize according to your mission and requirements.

Eclipse Phase takes place in a future of exponentially accelerating technological progress. Developments in the key fields of artificial intelligence, neuroscience, genetic engineering, nanotechnology, and information science have converged into an impressive feedback loop. Bodies and minds are shaped and augmented. AIs and animals are applied to human levels of sapience. Everything and everyone is laden with sensors, networked, and online. Your mind can communicate with every electronic device around it. Almost anything can be 3D-printed from commitment rooms with a nano-fabricator and blueprints. Technology allows people to live happier, healthier lives, emancipated from need.

Such advances also have their downsides. The wonders of the future are not yet evenly distributed—the immortal rich continue to concentrate their wealth and power while others struggle to survive. Surveillance is omnipresent, and the means exist to hack people's minds and memories, copy them entirely, and/or commit them to virtual slavery. Many technological advances are super-empowering, putting the means for mass devastation in everyone's hands. Efforts to restrict such tools are doomed to fail; only our own maturity as a species can save us.

Exemplifying these dangers, *Eclipse Phase* takes place ten years after transhumanity has lost a war with a group of super-intelligent, self-improving AIs. 95% of the population was lost during this apocalyptic conflict, many of them forcibly uploaded by the TITAN machine gods before they disappeared. Thousands more were corrupted and transformed by an alien exogenous virus. The Earth is ruined and off-limits, overrun by machines and monsters. The survivors evacuated the planet and spread throughout the Solar System, expanding our off-world colonies out of desperation and necessity. Many escaped only as refugees, with nothing but their bodies and minds.

The nations and super-powers of the old world are gone, decapitated and dismantled. New political blocs and factions have formed, loosely divided between the inner and outer systems. The capitalist economies of the inner system—Luna, Mars, and Venus—continue to enforce scarcity and intellectual property. They are dominated by the Planetary Consortium, a hyper-corporate entity that prioritizes business interests and that has declared Mars the new homeworld of transhumanity. Their habitats are identified by the influence of media and momentous conflict on civil discourse, the legislative and security restrictions that keep their populations safe, a lingering distrust of AIs and uplifts, and sharp class divisions. While socialists and hyper-elites play and prosper, many refugees have resorted to selling their labor as indentured servants to afford cheap, mass-produced synthetic bodies—the *clanking masses*.

The outer system is the stronghold of the Autonomist Alliance, a mutual-aid network of anarchists and techno-socialists. In these communal territories, currency is obsolete and unrestricted nano-fabrication means that everyone has the necessities and tools they need. People create rather than consume. Reputation, not wealth, mediates the exchange of information and services. Many habitats operate without government, laws, or police, relying instead on voluntary and cooperative structures, real-time online referendums, and collective militias. The outer system is a patchwork of political, economic, and social experimentation.

Interested among these major factions, other transhuman clans build their own societies. Criminal cartels feed black markets, radical scientists work to democratize science, and some mercenaries offer their services, pirates prey on the unwary, and isolationists filter their communities from outside influences. Even bioconservatives—distrustful of transhuman technologies—thrive on, fearing for our species' future.

The war with the TITAN AIs scared more than Earth. Zones on Luna, Mars, and Saturn's moon Iapetus remain under machine influence. Of greater impact, however, are the mysterious Pandora gates discovered around the system. These wormhole gates open to extrastellar systems—thousands of exoplanets and alien mysteries. Intrepid gatecrashers explore these new horizons, colonizing worlds and uncovering the remnants of extinct civilizations. While no living sapient species has been found beyond the gates, transhumanity has had its first encounters with alien life within our own Solar System. A star-faring species known as the Factors visits regularly, though the true nature and intentions of these laconic ambled merchants remains unknown.

Ultimately, *Eclipse Phase* is a game of transhuman survival. Aside from the threat that the TITANs will return, we face existential risks—*e-risks*—that endanger our future as a species. These include weapons of mass destruction, artifacts from beyond the Pandora gates, salvaged TITAN technology, exogenous infection outbreaks, alien threats, media phenomena, and the dangers we pose to ourselves. Our species is in a deteriorating orbit around the black hole of extinction. Will our conflicts steer us into the event horizon, or will we evolve and cooperate to escape the gravity well and reach new frontiers? Will we be recognizable when we get there?

Eclipse Phase is an exploration of uncertain futures. This is more than a tabletop roleplaying game; it's a detailed science-fiction setting that thoroughly investigates issues that affect our future as a species. The core of *Eclipse Phase* emphasizes the nature of transhumanity as it transforms itself, mentally and physically, on the edge of becoming something posthuman. This is a setting that speaks to the immense dangers that technology offers us—but that balances this outlook by considering how science can be used to improve ourselves, enhance cooperation, counteract these risks, and prosper. There is danger—but also hope.

NEW TO ROLEPLAYING?

If you are new to roleplaying games, you will find everything you need to know about how to play them here: <http://eclipsephase.com/roleplaying>

STARTING PLAYERS

This chapter provides a summary overview of the game; we recommend that everyone start by giving the rest of it a brief review. If you're new to the game and eager to start playing, we recommend choosing one of the 16 sample characters #12 to start out. These characters are divided into 4 teams of 4, so we recommend you and your friends choose from the same team. If you have more than 4 players, choose your extras from other teams. All of the teams work for Firewall-based games, with one team optimized for the inner Solar System and one team designed for the outer system. One of the teams is also made specifically for gatecrashing, and one for criminal-oriented scenarios.

If you prefer to jump right into making your own characters, proceed to Making Characters #36.

If you'd prefer to get a grasp on the rules first, start with Game Mechanics #20. For more detail, move on to Actions & Combat #202 and Transhuman Tech #208. If you plan to play a hacker, check out the mech #240. If you have a psychic async in mind, take a look at Psi #272.

If you're more interested in the setting, there's plenty to read, starting with the history *How It Came to Be* #18.

STARTING GAMEMASTERS

As a gamemaster (GM), you will need to be familiar with the general content of this book. We recommend starting out with the setting, beginning with *How It Came to Be* #18. After that, pop on over to *Hours & Risks* #160 for the juicy behind-the-scenes stuff.

Once you've acquainted yourself with our universe, you'll need to learn the rules, starting with Game Mechanics #20. You will probably want to have a grasp on the basics of skills #48, combat #202, the mech #240, and resolving #281. You should also be familiar with how players acquire gear #372 and morphs #290. The rest you can pick up as you need.

Finally, peruse our *Eclipse Phase*-specific gamemastering advice in *Running the Game* #354.

A NOTE ON POLITICS

Eclipse Phase delves into numerous political themes; in fact, we start with the premise that everything is political. Like all authors, we write from the perspective of our personal biases. Our specific lens is radical, liberatory, inclusive, and antifascist. If you support bigotry or authoritarianism in any form, *Eclipse Phase* is not the game for you.

A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY, SEX, AND GENDER

Sexual biology is ephemeral in *Eclipse Phase*. Sex is elective and subject to change; almost everyone has the opportunity to switch bodies. A character's gender identity may not always match their physical sexual characteristics (or lack thereof). Gender identity itself is often fluid. To reflect this, we apply the "singular they" rule, meaning that we

use "they" as the default pronoun for individuals. When referring to specific characters with an established gender, however, we use the pronoun appropriate to their current gender identity, regardless of the sex of the morph they happen to be in.

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