

# Star-spawned by David J Prokopetz

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A game of tentacles and self-discovery, for 3–5 players

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One unearthly night, a ray of colourless light descended from the stars, and under its warping radiance, creatures unlike any the world has ever seen were born. They do not know the world, and they do not know themselves. Unfortunately for the world, they're quick learners!

## What You'll Need

*Star-spawned* requires three six-sided dice, a large sheet of blank paper – or, alternatively, a shared spreadsheet or text document – called the Discovery Sheet, and some way of noting the values of each player's Facets.

Some rules refer to the player to your left or right; if you're not seated around a table, work out a virtual seating order amongst yourselves before play begins.

## Character Creation

Character creation in *Star-spawned* is undertaken as a group, and consists of two main phases: generating Facets, and assigning Facets.

## Generate Facets

Roll a six-sided die twice, reading the first roll as the “tens” place and the second roll as the “ones” place, yielding a number in the range from 11 to 66. Find the corresponding row of the following table, and write down the contents of the first column. Repeat this process for the second and third columns, and arrange the results in order to find the name of a Facet. For example, if you rolled 23, 41, and 31, this would yield a Facet name of “Desmatence”.

Generate a number of Facet names equal to the number of players, and write them on the Discovery Sheet, each in a separate column with plenty of space under it.

**11–12.** ab | bles | age

**13–14.** an | cap | and

**15–16.** bi | cim | ary

**21–22.** con | dab | ate

**23–24.** des | dor | dom

**25–26.** flam | glan | en

**31–32.** gen | gov | ence

**33–34.** gro | kin | ess

**35–36.** jav | lin | ice

**41–42.** ka | mat | ing

**43–44.** pur | ned | ion  
**45–46.** re | nil | ity  
**51–52.** sle | nov | le  
**53–54.** sun | quir | ma  
**55–56.** tab | sped | ood  
**61–62.** tri | sib | on  
**63–64.** ven | tin | ous  
**65–66.** war | tog | yle

## Assign Facets

Your character begins with a rating of 1 in each Facet generated in the previous step. Distribute a number of additional points equal to the number of players (or, equivalently, equal to the number of Facets). No Facet may have a final value greater than 3. Try to avoid having two characters with the exact same spread of Facets.

Note: at the time that you assign your Facets, you will have no idea what they mean. This is intentional.

## Finishing Touches

No human eye may apprehend nor human tongue express what you are. Roll or choose up to three adjectives from the following table to define the impression you leave upon others – your form is otherwise utterly indescribable. Your nameless name likewise cannot be inscribed or uttered; you may amuse yourself by imagining the epithets that will inevitably be bestowed upon you.

**11–12.** ancient  
**13–14.** bulbous  
**15–16.** cyclopean  
**21–22.** distorted  
**23–24.** enveloping  
**25–26.** fluid  
**31–32.** grasping  
**33–34.** howling  
**35–36.** iridescent  
**41–42.** lurking  
**43–44.** membranous  
**45–46.** nebulous  
**51–52.** oily  
**53–54.** porous  
**55–56.** refulgent  
**61–62.** squamous  
**63–64.** tentacled  
**65–66.** throbbing

## Playing the Game

The sole pursuit of *Star-spawned* is to discover the world, and in so doing, discover yourselves. Play proceeds without a GM: simply describe what do you and ask the group what you see: any other player may answer.

In the course of your explorations, there must come a time when you are not content merely to observe, but find yourself driven to engage in some fashion. When this time comes, you must essay one of your Facets to work your will upon the world. This can be accomplished in one of three ways: *Proposing a Hypothesis*, *Refining a Hypothesis*, or *Putting Theory into Practice*.

## Proposing a Hypothesis

Choose a Facet which currently has fewer than three statements written under it on the Discovery Sheet. (Crossed-off statements don't count for this purpose.) Propose a hypothesis about what that Facet does, in the following form:

“[Facet name] must [up to six words, no more]”

This statement may freely contradict existing statements written under the chosen Facet if you wish; the ways of the star-spawned are ineffable.

Next, roll a number of dice equal to your rating in the chosen Facet, and sum their values. If the sum of the dice is *equal to one of the first seven prime numbers* – that is, a sum of 2, 3, 5, 7, 11, 13 or 17 – then your unworldly intuition regarding the Facet's purpose has led you rightly, and the hypothesis is confirmed; otherwise, it has led you astray: either the Facet is not what you think it is, or you've employed it incorrectly, and in both cases the hypothesis is refuted.

Note: the statistically astute may realise that the likelihood of rolling a prime sum decreases as more dice are rolled, from one in two with a single die, to two in five with two dice, to scarcely one in three with three dice. This is as it should be; the powerful are often overconfident!

If the sum of the roll is prime, find the row corresponding to the **highest single die** on the following table; otherwise, find the row corresponding to the **lowest single die**. Do not re-roll.

1. Unthinkable ruin
2. Vile ruin
3. Dreary ruin
4. Subtle glory
5. Stark glory
6. Ineffable glory

If you achieve glory, the player to your left describes the outcome of your overture; otherwise, the player to your right does. Their descriptions should bear in mind whether the hypothesis was confirmed or refuted: glory as a result of pursuing a refuted hypothesis is likely to take unexpected forms!

Finally, if the hypothesis was confirmed (i.e., the sum of the roll was prime), write it down near the top of the Discovery Sheet, under the appropriate Facet's column, then add a question mark to

remind yourself that it is, as yet, only a hypothesis. Otherwise, write it near the bottom, and cross it out to remind you that it's been refuted.

## Refining a Hypothesis

Choose an existing statement from the Discovery Sheet that's followed by at least one question mark. Roll a number of dice equal to your rating in the statement's associated Facet.

Next, you may – but are not required to – discard a number of dice up to the number of question marks following the chosen statement. (i.e., if there is one question mark, you may discard zero or one dice; if there are two question marks, you may discard zero, one, or two dice.) You may *not* discard all of the dice that you rolled – at least one must remain.

After making your discards, if any, sum the remaining dice.

If the sum of the dice is prime, your understanding of the Facet is deepened. Read the **highest single die** as your result, using the table above, and have the appropriate player describe the outcome. Then, add another question mark after the chosen statement.

If the sum of the dice is *not* prime, something unexpected happens, and your understanding of the Facet is transformed. Read the **lowest single die** as your result, using the table above, and have the appropriate player describe the outcome. Then, choose one:

Modify the chosen statement on the Discovery Sheet by adding, removing, or changing a single word (observing the overall limit of six words following “must”, of course).

Remove a question mark from the chosen statement.

Finally, if the chosen statement now has three or more question marks next to it, erase them and write a period in their place: the hypothesis is now a *theory*. Conversely, if the chosen statement now has no question marks next to it at all, cross it off the Discovery Sheet.

## Putting Theory into Practice

Choose an existing statement from the Discovery Sheet that's followed by a period. As you're falling back on well-understood principles, simply roll dice equal to your rating in the statement's associated Facet, reading the **highest single die** as your result.

## Concluding the Game

Play concludes when every Facet has at least one statement followed by a period written under it. Take what you've learned about yourselves and collectively describe the transformation you wreak upon the world.