
MY DARN EX-WIFE

she done gone and run off with a spaceman
(and took the kids with!)

A Game By John Ryan

Ruthlessly stolen from:

- *John Harper's LADYBLACKBIRD*
- *RPG.net's FTL Y'ALL*

With thanks to:

- *J. James*
- *Z. Maplestone*
- *N. Parkes*
- *A. Hartman*
- *E. Bolduan*

Apologies to:

- *Alabama*
- *The Dukes of Hazzard*
- *The Last Starfighter*

TERRENCE JACKSON

was looking forward to taking his kids along to the State Fair, along with a few of his good friends. He hadn't seen them in two weeks, as they'd been spending time with their no-good mother and her mysterious new boyfriend.

As his pickup pulled into the trailer park, TJ noticed a bright flash in the sky. Linda Leigh's banged-up trailer was empty and abandoned. Maddi Sue and Connor were nowhere to be found.

Turns out Linda Leigh's new beau was none other than Gregoxar IV, Heir-Apparent to the Imperium of Tauron - and she was flying away to become his Empress.

Squid Head Bill was able to get the faintest trace on the jump trail. Chucking together an old warp drive and TJ's old Dodge pickup, a posse set off in search of Tauron and TJ's kids.

Too bad none of them checked the gas tank before leaving.

WILL MADDI SUE AND CONNOR EVER SEE THEIR FATHER AGAIN?

CAN ONE MAN DEFEAT A GALACTIC SPACE EMPIRE?

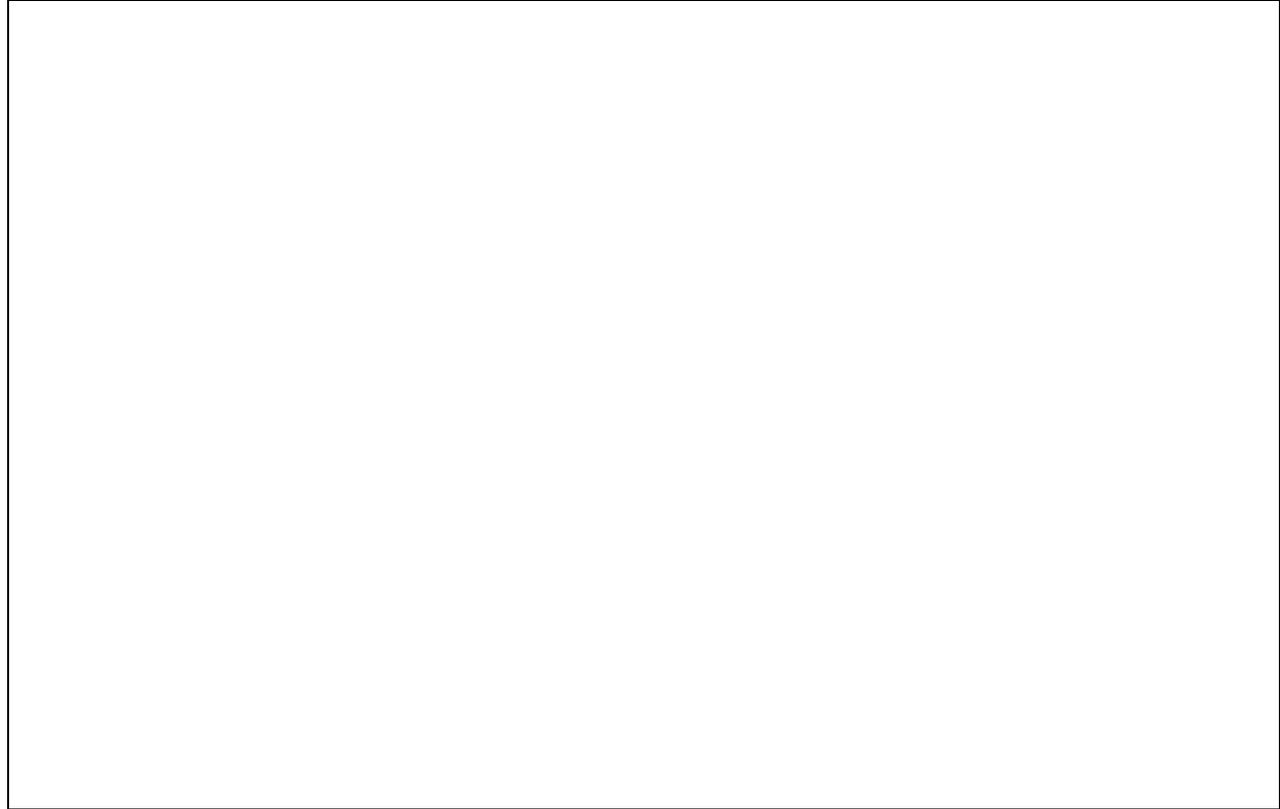
WHO WILL WIN THE ALL-TAURON GRAVITIC HYPERBOWL?

FIND OUT THIS WEEK ON **MY DARN EX-WIFE!**

WEDNESDAY 9 / 10c ON **FOX**

The Tauron Sector

ZZ9 Plural Alfa Romeo



THE IMPERIUM OF TAURON

For over two thousand years, the Tauron Imperium has been the dominant power in the sector, ruling over several dozen worlds with an iron hand.

TAURON

A harsh desert world, the planet of Tauron itself reflects the bitter strength of its warrior people. It is home to the Imperial City, a vast and beautiful city carved out of an immense canyon.

CALABAR

The paradisiacal ocean world of Calabar is home to the Squidillian people, oppressed by the Tauron Imperium since its founding. Its beautiful islands serve as resorts for Tauron warriors, and it is orbited by the primary shipyards of the Tauron Starforce.

THE PULSON NEBULA

Deadly and beautiful, the reaches of the Pulson Nebula are home to brutal pirates and raiders who prey on trade from all quarters.

STAR FORTS

Established to shield the Imperium from Pulson pirates, the Star Forts exert their presence over massive reaches of space

OTHER IMPORTANT FEATURES

- ❖ The savage Felinoid worlds
- ❖ San Romane, human colony
- ❖ The Free Trader Union
- ❖ The Crystal Planet of Syrax
- ❖ The Jungle Deathworld of Korona
- ❖ The Spice Mines of Clover
- ❖ The Battle Stadium of P'zbur

Terrence "TJ" Jackson

Former hometown hero who left his chance at the big leagues behind.

TRAITS

Trucker

Driving, Wakefulness, Radio, Repair, Big Rig, Pickup, [Space Trucker], [Warp Drive], [Stunt Driving], [Navigation]

Ex-Quarterback

Football, Athletic, Brawn, Game Plan, Endurance, Tough, Wrestling, [Awareness], [Strategy], [Tauron Gravball]

Kind-Natured

Friendly, Kindly, Gentle, Smile, Sense of Humour, Father, Caring, [Good Husband]

Southerner

Drinking, Brawling, Drawling, Hunting, Shotgun, Pride, Hometown Hero, Heritage, [Southern Charm]

KEYS & SECRETS

Key of the Loving Father

*You love your kids, Maddi Sue and Connor, more than anything else. Hit your key whenever you act to find, protect, or help your kids. **Buyoff:** Let Linda Leigh keep the kids.*

Key of the Could-Have-Been

*Once, you were a hometown hero, the hope of Duke County. Now you're just another trucker. Hit your key whenever you give up on a course of action because it seems unrealistic. **Buyoff:** Succeed at something unlikely.*

Key of Kindness

*You are, at heart, a kind and gentle man. Hit your key whenever you show kindness or mercy. **Buyoff:** Hurt someone when you could have avoided it.*

Secret of Cousins

Once per session, you may call on assistance from one of your many, many cousins.

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LOST

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IN DEBT

Rolling the Dice

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Roll all the dice you've gathered. Each die that shows 4 or higher is a hit. You need hits equal to the difficulty level (between 2 and 5) to pass the obstacle.

If you pass, discard all the dice you rolled (including any pool dice you used). If you don't pass, you don't yet achieve your goal. But, you get to keep the pool dice you rolled and add another die to your pool. The GM will escalate the situation in some way and you might be able to try again.

When events warrant or especially when you fail a roll, the GM may impose a condition on your character.

Helping

If your character is in a position to help another character, you can give them a die from your pool. Say what your character does to help. If the roll fails, you get your pool die back. If it succeeds, your die is lost.

Keys

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- ❖ Learn a **Secret** (if you have the means to)

You can hold on to advances if you want, and spend them at any time, even in the middle of a battle!

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Refresh

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Ellie Tyler

The smart kid who ended up back home seeking love.

TRAITS

Deputy Sheriff

The Law, Badge, Watchful, Handcuffs, Pistol, Taser, Disarm, Arrest, Protect, [Careful], [Negotiate], [Command], [Undercover]

College Educated

Intelligent, Criminology, Sociology, Forensic Science, Physics, Computers, Mathematics, [Astrophysics], [Xenolinguistics]

Athletic

Gymnastics, Running, Karate, Endurance, Quick, Reflexes, [Zero-Gee], [Tauron Gravball]

Clever

Keen, Planning, Tactics, Negotiations, [Tricks], [Notice Flaws], [Observant]

KEYS & SECRETS

Key of the Law-woman

*You have a deep and abiding respect for the law. Hit your key whenever you act to uphold a law or prevent a crime. **Buyoff:** Break a law or commit a felony.*

Key of Hidden Longing

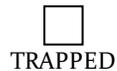
*You've secretly been in love with TJ since high school. Hit your key whenever you indirectly show your feelings for TJ. **Buyoff:** Succeed at something unlikely.*

Key of Cleverness

*You were always the smartest girl in the country. Hit your key whenever you point out something no-one else new or come up with a clever plan. **Buyoff:** Have a clever plan fail.*

Secret of Common Sense

Once per session, you may allow someone else a chance to re-roll a failed roll by giving them advice.



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Crazy Auntie Mae

The crazy-as-all-shit cat lady.

TRAITS

Goddamn Crazy

Cats, Shotgun, More Cats, Paranoia, Shooting, Raving, Reckless, Unsteady, Roadkill Pie, [Shoot Anything That Moves], [Octo-Cats], [Space Crazy]

Former Beauty Queen

Aged Beauty, Charming, Presence, Dancing, Swimming, Beautiful Dress

Old Lady

Strict, Caring, "Medicine", Cookies, Knitting, Baking, Pumpkin Pie, Grand-Niece, Grand-Nephew, Frying, [Space Quilting], [Tauron Cuisine]

Religiosity

Baptist, Bible, Prayer, Disapproval, Letter Writing, Reverend Willy, Evangelist, [Preaching], [Turn the Other Cheek], [Love thy Neighbour]

KEYS & SECRETS

Key of the Great-Aunt

*That goddamn Linda Leigh broke your favourite nephew's heart and then stole his children. Hit your key whenever you act to find, protect, or help TJ's kids. **Buyoff:** Sit back while Linda Leigh keeps the kids.*

Key of Xenophobic Bigotry

*You are convinced that these good-for-nothing green headjobs from outer space are a Bad Influence. Hit your key whenever you act with xenophobia or bigotry. **Buyoff:** Become true friends with an alien.*

Key of Crazy

*You've got more than a few leaks in the brainpan. Hit your key whenever you do something crazy and awesome. **Buyoff:** Let the kids play on your lawn or give away your cats.*

Secret of the Cat Lady

You can talk to cats and cat-like beings, and they are always friendly towards you.

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James "Slim Jim" Wayne

Petty con artist and local drunk.

TRAITS

Petty Criminal

Sneak, Pickpocket, Crowbar, Hotwire, Sly, Running, Getaway, [Vanishing], [Space Crime], [Firearms]

Charm

Fast-Talk, Southern Accent, Deception, Lying, Handshake, Womanizer, Con Artist, [Lie to Aliens], [Ladykiller]

Drunk

Drinking, Liquor, Brawling, Drawling, Insults, Fighting, Homebrew, Bottles, [Tolerance], [Fortitude], [Alien Liquor]

Summer Camp Counsellor

Survival, Campfires, Ghost Stories, Archery, Bows, Hunting, The Woods, [Alien Planets], [Counselling]

KEYS & SECRETS

Key of the Best Friend

*You and TJ have been best friends since you were in diapers. You'd help him hide bodies. Hit your key whenever your friendship with TJ is important in a scene. **Buyoff:** End your friendship with TJ.*

Key of Greed

*You can't stop twitching when you see something you want. Hit your key when you steal something cool or score a big payoff. **Buyoff:** Swear off stealing forever.*

Key of the Charming Scoundrel

*You can't resist a sucker, or a pretty face. Hit your key whenever you turn your considerable charm on someone for your own ends. **Buyoff:** Tell the truth about one of your lies.*

Secret of Concealment

You can always conceal small items somewhere no matter how thoroughly you are searched.



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Squid-Head Bill

Exiled alien rebel and Duke County's number one auto mechanic.

TRAITS

Space Mechanic

Repair, Driving, Gravity, Drives, Chassis, Spare Parts, Scrounge, Space Gadgets, [Sabotage], [Weapons], [Pimp Ride]

Galactic Immigrant

Loves Earth, Loves Humans, Friendly, Galactic Knowledge, Understand Language, Investigate, Navigate, [Understand Humans], [Duke County]

Tauron Exile

Connections, Language, Law, Tauron Gravball, Rebellion, Underground, Ray Gun

Alien Biology

Eats Anything, Mighty Strong, Odd Smells, Alien Senses, Ink Glands, Breathe Underwater, [Additional Organs], [Produce Offspring]

KEYS & SECRETS

Key of the Friendly Alien

*You've developed affection for these strange, pink-skinned creatures that inhabit the Earth. Hit your key whenever you act to protect your human friends, or to befriend a new human. **Buyoff:** Abandon your human friends.*

Key of Curiosity

*Hit your key whenever you investigate something new. **Buyoff:** Ignore an opportunity to learn something new, especially about humans.*

Key of the Exile

*The Tauron Imperocracy exiled you from crimes against the state. Hit your key whenever your exile status causes you trouble or is important to a scene. **Buyoff:** Return to the Tauron Imperocracy or become a citizen of another world.*

Secret of the Rebellion

You know how to get in touch with the Tauron underground movement.

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The General Jackson

TJ's battered old pickup, hyper-converted by Squid Head Bill



BUSTED

OUT OF GAS

IMPOUNDED

BATTERED

LEAKING

ZAPPED

GRAPPLED

STATISTICS

Model: Dodge Ram 1993

Capacity: 1 driver + 4 passengers

Engines:

- ❖ 300HP Magnum V8
- ❖ KDC M-Series Warp Capacitor
- ❖ Gravitic Bounce Field

Maximum Warp: 11.7 light years

Transmission: 6-speed manual

Towing Capacity: 10 tonnes

Wheelbase: 197.2 inches

Life Support: Converted air conditioner.

Running the Game

Listen & Ask, Don't Plan

When you're the GM, don't try to plan what will happen. Instead, ask questions—lots and lots and make them pointed toward the things you're interested in. Like, Slim Jim suggests that the crew steal a merchant's spaceship, but Ellie's player doesn't register it right away. The others start to go along with the plan. So I ask Ellie player, "How do you react when Slim Jim suggests are blatantly criminal course of action? Is that okay with you?" And then, when it's totally not okay, "What do you say to him? What do you say to TJ?" and a few more like that and everyone is yelling at each other and rolling dice to impose their will.

Also ask questions like:

"Does anything break when you do this crazy maneuver?"

"The fire probably spreads out of control doesn't it?"

"That sounds like a bold plan. What's the first step?"

"Do the two of you end up somewhere quiet together? Does something happen between you?"

"What do you know about the Rebellion? Do you think they can help you out here?"

Keep that going at a steady pace and the game flies along pretty well. Part of the job of the GM is *listening* to what the players say, catching it, turning it around and looking at it, and seeing if there's anything else to be done with it.

The GM's jobs: listen and reincorporate, play the NPCs with gusto, create interesting obstacles, and impose conditions as events warrant (especially when rolls fail).

Say Yes, Look For the Obstacles

By default, characters can accomplish anything covered by their traits. They're competent and effective people, in other words. It's no fun to

ask for a roll when there's no cool obstacle in the way. Just say yes to the action, listen, and ask questions as usual. But also, be on the look out for the opportunity to create obstacles as the action develops. Because you're asking leading questions and listening closely, they'll be all over the place, so it won't be too hard to spot them.

Obstacles can be people (pirates, goblins, imperials, citizens, nobles), weather, monsters (sky squid, flying eels), situations (fires, falling, being shot at, chases, escapes) or anything else you can imagine.

If a character tries something not covered by their traits, that's an obstacle right there: lack of experience and training. Lots of fun things can go wrong when you don't know what you're doing! So go ahead and call for rolls there. Also, players will sometimes try things they're bad at so they can fail and add dice to their pool. It's a fine move for them and it gives you the chance to create more trouble, so everyone wins.

Limits

Some people feel better when there are hard limits. If you need them, you can use these.

- ❖ Maximum number of tags / trait: 12
- ❖ Maximum number of keys / character: 5
- ❖ Maximum number of secrets / character: 4

Using limits will naturally give players some harder choices to make so only use them if you encounter an issue that will be solved with limits or if the players request them.

Sample Obstacles

SURVIVE CRASHDOWN

Sometimes, that grav-bounce just doesn't kick in when you want it to.

Obstacles: Deploy heat shield: 3. Fix grav-bounce while falling through atmosphere: 5. Brace for impact: 4. Identify location: 4.

Escalate: Heat shield fails to deploy (Battered). Ionospheric charge (Zapped). Impact! (Injured). Distant location (Lost).

FELINOID SAVAGES

You are surrounded by hissing, six-armed cat folk who wield nasty-looking spears and swords.

Obstacles: Notice ambush: 4. Distract savages: 3. Escape into jungle: 4. Fight tomcat warriors: 4. Fight queen: 5. (Mae only – Befriend: 2. Have others recognized as not-food: 5)

Escalate: Caught in snare (Trapped). Spear through leg (Injured). Scratched in face (Angry). Run into jungle (Lost).

NEBULA RUN

The Pulson Nebula is no place for the weak at heart.

Obstacles: Navigate course: 4. Maneuver to avoid pulsar: 3. Endure pulsar flare: 5. Evade pirate vessel: 4. Shoot down pirates: 5. Maneuver to avoid incoming fire: 3. Lots of incoming fire: 4.

Escalate: Pulsar flare (Zapped). Lost in Nebula (Lost). Tractor beam locked on (Grappled)! Boarded by space pirates!

TAURON GRAVBALL

The most exciting and deadly sport in the local galaxy.

Obstacles: Gain possession of ball: 4. (Offense only – Score a down: 4.) Pass ball through opposition: 3. Prevent other team from scoring: 3. Deal with biased umpires: 4. Score field goal: 5.

Escalate: Slammed into wall (Injured). Other team pulls ahead in last quarter. Gravitic harness malfunctions (Zapped). Fatigue sets in (Tired).

CONTACT REBELS

You won't find your way into the Imperial City on your own.

Obstacles: (Bill only - Make contact: 3) Negotiate for weapons: 3. Get codes for Imperial Palace: 4. Convince rebels to launch major attack: 5.

Escalate: Betrayed! Tauron marines arrive. Rebels demand payment for assistance (In Debt). Negotiations drag out (Tired).

IMPERIAL STAR FORT

Sure, it may be the size of a small moon, but we can deal with it.

Obstacles: Evade fighter patrol: 3. Sneak aboard: 4. Disable turrets: 3. Fight crew: 3. Fight warriors: 4. Disable interdiction field: 4. Set reactor to explode: 5. Escape: 4. Escape explosion: 5.

Escalate: Captured by marines (Trapped)! Zapped by auto-guns (Zapped). More marines arrive. Get lost (Lost). Fighter wing launched.

GALACTIC COURT

There are only two things worse than death: taxmen and lawyers.

Obstacles: Avoid parking fine: 3. Understand galactic law: 4. Make convincing argument: 3. Interrogate hostile witness: 4. Win over jury: 4. Win over biased judge: 5.

Escalate: Key witness rejected by judge. Infuriating opposition (Angry). Fined for contempt of court (In Debt). Jail sentence (Trapped).

DRINKING CONTEST

Just one more glass and you've got him over a barrel.

Obstacles: Earth standard alcohol: 3. Pure methanol: 4. Tauron war-brand: 5. Warp injector fluid: 6. Swap out opponent's drink for warp injector fluid: 4.

Escalate: Get smashed (Drunk). Get really smashed (Really Drunk). Bar fight!

SPICE WORM HUNT

Just like shooting pigs. Except not.

Obstacles: Track spice worm: 4. Avoid sand holes: 3. Shoot spice worm: 4. Evade mouth: 4. Extract spice: 3.

Escalate: Spice worm is angered! Tiring chase (Tired). Trapped in sand hole (Trapped). Lost in dunes (Lost). Swallowed by spice worm (Trapped and Injured)! Spice worm swarm!

Sample Advances

NEW TRAITS & TAGS

Star Pirate

Ruthless, Pilot, Navigate, Gunnery, Vibroknife, Boarding, Close Quarters, Cruel, Drinking, Looting, Intimidating, Treachery

Rebel Agent

Stealthy, Subterfuge, Innuendo, Silent, Contacts, Sabotage, Double Agent, Identities, Assassinate, Bombs, Ray Guns, Double Cross, Codes

Hero

Bold, Daring, Rescue, Fire, Reckless, Brave, Outnumbered, Underdog, Hometown, Freedom, Liberty

Cyborg

Strength, Reflexes, Infravision, Cybergun, Laser Eye, Backup Organs, Armored Skin, Inhuman, Interface, Hacking, Technology

Galactic Citizen

Languages, Communication, Galactic Knowledge, Galactic Law, Star Charts, Connections, Space Travel

Keen

Observant, Quick, Watchful, Common Sense, Understanding, Insightful, Liars, Danger Sense, Sense Motives

Tauron Warrior

Honor, Might, Combat Trained, Thunder Sword, Leadership, Superiority, War Drinking, Loyalty, Battle Rage, Poetry

Psychic

Empathy, Psychic Sense, Telepathy, Telekinesis, Pyrokinesis, Levitation, Compulsion, Suggestion, Precognition

NEW KEYS

Key of the Galactic Explorer

*You love seeing new sights and exploring the galaxy. Hit your key whenever you share an interesting detail about a place or thing you have discovered or discover something new. **Buyoff:** Settle down on one planet.*

Key of the Deal

*You love making deals and getting things just right. Hit your key whenever you bargain, exchange favors or strike a deal. **Buyoff:** Pass up a good deal.*

Key of the Rebel

*The Imperium of Tauron is your greatest foe. Hit your key whenever you strike a blow against the Imperium or kill a Tauron agent. **Buyoff:** Make peace with the Imperium.*

Key of Honor

*You abide by a strict code of honor. Hit your key whenever you make a decision influenced by your code of honor or keep your word. **Buyoff:** Do something underhanded and dishonorable.*

NEW SECRETS

Secret of the Lucky Break

*Once per session, you may keep your pool dice when you succeed. **Requires:** Succeed at something decidedly unlikely.*

Secret of Southern Charm

*Once per session, you may reroll a failure when trying to influence or charm someone. **Requires:** A true Southern accent and a charming smile.*

Secret of Psionics

*You can have the Psychic tag. Once per session, you may reroll any attempt to use your Psychic powers. **Requires:** Be exposed to Zeta Radiation.*

Secret of the Guardian

*Once per session, you may reroll a failure while protecting or guarding someone. **Requires:** Be willing to sacrifice your life for someone.*

Secret of the Nebula Pirates

*You can find your way through space using the shortcuts and wormholes found within the Pulson Nebula. **Requires:** Learn from a Pulson Pirate or spend ten years sailing the Nebula.*