

Raptor: Call Of The Shadows

V1.0 by Songless

In this place, wealth and power are all that matters. The governments of old are gone or rendered inconsequential, with vast, ruthless megacorps holding all true power. Larger than even the greatest nations on Earth, these corporate behemoths seek to expand their power and influence through any means necessary, from fielding their own private armies to hiring mercenaries for more dangerous - and profitable - operations.

You are one of these mercenaries. Your name and background are irrelevant - all that matters is what you do.

All that matters is that you fly the *Raptor*.

You are here for money, for fame, for the glory of battle - hired to eliminate your financier's rivals by cutting a bloody path through hostile territories with the most advanced weapons known to man. Hostile aircraft will fall to your guns by the hundreds, bunkers and warehouses will be left smoking ruins after your bombing runs.

From the river deltas and oil rigs of Lithos Petroleum's Bravo Sector to the asteroids and volcanic wastelands of the Outer Regions, you will push on - leaving your foes broken and ruined. The call of the shadows will not be denied. With each kill, your accounts grow richer. With each mission, your fame grows.

This jump is a Gauntlet. You carry with you nothing from other worlds, save the memories of your past and what little you gain from your Body Mod. You need nothing but your skill, the will to succeed, and the might of the Raptor coming to life beneath you as you slide into the cockpit.

Carnage awaits. Fly true, Jumper, and fulfill your destiny.

You start with **0CP**.

PERKS

- Pilot (Free)

To soar through the sky, raining death upon your enemies for cold hard cash... it is glory, pure and true. But before you do that, it would be a good idea to actually know how to *fly*. With this Perk, you are guaranteed all the basic skills needed to pilot your Raptor craft, from the start-up checklist to dogfighting and everything in between. You'll have plenty of room for growth and improvement, but you're not going to make any beginner's mistakes.

- Iron (50CP)

Your foes are without number, but they will fall to your weapons like wheat before the scythe. Lesser men and women might flinch at the challenge, the flak shells and plasma blasts raging just beyond the cockpit canopy too much for their fraying nerves. Not you. No matter how intimidating the fight, no matter how outclassed or how deadly the skies ahead, you will never know fear or panic. You are always calm in combat, your morale unshakeable and unbreakable before the hostile tide.

- Costs And Benefits (75CP)

Flying the Raptor is only part of the equation - you need to know how much risk to take, how far you can push yourself before you go too far. Taking advantage of the opportunities you might encounter during your missions can be very rewarding... but only if you survive. Now, you have a sixth sense for estimating how many resources you need to keep in reserve, how valuable opportunities like cash pickups are, and if it's worth taking some additional damage to deliver a crushing blow to high-value targets or if you're better off avoiding them. You're also supremely gifted at knowing how and when to use limited-supply items like *Guillotine* bombs, to make the absolute most of such pricey 'trump cards'.

- Target Lock (100CP)

It's important to know where you're going - but often it's even more relevant that you understand where your *weapons* are going. This Perk grants you a mental 'target pointer' for any weapons you're using, providing real-time, accurate predictions on where your shots will land while incorporating the influence from gravity, wind speed, and other environmental factors. Weapons that are less accurate will instead give you a similar sense of where the hit distribution is - so even if you don't know exactly where each *Psycho* missile might go, you'll know which area they'll inevitably detonate in once you pull the trigger.

- Ace (125CP)

Where before you might have only been competent (or competent *enough*), it takes a master pilot to really make the Raptor dance - and with this Perk, you are such a pilot. Your skills are vast, your experience enough you could practically fly a hyper-advanced futuristic jet fighter *in your sleep*, and you could identify any problems with calibration or minor damage just by feeling

the tremors in your seat. You are the top of the line, now, and let no-one forget it. And yet, there is always room for improvement, even with such skill. You'll find that so long as you put in the effort to become a better pilot, you'll always be able to get just that little bit more skilled and capable.

- Blood Harvest (150CP)

During your time here, your sponsor will reward you for each enemy you destroy - bounties that will see you rise to the top over the burning wrecks of a thousand aircraft, tanks, and factories. With this perk, you can count on similar compensation for any carnage you create, even in future worlds. Every machine you destroy, every life you end, every corporate nation left in ruins at your passing... each will now grant you riches appropriate to the amount of damage you've done. This ability will usually pay out in whatever the local currency is, but it'll always be delivered tax-free in a suitably convenient manner (such as untraceable wire transfers into your personal accounts).

- Quicksilver (200CP)

Most pilots might be happy with merely having 'nerves of steel'. You don't have them (at least not from this Perk), but you've got something better - nerves of lightning! Your reflexes are supernaturally fast and accurate, your response time close enough to zero that even the most advanced measurements wouldn't be able to find the difference. You're still limited by what your muscles can achieve, but you'll never again be the last one to pull the trigger.

- Executioner (250CP)

You are death on wings, an ender of lives beyond count - and your ruthless capacity for inflicting damage reflects your purpose. Be it through skill or more esoteric means, you will find that your attacks seem to almost guide themselves into enemies' weak spots. Your bullets may find fuel lines to rupture and ammunition stores to detonate, where before they might have simply ricocheted off a piece of armor instead.

- Ghost (300CP)

Your name strikes fear into the hearts of your foes, not because they know you're coming... but because they know they'll never see you until it's too late. By some quirk of your nature as a Jumper, it's now become much more difficult to spot you if you don't want to be found. Your energy weapons blind your foes for a few moments right after you appear in their field of view, missiles take a little longer to get a lock on your craft, and countless other coincidences will conspire together to ensure that your enemies will always be left unbalanced for a few seconds longer than they otherwise would be. Certainly, it's not a very long span of time... but it can be just long enough to make sure that by the time they're ready to open fire, *your* missiles are already nearly at their target.

- Firewalker (400CP)

In the dance of battle, a single misstep is enough to damn a man thrice over as they stumble into oblivion. But to those who do not just survive but *thrive*, battle is a beautiful if unforgiving

melody, a tapestry of action and reaction... with you at the center of it all. You see the underlying patterns within the battlespace, with an ability to predict enemy forces and their attacks that is nothing short of *gifted*. No longer shall you struggle, moving from moment to moment, dodging flak shells or missiles by the skin of your teeth. You shall sail through a sea of calm invisible to all others - for you see the tranquil paths between the carnage, the motions that form the whole. And even if complete safety will always be a mere illusion, with this kind of insight your enemies could be forgiven for thinking you untouchable.

THE HANGAR

- The Raptor (Free)

One of the most sophisticated strike crafts of the modern age, the Raptor is styled after the jet-powered military designs of old. But underneath its classic form thrums the heartbeat of a true monster. Equipped with an immensely potent energy shield, a modular upgrade and weapon loadout system, highly efficient fuel and ammunition storage and engines that are fully space-capable, this machine can rain death upon almost anyone, in any environment, for extended periods of time before resupplying.

Though initially equipped with only a pair of heavy 'Reaver' machine guns, with enough time and money the Raptor can be made into a craft capable of facing foes in the hundreds and coming out on top.

During this Gauntlet and beyond, the Raptor has effectively limitless fuel and will automatically repair to pristine condition in about a week. That said, by the time you start taking actual damage you're already nearly dead - the vast majority of its resilience is thanks to shields, not physical armor.

Once you've completed this Gauntlet, the Raptor will respawn after a week if it is ever destroyed, and slowly repairs to pristine condition if it is damaged.

- Hangar Bay (Free)

Acting as your forward operating base from where you launch your raids upon the megacorporations your employer wishes destroyed, the Hangar Bay contains everything you need to resupply and modify your Raptor. From changing the paint job to installing a Tsunami cannon, the automated machinery here can handle just about any aspect of the job. The Hangar Bay even comes with a terminal from which you can access the weapons market - including Harrold's Death Emporium. With deliveries taking place in a manner of hours, you'll be able to purchase just about any weapon or upgrade the Raptor might need, even in future worlds. However, these purchased weapons do not enjoy the additional advantages granted to CP-bought weapons - they are identical to the ordinary variants found in the setting itself. Likewise, Harrold doesn't run a charity - if you want the goods, you'll need to pay up front. No cash, no guns.

The Hangar Bay is attached to your Warehouse, and can open its hangar doors into your current setting in a similar manner as that used by the Warehouse's 'Portal' process.

- Fleet Logistics And Supply Upgrade (100CP)

Few craft can hope to match the Raptor, but sometimes you might need a different kind of ship than a single-pilot deathbringer on wings. With this purchase, the Hangar Bay automatically expands to accommodate any other vehicles, aircraft, spaceships and so on you might acquire in your travels. It'll include commonly available support systems needed for these vehicles, and allows you to repair, upgrade or modify them much like the standard Hangar Bay can service the Raptor.

- Market Expansion Upgrade (100CP)

There's plentiful methods of mayhem available from the Hangar's terminal, but that doesn't mean the Raptor can take on *everything* you might face in the multiverse. This upgrade evens the odds a little, at least. As you travel to new worlds, Harrold's Death Emporium will begin to modify available stock to include weapons and other semi-commonly available upgrades found in your current setting. That said, unless you've also bought the *Fleet Logistics And Supply Upgrade*, these weapons will be limited to only those that the Raptor could conceivably be equipped with (possibly after upgrading its structure, power supply, etcetera). If you do have this upgrade, the parts on sale will begin to include variants for any of your other ships and vehicles stored in the Hangar Bay.

The Market Expansion Upgrade will also include variants of the Small Arms, Radioactive Isotopes, Thaelite, Micro-Fusion Core, and/or the Raw Freylium Ore, provided you have bought the relevant option(s) below. These improvements include variants that have been modified to be suitable for your current setting, much like the 'standard' inventory is.

Pricing and availability will depend on the power, rarity and complexity of newly acquired systems - a railgun will be cheaper and available in greater numbers than a quantum-singularity projector or some similarly bizarre piece of technological devastation.

- Small Arms (50CP)

This heavy military transport container is an arms cache filled to the brim with smaller-scale weaponry, from submachine guns to RPGs and body armor. Though you likely won't find much use for it here, unless you somehow decide to outfit a hundred men into a military force of some sort, the supply of ammunition is compatible with the machine guns used by the Reaver and Thor, increasing their damage, rate of fire and projectile speed by roughly 25% thanks to the use of specialized, high-grade munitions.

You gain a new container of Small Arms every mission, and you will likewise gain a new one each week after you have completed the Gauntlet. Since there's pretty much *always* fighting going on somewhere, it's easy to find a buyer for these guns and equipment - perfect if you're short of a bit of cash. Just head into the Hangar, and Harold will take them off your hands for a good amount of cash.

- Radioactive Isotopes (75CP)

Although atomic weapons aren't commonly used in modern-day warfare, nuclear power plants and weaponry are still in use. Capable of providing massive amounts of energy at the cost of fine control, isotopes like these are ideal for the use of powerful and volatile weapons.

Incorporating these compounds in your Plasma Cannon, Tsunami Pulse Cannon or the Power Disruptor allows you to shunt even more energy into these weapons - creating unstable but highly dangerous discharges that increase the damage of these weapons by 25% and allow them to erupt into area-of-effect damage on a direct hit. The Guillotine Megabomb can even be improved into a true nuclear WMD, although using it as such will require a lot of careful planning. The Raptor may be tough, but a point-blank atomic blast is too much even for this great machine.

You receive sufficient material to fully stock a nuclear reactor with each mission, and gain a similar supply once per week after you complete your time in this Gauntlet. Nuclear fuel rods are in high demand, and they're worth a pretty penny, too - if you ever feel you don't need them, you can sell them for cash in the Hangar.

- Thaelite (75CP)

One of the most efficient and widely used energy sources available today, Thaelite provides high-intensity, steady power for engine cores and other such drive systems. Remarkably resilient without the right circumstances for ignition, Thaelite remnants can often be seen floating to the ground after a ship's destruction, forming distinctive golden-yellow stars as they fall.

The amount here is sufficient to saturate five strike craft's engine cores - sufficient power to allow them to fly for a year without refueling (assuming they don't spend energy on their shields). However, this particular supply is optimized for another purpose - providing an extra 'kick' to the jets and payloads of guided weaponry.

Purchasing Thaelite improves the engine power of all missile weapons, including Micro Missiles and the Bomb Launcher, improving their speed to half again their default and allowing them to carry heavier payloads to deal 25% more damage.

You gain a new supply of Thaelite each mission, and likewise restock weekly after your time here has come to an end. Like the other supply deliveries, Harold will readily buy any leftover Thaelite you can't use for anything else.

- Micro-Fusion Core (100CP)

This dedicated, high-tech power generator can provide a reliable supply of power to a wide range of systems, but it is optimized for the use of delicate, advanced systems that need a tightly regulated energy source. As such, it is less suitable for power-hungry systems like drive cores or heavy weapons, but it excels as a dedicated power supply for advanced electronics. The Micro-Fusion Core can be used to improve your Phase Shields, reducing the damage they take by 25%, and fine-tuning the Odin laser turret gives it a 25% boost to both damage and rate of fire.

You will receive a new Micro-Fusion Core each mission or each week after ending your time here, and Harold will be more than happy to buy any spares you've got.

- Raw Freylium Ore (125CP)

Now *this* is a find, Pilot! Freylium is a very rare and highly valuable metallic compound used in the most advanced and powerful weaponry in use today. Effectively combining the properties of

a room-temperature superconductor with near-perfect reflection of thermal, ionic and even neutron radiation, Freylium can withstand energy spikes high enough to vaporize lesser materials in the blink of an eye without so much as losing its shine.

You can use this Freylium to improve your mightiest weapons - the Atlas Deathray and the Eclipse Twin Laser - improving their damage and fire rate by 25%.

You receive one pound of Freylium each mission, or once per week after the end of the Gauntlet - but that one pound will take you *far*. Should you completely lose your mind and want to get rid of any 'leftovers' of this miracle metal, you can sell it in the Hangar... and that one pound is already enough to make you a pretty rich man.

- Raptor Armor (Free upon completion of the Gauntlet)

Of course, there's only so much you can do with a state-of-the-art strike fighter - plenty of times you'll want to get up close and personal instead. So, as a free reward for completing the Gauntlet, you get *this*. A personalized suit of power armor, based upon the Raptor design but downscaled to humanoid size with miniaturized counterparts to its bigger brother's gear.

The Raptor Armor comes with a personal scale variant of each purchase you've made for the Raptor itself - Banshee missiles may become a shoulder-mounted missile launcher with demolition warheads, the Guillotine Megabomb becomes a cluster grenade pack, your Phase Shields become personal shield generators, and so on.

For all other intents and purposes, anything from this document that provides benefits or services related to the Raptor also provides similar effects for the Raptor Armor. This armor is restored after a week if damaged or destroyed, much like the regular Raptor is.

Now. Go out there, and claim your place of fame and fortune by climbing upon a mountain of bodies.

HARROLD'S DEATH EMPORIUM

All weapons and upgrades can be bought multiple times, but while you can install multiple weapon systems into your Raptor without issue, you can only use one standard weapon at a time and will need to switch from one to the other as circumstances change. Repeat purchases of all options here are discounted to half price.

All weapons have unlimited ammo while you participate in the Gauntlet (unless you took 'Call Of The Shadows'), but only CP-bought weapons continue to enjoy this benefit in future worlds. In addition, they will never degrade due to damage (be it from incoming attacks or overheating from continuous fire) and will not be accidentally lost in case your Raptor suffers crippling damage. Any CP-bought weapons that are lost will be replaced after one week. Weapons and other upgrades bought here may be transferred to different vehicles after your time in this world comes to an end.

- MG21C 'Reaver' Machine Guns (One Free, 50CP for further purchases)

The Reaver is the standard machine gun equipped on the Raptor, providing forward-facing firepower suited for a multitude of tasks. Though only lightly damaging, the Reaver is highly

accurate and capable of firing 7500 21mm rounds per minute – literally shredding targets in a hail of fire. The first (free) purchase comes built-in as a standard weapon for your Raptor, meaning it has the 'Auto Equip Upgrade' for free.

- Ion Scanner (25CP)

This lightweight scanner automatically locks on to any engine emissions from nearby foes, providing data on damage thresholds and their overall 'health'. It doesn't make you any deadlier per se, but knowing how close to destruction your stronger foes are can still be a useful boon. It's most effective for things like aircraft, spaceships, and similar kinds of vehicles, but you can probably configure it for other types of systems with little difficulty if the need arises. The Ion Scanner never takes up space on your craft, and comes with the 'Auto Equip Upgrade' for free.

- 'Guillotine' Megabomb (25CP)

An immensely powerful cluster bomb, the Guillotine is capable of covering a wide area with both anti-ground and anti-air sub-munitions. At the same time, a sophisticated IFF system ensures the cataclysmic blast does not harm the user even as they leave burning wrecks in their wake. The immense size and weight of these bombs means each is fired individually, and the Raptor can only carry five at a time. Each purchase grants you one Guillotine bomb every mission (during this Gauntlet) or every week in any future worlds you may visit. This weapon cannot be improved with the Auto Equip or Tracking upgrades found below.

- AIM-31 'Mauler' Air to Air Missiles (50CP)

Fast, powerful and reliable, the Mauler is the standard anti-air weapon for use by mercenaries and paramilitary forces. Though they cannot easily 'turn' to follow agile targets, their heavy air-blast payloads mean they will wreak havoc on any enemy caught nearby. Combined with their guidance systems and speed, this makes them highly effective against air forces. Larger, slower enemies incapable of evading these brutish explosives need to be especially wary.

- 'Ares' Phase Shield (50CP)

Though your Raptor craft already comes with a standard shield equipped, it is ill-suited for taking heavy fire. The Phase Shield provides a secondary shield layer to absorb fire, boosting the amount of damage you can take before your jet is destroyed. By default, the Raptor can carry up to five of these shields, each of which provides a 100% boost to overall 'health'. Each purchase grants you one fully charged Phase Shield, and every CP-bought Phase Shield will slowly restore itself to full strength rather than permanently burning out once depleted.

- Dearborn Industries Plasma Cannon (100CP)

An intimidating anti-air weapon in use by countless forces across the system, the Plasma Cannon fires blazing hot blasts that can melt through solid steel on a hit. Its small size and efficient operation allows it to be installed alongside larger weapons, typically in the nose of a fighter, making this an excellent support weapon. This weapon's one major weakness is that the Plasma Cannon is designed primarily for anti-air duties, and is incapable of engaging ground

targets without some major effort from the pilot to line up a shot. Your first Plasma Cannon purchase receives the 'Auto Equip Upgrade' for free.

- MK-133 Bomb Launcher (50CP)

These slow moving and slow-firing heavy iron bombs provide not only devastating single-target damage against ground targets, they also release powerful cluster munitions to cause destruction in a wide-spread area around the initial impact site. If you need to demolish a lot of buildings in a hurry, this is one of the best ways to do it - only the Guillotine can match this brute's ability to turn an entire base into nothing but craters.

- AGM-26L 'Banshee' Air to Ground Missiles (50CP)

These slow, radar-guided missiles carry massively powerful shaped charge demolitions with enough firepower to punch through armored bunkers with ease – to say nothing of lighter vehicle armor. Compared to the Bomb Launcher, Banshees are somewhat weaker and lack the area-of-effect damage, but they also travel faster and are more accurate.

- DM1R 'Psycho' Dumbfire Missiles (75CP)

Capable of locking on to both air and ground targets, the one weakness of these missiles is their relative lack of accuracy. Nonetheless, the solid firing rate and characteristic swerving of these missiles allow a jet fighter to saturate an area with highly unpredictable, hard to dodge munitions that are effective against almost all targets you might encounter - both on the ground and in the air.

- Micro Missiles (150CP)

As the name implies, a Micro Missile is much smaller and weaker than most other commonly seen missiles. However, while each missile individually only packs a small punch, they can be fired with great speed, sending an endless stream of ordnance against air or ground targets. Furthermore, the sophisticated launchers these missiles use can be installed without getting in the way of more powerful weapon systems, and the first purchase of this weapon comes with the 'Auto Equip Upgrade' for free.

- AARL-1201 Scatterpack Missile Pod (100CP)

Similar in purpose as the 'Mauler' anti-air missiles, the Scatterpack fires a similar cluster of anti-air missiles with each volley. However, this weapon's more expansive systems allow for a nearly continuous stream of missiles to be launched - easily doubling the Mauler's rate of fire. Sadly, it carries the same limitations in that it cannot target ground forces and lacks anything more advanced than a basic homing system. Nonetheless, few weapons can hope to match the aerial devastation created by this weapon system, and the Scatterpack can easily slaughter scores of enemies with its unending barrage.

- TH19 'Thor' Minigun Turret (150CP)

Accurate, versatile and sporting a high rate of fire, the Thor is about comparable to the Reaver guns that come standard with your Raptor in terms of overall performance. However, this

weapon's defining characteristic is that its paired turret design allows it to fire in any direction. Combined with a potent target identification and tracking system, the Thor can automatically engage targets both in the air and on the ground. This allows pilots to attack sideways or even *backwards*, all the while staying out of their enemies' cross-hairs. This weapon always comes with the 'Tracking Upgrade' for free.

- Power Disruptor (100CP)

Emitting a wave of electrical energy, the Power Disruptor causes heavy feedback in a target's systems, knocking out weapons and other vulnerable electronics for a few moments. Its design is specifically built to not only disrupt but also work *through* shields, making this a highly reliable method to cripple otherwise well-protected opponents. Sadly, the Power Disruptor does not deal any serious damage by itself, and must be combined with other guns to finish off your weakened enemies.

- OD55 'Odin' Laser Turret (200)

Carrying more firepower and effectively instantaneous attacks, the Odin is a potent improvement over the Thor Minigun turret. However, the higher power comes with some sacrifices – where the Thor can engage multiple targets simultaneously, the Odin can only fire at one target at a time. Furthermore, the design of the laser turret means it is only effective against air targets. Nonetheless, this weapon is one of the safest and most effective counters to massed air forces available. The Odin Laser Turret always receives the 'Tracking Upgrade' for free.

- RX1 'Tsunami' Pulse Cannon (200CP)

Generating a devastating EMP shockwave, the Tsunami can obliterate all but the toughest targets both in the air and on the ground. Furthermore, the size of the shockwaves makes them difficult to dodge or otherwise avoid, and its rapid firing speed can easily turn an entire airspace into a lethal maelstrom of scintillating energy.

- MSIL Atlas Deathray (300CP)

Firing a stream of highly energetic particles, the Atlas is a devastating weapon against both ground and air targets. The plasma beam can reach targets nearly instantaneously, and while the firing rate is only average, each beam deals enough damage to destroy all but the most heavily armored foes in a single hit. Only the wealthiest and most experienced forces can even hope to see one of these weapons, but the brilliant orange beam lancing through an opposing force is often enough to break entire enemy armies, both in terms of morale and in a decidedly more *literal* manner.

- CAL-10 Eclipse Twin Laser (450CP)

The mightiest weapon available for your arsenal, the Eclipse fires a dual laser beam with unmatched damage. Indeed, against most enemies this weapon should be considered 'overkill', but while the price is exorbitant, those who do find themselves in possession of this weapon system will easily see it is worth the price - against weaker enemies, it's capable of outright

piercing through their hull, striking enemies behind your original target. Even the massive, fortified behemoths the Megacorps use to oversee regions under their control will not withstand more than a handful of strafing runs with this weapon. The apex. The dream. The weapon to all weapons... and now, it is yours.

- Auto Equip Upgrade (100CP)

Not a new weapon so much as a modification of an existing option, each purchase of this upgrade allows you to convert one weapon bought above into a sleeker, more efficient variant. Where ordinarily you may only have one active weapon at a time, this upgrade allows the selected weapon to be equipped and fired at any time. Indeed, this improvement is advanced enough it doesn't even take up the leftover space used by similar 'auto equip' systems found in-setting. The 'Auto Equip Upgrade' can be applied to the Phase Shield and/or Guillotine Megabomb, but the individual items are not modified - rather, it increases the number of shields (or bombs) that your Raptor can equip by five, be it CP-bought or in-setting variants. This upgrade must be purchased separately for any weapon or system you wish to improve, and it is not discounted on repeat purchases.

- Tracking Upgrade (100CP)

Much like the Auto Equip Upgrade, this option improves one of your existing weapons with the ability to automatically target and engage enemies in any direction, not unlike the Thor and Odin turrets above. Direct-fire weapons such as machine guns and energy weapons are installed into specialized weapon turrets, while missiles are instead given sophisticated homing systems that allow them to target enemies independently. The tracking systems can be configured to immediately switch targets after each attack, to lock on and engage a single foe until it's completely destroyed, or anything in between as you desire. This upgrade does not, however, allow anti-air weapons to strike ground targets (or the other way around) or otherwise adjust their functionality. This upgrade cannot be applied to the Phase Shield or Guillotine Megabomb. This upgrade must be purchased separately for any weapon you wish to improve, and it is not discounted on repeat purchases.

DRAWBACKS

You may take any number of Drawbacks - if you dare.

- Call Of The Shadows (+1000CP)

Ahhhhhh... a 'mere' campaign of annihilation against the Megacorps wasn't enough for you. You want *more*. With this Drawback, you now operate under standard jump rules. You regain access to your Warehouse and any powers and other advantages you might have acquired in other jumps. Death now means the end of your chain, not merely the failure of this Gauntlet. And of course, you will stay here for ten years... and may those who stand against you learn to fear your name.

- Regional Ace (+50CP each, up to +300CP)

Ordinarily, there are three main Regions you need to destroy to fulfill your obligations to your sponsor - the Bravo Sector, Tango Sector, and the Outer Reaches. With each level of this Drawback, you must instead push on, completing one additional Region as dangerous as the Outer Reaches was. At the highest level of this Drawback, this means you'll need to survive and thrive for three times as long - with the majority of that time spent fighting the most elite forces in the setting.

- We Are Legion (+100CP each, up to +300CP)

You can be expected to leave countless burning wrecks in your wake; factories burned to the ground, jet fighters scattered into a thousand pieces, and even the heaviest fortifications and command vessels left as nothing but burning scrap. This is doubly true now, for with every tier of this Drawback, the number of enemies increases by a full hundred percent. At the highest level of this Drawback, this means you'll be facing four times as many enemies as you normally would. Can you handle a battlefield where fighter squadrons now seem more like swarms of wasps than the half dozen craft they were originally made of?

- Misers (+50CP)

While most of your duties involve the destruction of your sponsor's rivals, you'll often find other opportunities to make money. From Micro-Thaelite to Raw Freylium Ore, your Raptor is equipped to collect a wide variety of 'drops' while out in the field... or at least, it *was*. Now, you won't be able to gain any additional money from these kinds of opportunities, making it just that trickier to afford your upgrades and repairs.

- Stranded Salvage (+50CP)

Much like the resource and money drops, you might also encounter weapons, Phase Shields and other such upgrades in your missions that can be collected and equipped on your Raptor. With this Drawback, you are incapable of taking advantage of such items in much the same way 'Misers' disables cash drops. If you want to upgrade your craft, you'll have to buy it all the old-fashioned way.

- Contract (+100CP)

Remember how you're here for fame and, most importantly, *money*? Well, it seems you should have read the contract you signed with your sponsor a bit better, because you're no longer paid by the kill as you normally would be. No matter how many foes you eliminate, your bank account's balance remains firmly stuck where it was. This doesn't eliminate other ways to make money, but since the bounties for your kills will form most of your income... well, you might need to get creative.

- Fanatics (+100CP)

You'd think fighting for little more than your payroll wouldn't instill a great amount of loyalty - but you'd be wrong. Weapons are only one way that foes may seek to take you down... after all, if all else fails they can still try ramming you out of the sky. And they *will*, down to the last,

desperate fighter. Every single aircraft you face here, aside from the floating fortresses that serve as 'bosses' in certain stages, will attempt to crash into you as you go through their domain. You'd better make sure they die before they reach you, because while the raptor can usually survive such an aerial collision, doing so repeatedly is going to see you crash and burn before long.

- Megacorp Nation (+150CP)

The Megacorps are the movers and shakers of this world - each a nation in effect if (officially) not in name. With that comes the power and infrastructure you'd normally associate with international superpowers - and now, that infrastructure is especially prominent. Where before you'd have faced mostly air forces with the occasional groundside flak turrets or missile batteries, now the Megacorps you're attacking will have far more ground defenses - enough to level the playing field compared to their aerial forces. They won't be nearly as mobile, of course, but likewise a lot of the Raptor's weapons are primarily designed for anti-air duty. You'd better invest in something that can leave a crater or two... or two hundred.

- Fly By Night (+100CP)

Darkness favors the attacker, this much is true... but now, when all your missions will take place in the depth of night, with nothing but the stars to guide your way, this truth is of little comfort. It's more difficult to spot enemies and projectiles, night vision and scans are of no help - the depths of night shroud all in its murky depths. The countless factories and fighter craft have at least *some* lights to aim your guns toward, though, you'll just have to keep your eyes open.

- Watch Your Path (+100CP)

Compared to the 'classic' fighter craft with flak cannons, missiles, and so on, mines are both relatively rare and tricky to deploy in large numbers due to their volatile nature. But now... perhaps the Megacorps have gotten a bit of a financial windfall, because they've invested in minelayer systems to the point *every* aircraft you face will come with a single (stationary) air mine to drop during their attack runs.

- Delicate (+200CP)

She's a beauty, the Raptor... and beauty is never tarnished. Your shields ensure that the only damage you take is that just before your craft is ripped apart, but now your standard defenses and Phase Shields are considerably less resilient than before. Every hit you take seems to be twice as damaging now, and you'll have to be very careful to keep your Raptor's shields 'in the green'.

- Steel Skies (+200CP)

Your jet is fast, your guns are powerful... well, powerful enough, we'd say. But they're not quite up to scratch like they were before. Or perhaps your enemies have wisened up, and started bolting some extra armor plating on their fighters and other combat forces. Whatever the case

may be, your attacks are now only half as effective as they used to be, and where once you'd have fought an aerial blitzkrieg, now it's much more a battle of attrition.

- Juggernaut (+200CP)

The Raptor is a beast, capable of eradicating dozens of targets in mere seconds again and again while evading nearly all hostile fire - but with this Drawback, you'll have to rely on fighting hard instead of smart. Your ability to weave left and right is effectively cut in half, making it more difficult to dodge incoming fire or get into position for another attack run. Did you get the Windows version, by any chance?

- Loaded For Raptor (+300CP)

Your name will be mentioned only in hushed whispers, but there is a darker side to gaining fame and glory - for as your reputation grows, your enemies will know to expect you. They know you're coming for them, and where before you might have faced foes with only the standard, economical loadouts considered 'affordable' by the Megacorps, now you'll find that your enemies will bring out everything they've got. All your opponents' weapons are upgraded: Flak cannons become missile launchers, missile launchers become plasma weapons, and plasma weapons are replaced with lasers. Each now carries noticeably higher firepower, and each is just that bit harder to dodge.

- Lightweight (+300CP)

Sleek, powerful, tough... the Raptor is many things, all of them terrifying when in the hands of a skilled pilot. But all that might now comes with a downside as well - your craft seems to need more of its bulk to carry its basic systems, preventing you from equipping the most potent weapons available. For the duration of this Gauntlet, you are incapable of equipping any weapon more powerful than the Power Disruptor, be it those you've bought in this document or weapons you acquire during your time here.

There's still plenty of ways to cause mayhem among your enemies, of course... but you'll have to be smart about it, and you'll need to be patient as you whittle your foes down with the weaker side of the Raptor's arsenal.

- Shaky (+300CP)

Maybe you're twitchy, maybe it's poor reflexes, maybe it's badly aligned engine systems of the killing machine around you, or some other reason entirely. But flying straight is now no longer an option for you. Keeping your Raptor under control is a major challenge, your craft continually juking left and right without your input. You should be able to stay off the ground without *too* much difficulty, but regaining fine control and especially the ability to aim straight are going to be a rare occasion. Try not to ram too many foes - even the Raptor's shields can only take so much abuse.

- Bullet Magnet (+400CP)

You'll face hundreds of foes during your missions, but the Raptor is coated with a specialized stealth cover that prevents easy target lock - forcing all but the most advanced enemies to fire

blindly in hopes of hitting you. With this Drawback, however, that protection is now absent, and pretty much every enemy you encounter will know just how to aim at you. Slow-turning weapons like plasma cannons and lasers are unaffected, but every ball of Flak and every missile launched by your enemies is now a guaranteed hit... unless you get out of the way. I take it you've kept your dogfighting and dodging skills sharp?

ENDING

The fight is over. You've left a trail of destruction in your wake, and now it's time to set your course anew.

Do you **Move On** to worlds unknown, seeking further riches and glory in the wider multiverse?

Do you feel the fight has left you, and you wish to **Go Home** instead?

Or perhaps... you've carved a place of your own in this world, and would like to **Stay Here**?

Whatever the case may be... fly true, pilot, and claim the skies for your own.

NOTES

Fanwank how exactly the top-down gameplay translates to 'real life', like how much anti-air missiles home and why enemies just rush past shooting straight down (in most cases). I made some assumptions as I wrote the document, but ultimately it's a single-player experience so feel free to come up with your own explanations on how things work. The important part is to have fun :)

Weapons don't run out of ammo during the Gauntlet regardless of whether you bought them with CP or acquired them during the Gauntlet itself. Any weapons not bought with CP will need to be supplied with additional bullets, missiles, fuel or whatever else they need in future jumps, as well as if you take 'Call Of The Shadows'. Any such weapons can be resupplied from the Hangar for a suitable fee.

The 'Auto-Equip Upgrade' eliminates the selected weapon from your loadout limits entirely - regardless of whether the in-setting variant is normally an Auto-Equip weapon as well. For example, buying a Micro Missile system with CP would allow you to buy a second one in-setting, since your CP-bought variant wouldn't take up the space the in-setting Micro Missiles would need.