

# CALLS TO ADVENTURE

# THE COSMIC COMPANION

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*lore from Honest Tommy: Calls to Adventure*

*Yeomen Warders* | group: military

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The loyal Beefeaters of London, these body guards are stationed at royal residences and Crown dependencies across the Realm and Star Territories. Dressed in royal red and armed with pikes, Warders are typically hand-picked from British Army regiments; Sergeant Thomas Gentle served with the 21<sup>st</sup> Foot in the East Indies, and Exon Margery Jesser saw action in the Gonjo jungles with the Handkerchief Guards. While a common sight at Buckingham Palace and around Westminster, Yeomen are typically spotted stumbling out of public houses such as Ponky Loake's, Mumbles, and the Kettle of Fish.

*Kitty Canning* | individual: revolutionary

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A rebellious member of the lower classes, Kitty Canning is quick with a critical word against the British government, and even quicker with a pulsing blazer pistol. The daughter of a Devonian pirate, Kitty learned how to handle and enjoy weapons at a young age, and joined numerous socialist causes as an adolescent, ultimately throwing in with the Stonehouse Irregulars, a group of militant anti-monarchists who got their hands on a batch of Peter Salt's speciality Serpentine Nitrate.

*Princess Victoria* | individual: British Royal Family

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When not serving as the public face of the English crown and darling of the Great British Space Empire, Princess Victoria keeps her own secretive agenda. As the daughter of Queen Victoria, the Princess Royal is expected to attend royal galas and seasonal festivals across the Realm and Star Territories, but of late is rumoured to be amassing arms and allies in private. She is said to have a secret retreat on the dark side of the Moon, and her Ladies-in-Waiting seem more armoured than usual.

***Serpentine Nitrate*** | invention: gunpowder

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A unique form of black powder credited to Peter Salt, Serpentine Nitrate is also known as Black Snow, or the Smoking Death. Its creator, ever wary about being caught, lined the walls of his Waltham Abbey vault with his combustible, which hung like moss ready to explode in the faces of any would-be burglars. Supplies became rare after Salt's supposed incendiary death, although samples fetch a high price on the black market.

***Killer robot*** | gizmo: robot

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A mechanical contraption designed to strike fear into the heart of any ne'er-do-well, a killer robot is a steaming amalgamation of cogs and motors used to guard Britain's fortifications. While some find use as excavators and war mounts, the MK Military Knight is a killer robot variant employed as a ceremonial officer by the British Royal Household, and can typically be found lurking in the undercroft of Westminster, ready to bash infiltrators on the head with a swipe of its claws.

***Runcible*** | individual: mad

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If ever a creator-god came down from on high to take credit for the multitude of reality existing in the known universe, one of the many baffling aspects of creation They would have to explain away would be Professor Runcible. Professor Emeritus of the Royal Academy of Scotland, Runcible doesn't so much exist as gyrate through the manifold dimensions, floating along in the troubled ocean of her own mind while inventing everything from self-buttering bread to a pocket universe she keeps in an egg cup. She once studied with luminaries such as Charles Babbage and Ada Lovelace, and by their own admission, gave them most of their best ideas.

***Royal Academy*** | location: place of learning

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A highly-respected institute of higher education in Scotland, the Royal Academy has ushered many gifted alumni through its doors, including Professor Raffid, Charles Babbage, and Prespicarius Nit. Of these, Professor Runcible is perhaps equally the most gifted and the most infamous, having been alleged as the culprit responsible for transporting the chemistry department through a wormhole. Nonetheless, the Royal Academy remains a celebrated school on Earth, and has boarded up the unsightly hole where the chemistry labs were once found.

### ***The Jolly Good*** | conveyance: rocket ship

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One of Professor Runcible's creations, the rocket ship named by Captain Dashworth as the *Jolly Good* is a unique hodgepodge of contraptions conjured into being by Runcible during one of her moments of supreme transcendence. While the spacecraft is capable of flight, powered by a turbine whirring away beneath its sleek bow, it currently spends its bizarre existence dry-docked in London, where a small family of vagrants has built a squat on one of its wings.

### ***HMRS Tumbleweed*** | conveyance: spacecraft

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Although outdated, the Mark II *Nutrix*-class hygroscopic freighter is a mainstay of the Royal Space Navy's auxiliary fleet of tankers and support vessels. It vacuums hydrogen particles from deep space and funnels them into larger craft such colossal towships, dogging these mighty warships like flies. The HMRS *Tumbleweed*, helmed by Commander Josamee Brame, is a veteran of the Jupiter Wars, and is now attached to Admiral Gideon Blonce's roving fleet.

### ***Caspirian Spiral*** | location: space phenomenon

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A concordance of twelve black holes in the Pausix Conglomeration of the Circle of Orion, the Caspirian Spiral is infamous for its mind-bending effects on any sentient being who happens to stare too long into its maddening vortex. The swirling maelstrom is visible in the skies of Pausix Rest, and has sent numerous residents into the local infirmary, including the composer Elfrida Manbel, who produced some of her best work while under the influence of the Spiral.

### ***Gwendoline Broadchest*** | individual: midshipman

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A lowly officer of the Royal Space Navy assigned to menial duty aboard the HMRS *Tumbleweed*, Gwen Broadchest longs for adventure and excitement, or at least a handy escape from the tedium of slopping out the eliop tubes. The daughter of the great General Broadchest, hero of Corvanus, Gwen held little desire for either the Army or the Space Navy, but events conspired to force her into conscripted service with only a small octopoid named Squat for company. She weathers her duties with her trademark cynicism and bullish steadfastness, while secretly hoping to be looked up to for once as a hero of the cosmos.

***Squat*** | critter: octopoid

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An octopoid of the scub species, Squat was rescued aboard the hygroscopic freighter *Tumbleweed* by Gwen Broadchest, and kept as a pet and companion in her cabin. Possessing sticky tentacles that allow it to nest on most surfaces, Squat needs constant cleaning lest its acetabulum suckers, used for locomotion, become gummed up with its own adhesive goop. Although descended from amphibious cephalopods, some scubs are known to seek cosmic plankton in the vacuum of space.

***Benson*** | individual: tea boy

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One of the local recruits who presented himself to the British Army recruitment drive in Patty's Knob, Benson serves as a tea boy in the Vorgak Command encampment on Vorgak 3. Stalwart where most would be long-suffering, Benson happily carries out the most menial tasks with a beaming smile and a ready mop, and has been fobbed off with just about every job his superiors can think of, from shoe polishing to privy scrubbing, yet the hopeful lad always comes back for more, only slightly smellier than before.

***Vorgak Command*** | group: military unit

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A British Army unit stationed on the colony world of Vorgak 3 since its occupation in 1822. Then led by General Sir Archibald Bramwell-Fish, Vorgak Command now enjoys a peaceful, even lethargic existence under Commander Edimburgh Lunk. The 51<sup>st</sup> Colonial division encamped between the British embassy and Patty's Knob has to contend with little more than disgruntled terrafarmers and the occasional horde of lagonasps, and has become downright lackadaisical in its duties.

***Royal Infomarium*** | group: institute

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A records-keeping institution in London on Earth, the Royal Infomarium attempts to sort the vast and dizzying cosmos into something resembling order. Its Archivists and Lore-keepers field information from British survey teams and roving archaeologists, and endeavour to paint a complete picture of the history and current events of the Fifteen Galaxies. Doctor Bowminster FRSE serves as Assistant Lore at the Central Infomarium Treasury, and has been meticulously piecing together accounts of the Jupiter Wars and the Unification program that followed, although often gets lost among his own bookshelves until a wandering Junior Archivist stumbles upon him.

### *Dashworth* | individual: raconteur

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A junior Tea Ambassador employed by the Mother's Brown Tea Conglomerate, Dashworth has earned numerous black marks against his name for the shenanigans effected and exploits enjoyed during his tea rounds. When not stowing aboard tea clippers to see the great cosmos, Dashworth trawls the streets of London peddling his Penny Amazings, novellas of derring-do written by his scribe-for-hire, Quilton. Dashworth hopes to enter the history books as a wandering storyteller to inspire the peons of Britain, but feels his tales are missing a true hero in possession of guile, charisma, and an excellent bottom.

### *Mother's Brown Tea Conglomerate* | group: company

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The British Empire runs on tea, and Mother Brown sells most of it. One of the largest and wealthiest tea companies in the Empire, Mother's Brown sends its Tea Ambassadors to all corners of the Fifteen Galaxies to ply crates of *Beggar's Pillow*, *Farthing Special*, and *Rambunctious Hen*. While certain of its Ambassadors are said to duff up any hapless coffee-drinkers they happen upon, other of the Conglomerate's employees disagree with Mother Brown's aggressive business strategy, and attempt to sell the secrets of her signature blends to rival companies such as Yeller's Wholesale and Mustard's Leaf.

### *Quilton* | individual: grifter

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A trader of questionable goods operating out of various knocking shops in London Town, Quilton sells whatever he can get his grubby hands on. Possessing a failed degree in journalism, he touts himself as a scribe-for-hire, and has entered into a business relationship with Dashworth, who almost manages to pay Quilton to write up sensationalist adventures in the form of their Penny Amazings, which they hope to fob off on an unsuspecting literary public.

### *Plinkington's Publishing Group* | group: company

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One of the more reputable of London's publishing companies, Plinkington's has avoided a reputation for mugging a potential customer of their books before chucking them down the stairs. Operated by Plinkington herself, the publishing house owns a respectable establishment in the otherwise aptly-named Cheapside, from which she regularly turns down hopeful writers for looking too scruffy or having too few letters after their names.