

**Marva Gaines, Cultural Liaison, BA**



**Packages: +9**

**Earthling:** +1, **Explorer:** +12

**Attributes: +19**

- 4 \* Awareness (+2 Explorer) +2
- 3 Coordination +3
- 4 Ingenuity +4
- 4 Presence +4
- 4 Resolve (+1 Explorer) +3
- 3 Strength +3

**Skills: +15**

- 1 Athletics +1
- 1 Convince +1
- 1 Craft +1
- 0 Fighting +0
- 4(6) Knowledge (+1 Explorer) **AoE Venus** +4
- 2 Marksman (+1 Explorer) +1
- 0 Medicine +0
- 2 Science (+1 Explorer) +1
- 1 Subterfuge +1
- 5 \*\* Survival (+2 Explorer) +3
- 2 Technology (+1 Explorer) +1
- 2 \*\* Transport (+1 Explorer) +1

**Traits: -1**

**Friends ([Walter Francis White])** (**Earthling**, Minor Good)

**Brave (Explorer**, Minor Good) - The character gains a +2 bonus to any roll where courage plays a factor, such as resisting fear.

\* **Keen Senses ([Hearing])** (**Explorer**, Minor Good) - When this Trait is taken the character gets one sense enhanced at the Minor level. This sense gains a +2 bonus on perception based rolls.

**Lucky (Explorer, Minor Good)** - A character with the Lucky Trait gets to re-roll double '1's and try for a higher (and not failing) result. The second roll must be taken no matter what, and there is still a chance of double '1's a second time.

**\*\* Sense of Direction (Explorer, Minor Good)** - The character receives a +2 bonus to rolls to navigate or otherwise find his way and head in the proper direction, on a planet or in space.

**Insatiable Curiosity (Explorer, Minor Bad)** - If the character is trying to resist these urges, he should spend a Story Point and make a difficulty 12 Ingenuity + Resolve -2 roll.

**Obsession ([Venusians]) (Explorer, Minor Bad)** - At the Minor level, the character can resist this urge with a Story Point and a difficulty 12 Ingenuity + Resolve -2 roll.

**Linguist (Minor Good) +1** - A character can learn a new language by spending a Story Point and succeeding on a Difficulty 12 Ingenuity + Knowledge roll.

**Unlucky (Minor Bad) -1** - When double '6's are rolled, instead of a cheer and instant success, the character rerolls those dice and takes whatever results. This could be a failure or a success, or possibly the losing streak ends and the character gets a second set of '6's, and thus an instant success.

**Outcast ([African American Sharecropper family]) (Minor Bad) -1** - When interacting with those who have cast the character out, she is at -2 on social rolls.

**Special/Equipment: -4**

**Experienced**

-1 Story points spent toward Firebird 2

**Story Points: 8**

**Languages:** English, Ganymedian, High Martian (North Polar Dialect), High Martian (Southern Dialect), High Martian (Western Highlands Dialect), Eastern Venusian, European, French, German, Ioite, Western Venusian

## **Marva Gaines**

Age: 28

Sex: Female

Species: Earthling

Occupation: Cultural Liaison for the Firebird 2

Marva grew up as a Sharecropper's daughter, in racially segregated arizona. She and her mom and her brothers used to have to help her dad bring in the crops. As she grew, to help feed the family she took jobs cleaning homes. One of the women she cleaned for, Ilsa Hermann, kept an extensive library; Ilsa took pleasure in reading with Marva and teaching her to read, and as Marva grew loaning her books. Much of the Hermann library was French and German; so Marva became acquainted with other languages early.

Marva's parents were pleased with Marva's love of culture and reading; but always reminded her to keep her feet on the ground; that she couldn't expect much more out of life than to eke out an existence working the land. Marva accepted this as a given, but wasn't happy about it. Most places she went she was looked down on, or at least looked through; the best she could expect from cultured folk was pity.

When Martians were discovered in 1931, Marva was quick to recognize the implications. On the one hand, with more varied aliens being discovered, perhaps she and her people would not be treated as quite so alien. On the other hand, perhaps she would seem no more strange to sophants from other worlds than any other person from her planet. And one way or another, with worlds full of other cultures and languages, a young woman with a head for languages may have a strong career ahead of

her.

So Marva, at age 23, moved to Phoenix, where she got a job washing dishes; and began visiting the University of Phoenix quietly sitting in the back of lecture halls and classes on life and culture in the Solar system, in particular language classes. The professors rarely commented, and did not stop her. But eventually, one brought Marva to the attention of Alice Evans, the bursar for the University of Phoenix. Alice approached Marva with an offer -- since Marva was clearly going to continue "stealing" an education from the University of Phoenix and there was nothing they could do about it, Alice would enroll Marva in a degree program and arrange to purchase the books for Marva -- in return Marva would work 10 hours a week cleaning the halls of the University. Marva jumped at the possibility. Of course she recognized that this "offer" was charity, and that she would be indebted to Alice Evans.

During your first year as an official student at the University, Walter Francis White, secretary of the NAACP, came out of his way to visit with you while in Phoenix on a speaking tour. You got on well with him, and he frequently wrote you to ask about particular events and personalities in the Phoenix area. He's hoping that you will also keep him apprised, over the course of your travels, of the state of colored persons in the Solar system; though you don't want to lean on others' support needlessly, you expect that if you encounter personal problems because of the color of your skin, Walter would be in a position to put some pressure on GE UoP or private officials.

With the staffing of the Firebird 2, you wrote many letters to request placement on the mission. Alice, who joined the crew as a comptroller, must have said some very nice things about you, because your bid was accepted.

The crew-member who took the most special interest in bringing you and Alice aboard was Myles Sonnenbrille. It may be a sign that he's practical, it may be a sign that he is open to women as explorers, or it could be because he is German and hopes to get lucky; you have to watch out for him.