



# Character Briefs

Ash Town

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## Revision History

Date	Version	Updated By	Changes/Comments
1/16/2023	0.1	RC	Document creation; Added outline & Overview text
1/17/2023	0.2	RC	Added Luka brief
1/20/2023	0.3	RC	Added Val & Victor briefs; Added comps to Luka
1/23/2023	1.0	RC	Added comps to Val & Victor; Added additional backstory to Luka
1/26/2023	1.1	RC	Added To-Do List

### Lead Writer

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### Contributors

## Overview

### Introduction

This document contains all character background and personality info for the Ash Town project. It is intended to be a living document that will capture any decisions related to the growing list of characters in the game.

All departments should reference this collaborative, golden source to assist in their mutual understanding and depiction of the characters. **Please facilitate all updates through the Lead Writer.**

### Key Design Pillars

When updating the character briefs, please keep the key design pillars in mind:

- All characters have a past
- The Moon is a dangerous place
- Themes emerge through play
- Trust the player

While we will be joining the story in media res, our characters should have a rich sense of history that shapes them and their unique worldviews. Many of the details in this document will never be conveyed directly to the player, but they will help us to deliver a diverse cast of fallible and relatable characters. Their journey of change and growth is ultimately the player's journey...

### Premise Reminder

Here is a reminder of the initial, open-ended premise for Ash Town. This is the earliest compass for this project, from which everything has been iterated upon and has taken shape. Please reference the core Design Document for further details, as needed:

*A young, down-on-his luck man travels to the colonized Moon after learning of his estranged father's untimely death, leaving the safety of Earth behind to confront the ghosts of his past and the deadly secrets he inherits.*

# Characters

## Luka Sturgeon

**Character Type:** Main Protagonist

**Nickname:** Luke

**Quote:** "Call me Luke."

**Age:** Mid-twenties

**Gender ID, Racial ID, Sexuality:** Man (he/him), Cisgender

### Geographic Background/Community

Earth. Loner. No immediate family. Avoids the old neighborhood and those he might run into. Relationship with Sam recently ended with her moving out. Lost touch with his friends from the Academy. Finds himself perpetually between jobs & relationships.

### Role/Talents

Drop out of the Academy (think Space Marines, but more practical/realistic). Has interest in similar things as his dad (space, boxing, etc.), but does not want to admit it, so he dabbles. Wants to do good but lacks direction/commitment. Former altar boy (ties into the story).

### Secrets

He was named after Laika, the first dog in space, which he finds to be an embarrassing story. Secretly a space nerd - he knows Apollo history front and back, as his dad was obsessed.

He decides to leave the academy when there is some controversy (we never find out) and he doesn't stick up for himself.

### Likes

Outer space/the stars. Boxing. Blending in. Dry humor. Cats.

### Dislikes

The Moon. Nostalgia. Gambling. Large crowds. Birthdays.

### Treasures

Friendship bracelet made of red string. Was making it for his dad before he disappeared. Couldn't bring himself to toss it. Wears it on his trip (see Val: bring something red) and absent-mindedly tugs on it while thinking.

### Dominant personality traits/keywords

Quiet, Aloof, Sarcastic, Self-deprecating, Helpful, Tired, Hesitant

### Recessive personality traits/keywords

Honest, Frustrated, Stubborn, Charitable, Gentle, Observant

### Worldview/Beliefs/Misbeliefs

Afraid to commit. Tends to see things as glass half empty. Has massive abandonment issues as his dad left when he was young:

“So, one day he was just gone, the Moon his destination. We had no clue how he pulled it off, but I was suddenly the new world record holder in abandonment. Lucky me...”

He wants to forget about his dad. Remove the ever-present shadow. He wants a fresh start, with no baggage, but he self-sabotages himself. He is unwilling to take a leap of faith.

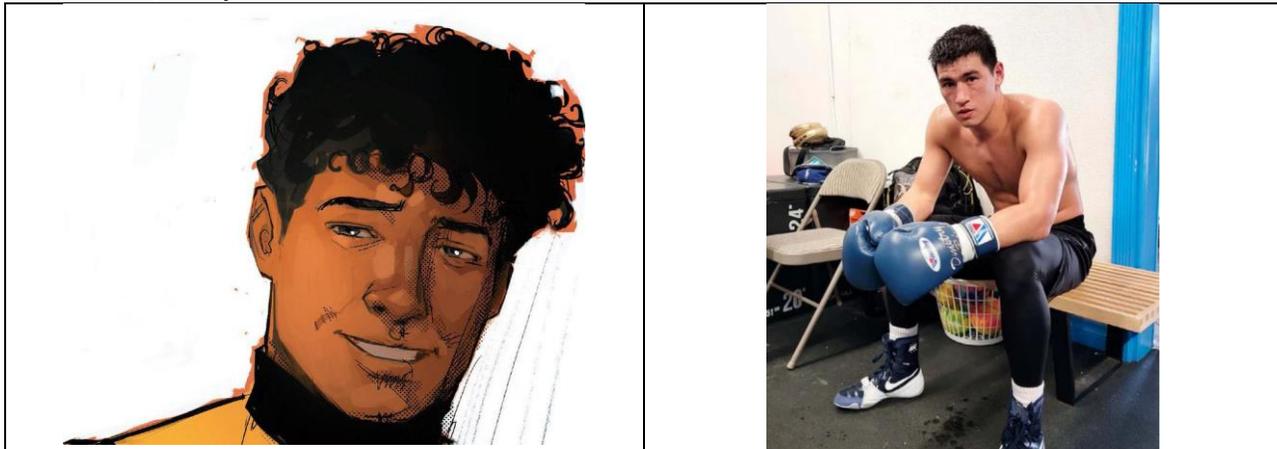
He is afraid that he will go out on a limb emotionally and be burned by someone else. And that he will be like his dad (which he kind of is).

He thinks it is better to forget about his dad and seeks closure by avoiding the pain and confusion. What he really needs is to forgive. To accept the good & bad. To have the faith and trust to love and be loved back, unconditionally. To be able to commit in life without always expecting the other shoe to drop.

### Defining Moments/Memories

#### Origin Story (paraphrased)

- Sitting in church with mom, wearing makeshift Sunday best
- The wayward glances
- Remembers his mom telling him to keep the faith, chin up to the stares, but hears her cry late at night over the static of the TV. Notices she wears black most of the time. She probably doesn't even realize it.
- She is proud, doesn't want to talk about the dad – ever
- He takes communion, more on autopilot, see the priest's sad smile. Feels a mix of thanks and shame. Comforting, yet condescending.
- Sees his best friend with both his parents
- Recalls quitting the baseball team
  - Drops the ball
  - Hears snickers about “what do you expect, doesn't have his dad to play catch with anymore”
  - Notices his friend kneejerk laugh
  - Realizes he's really in this alone. No one understands.
- Remembers his dad promising him something before he disappeared – yeah right
- Wonders if he knew at that time - if it was all just a big fat lie. Guess we'll never know.
- Feels like a sucker
- Vows never to blindly trust anyone again. If you can't rely on your own father, who/what can you rely on?
- Can't wait for the mass to be over so he can go home, although it's not much of a home, is it?
- He guesses it's what he deserves. Whenever he put his heart in something, it's always ended in failure and disappointment. What's the point?
- Could be worse though. He could be stuck on the moon, like his deadbeat dad. What hope does anyone have of succeeding there? How could he have chosen that dump over me?

**Visual Notes/Comps**

## Valentina Cabral

**Character Type:** Deuteragonist (Accomplice/Love Interest)

**Nickname:** Val

**Age:** Mid-twenties

**Gender ID, Racial ID, Sexuality:** Woman (she/her), Cisgender, Biromantic

### **Geographic Background/Community**

The Moon. Ash Town. Her family migrated to the Moon when she was a child.

### **Role/Talents**

Miner. Jack-of-all-trades. Knows her way around all the back alleys and where to get info, contraband, etc. Streetwise. Proficient/nimble in a space suit. Owns a small cart/vehicle that she can drive the wheels off of.

“Hold on!” Val shouted over her shoulder. She took a sharp turn and the cart groaned as we clattered into a much smaller tunnel. Just a few meters into the tube, we descended sharply. I had no idea where she was taking me, but it was too late to question it now.

### **Secrets**

Has recurring dreams of the sights and smells of the Earth, they are just out of her reach, but she will never admit to it.

### **Likes**

Honesty. Independence. Color. Synthetic Alcohol. Back & forth.

### **Dislikes**

Corporations. Greed. Formality. Pretentiousness. Bullying. Whining. Schmaltz.

### **Treasures**

Anything colorful she can get her hands on, which she stashes in her room. Ash Town is resolutely drab and appears weather-beaten, as if draped in soot. A gray, prefab world trapped in the pale, rusty light of a perpetual dusk. Her quarters (and her presence to the protagonist) are like a defiant burst of color in this monochromatic world.

*“Hi. I was a friend of your dad. By now you must have heard the news and received their most generous invite. He said you probably wouldn’t want anything to do with him, but you need to take them up on their offer. Just be careful. Don’t trust anybody. It’s important that we speak face to face. I have something that belongs to you. I’ll trade you for it. Bring something colorful. Red”*

#### **Dominant personality traits/keywords**

Empathy, Blunt, Resourceful, Vibrant, Observant, Practical

#### **Recessive personality traits/keywords**

Trusting, Creative, Proud, Headstrong, Forsaken

#### **Worldview/Beliefs/Misbeliefs**

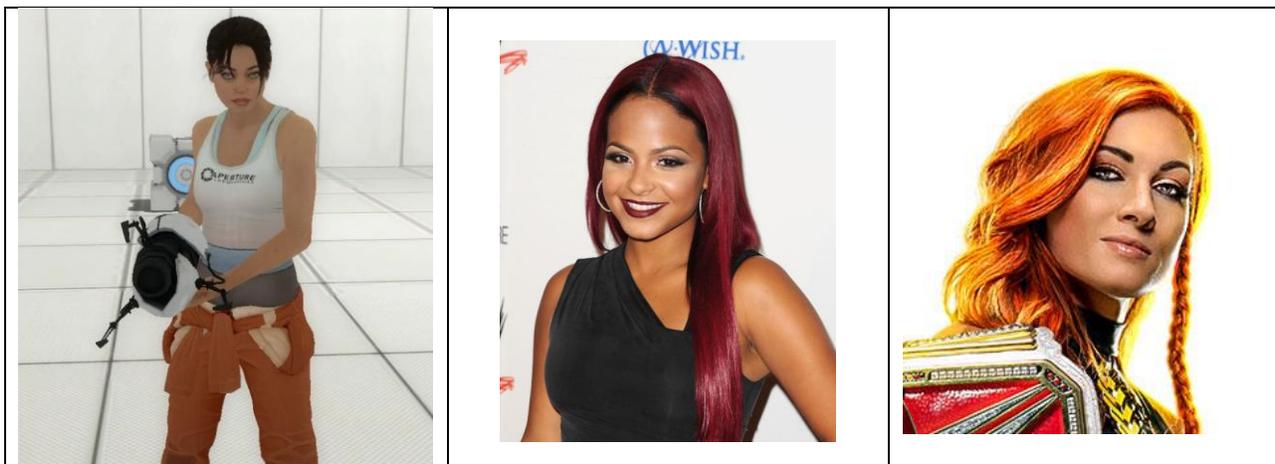
Grew up on the Moon and has had to fend for herself from a young age. Does not remember much about the Earth and doesn’t see the need to reminisce. Is focused on the day-to-day of surviving, taking care of herself, keeping her ear to the grindstone, and making the best of things. She doesn’t dream for much else, as she doesn’t see the point in it. Has some trusted friends that she considers family and will fiercely defend. She has even more connections, but she is careful to distinguish between the two.

#### **Defining Moments/Memories**

Val’s scientist father relocated her young family to the Moon despite the risks. Besides the hardships, there was also a growing air of discontent and associated violence on the Moon. He was blind to this, as well to the wishes of his family who really wanted to stay with their life on Earth. He was only focused on the positives and on his work, and he vetoed/ignored their pleas. Shortly after relocating, an explosion took the life of Val’s mom and placed her only sister in a coma. Stricken by grief, Val’s father remained at her sister’s bedside, longing to do everything in his power to will her to wake. With their family dynamic shattered and her father’s ever-present sense of remorse and guilt, Val grew distant with her father and ventured further and further into her new world to make her own way in life. This led her to Ash Town, where she’s crafted a life for herself, from one odd job to another, on her terms, for better and for worse.

#### **Visual Notes/Comps**

Fiery red hair, reminiscent of glowing embers. Dark onyx pupils that capture the light – a galaxy unto themselves. Typically wears a worker’s jumpsuit with the cuffs rolled up that is a utilitarian mix of gray and brown, with matching boots.



## Victor Maddon

**Character Type:** Main Antagonist

**Quote:** “To the *Victor* go the spoils...”

**Age:** Late fifties

**Gender ID, Racial ID, Sexuality:** Man, Cisgender, Graysexual

### Geographic Background/Community

Formally of Earth. Grew up in the old neighborhood with Luka’s dad Freddy and the mysterious Zeke, the three of which were thick as thieves (and also former altar boys under Father Addy). Son of the local mob boss.

### Role/Talents

Shrewd businessman with a God complex. Moreso a Mob boss. Strikes an intimidating figure. Wealthy and powerful and knows how to wield that power. Demands respect. Lives and runs his “business” by his warped code of honor. Deft politician. Gaslighter extraordinaire. Fancies himself a man of the people and is often able to use the public’s general anger and resentment of Earth to his advantage.

“It’s hard not to feel like we always get the short end of the stick. That we’re relegated to the kids table compared to Mother Earth. Our resources sapped away while the rich tourists come to play. There’s a growing movement that thinks we’d be better off without the Earth. The anger’s gotta go somewhere. And in the middle of it all is G.I. Maddon. His is an empire built on survival and, as a result, control. Ingenuity mixed with brutality. In this case, they go hand-in-hand.”

### Secrets

Sickly and pale as a child due to sickness such as photosensitivity/solar urticaria, which prevented him from spending too much time in the sun. It’s as if he was allergic to nature/Earth itself. Was sent to the sterile Moon where he does not have these issues and can hide from them. Feeling castigated, he set out to build

his own empire (Greater Lunar Industries) via the untapped opportunities and pervasive lawlessness on the moon.

“I didn’t know much about GLI, other than they practically ran things on the Moon. They had their hands in all the important stuff like Mining, Construction, Oxygenation, and Grav Control. It was *all* their business.”

#### **Likes**

Power, Loyalty, Respect, Tradition, Code of Honor, Acknowledgement, Sacrifice

#### **Dislikes**

Weakness, Impudence, Bleeding Hearts, Charity, Law

#### **Treasures**

Apollo landing site memorabilia. Collects and display all the artifacts. They are priceless to him, and he must have it all, from astronaut pins to discarded bags of poop.

#### **Dominant personality traits**

Cold, Intimidating, Refined, Shrewd, Self-righteous

#### **Recessive personality traits**

Resentful, Suave, Menacing, Obsessive, Maniacal, Jilted, Lonely, Unforgiving, Vengeful

#### **Worldview/Beliefs/Misbeliefs**

Victor is a man of roiling contradictions. While his achievements are impressive and some of the services his corporation provide are essential, his motives are not purely beneficial. He navigates in the gray, often having a point, but takes things too far with his unscrupulous methods and underlying narcissism. He is big on sacrifice and loyalty, but this does not go both ways. He sees himself as charitable and magnanimous, but he is ruthless when it comes to punishment if he feels it is deserved and when his competition oversteps their bounds. He is big on “family” but has a warped view of what that means. He has a strict code of conduct/honor as a result, not unlike the mafia/church, that he feels is righteous.

He perpetually feels slighted, and while he is seen a champion for the Moon, deep down he hates the Moon and all it signifies to him regarding his failings. He has been denied a life on Earth, a place which is truly alive, for his empty throne on the Moon. He fills his inner sanctum, a place rarely shared with others, with the sights, textures, smells, etc., of the Earth.

“I preceded up a short rampway and emerged into a cavernous, circular room with video walls spanning from floor to ceiling. The far wall projected lush jungle foliage with a raging waterfall. Bright blues and greens shook with life and energy, churning up a virtual mist that traveled all across. The air in the room was crisp to match, almost floral. I closed my eyes and took a deep breath, jettisoning the omnipresent stale air from my lungs.”

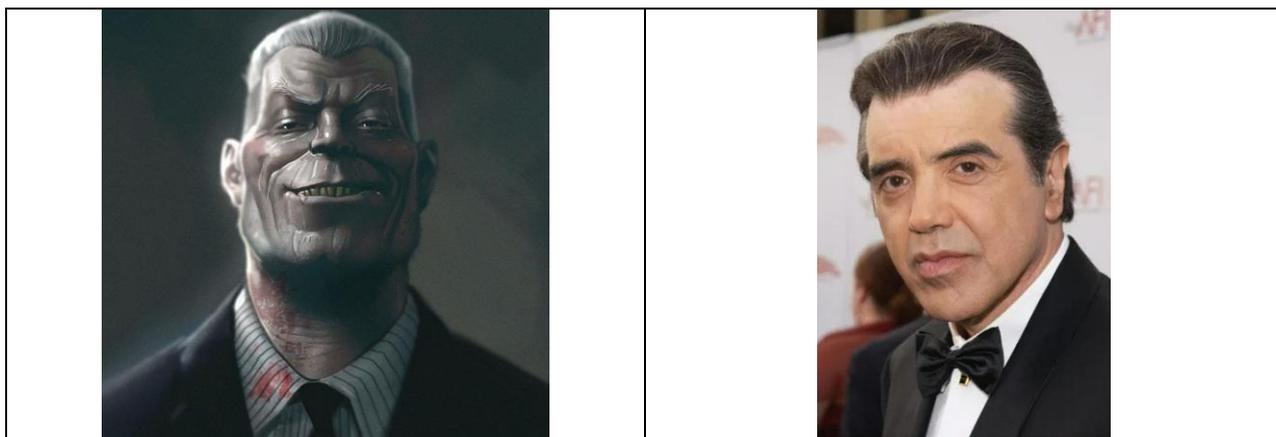
#### **Defining Moments/Memories**

Seeing Luka’s father Freddy stumble into the things in life that he seemingly couldn’t have, like his relationship with Luka’s mom (whom he coveted) and having a family. He resented how his friend was

more of a daydreamer and took those things for granted and vowed to one day entice him to the Moon to show him that things are not greener elsewhere, especially on the mostly dead Moon.

### Visual Notes/Comps

“He sauntered towards me, his sharp features slicing through the air. He sat back in an armchair across from me, crossing his legs. His movements were both suave and methodical. Calculated. He was a stew of charm and menace. Now that I could see him better, he looked older than on the streams - more gray at the temples. More than anything, I was struck by the blunt deadness in his eyes.”



## Future Enhancements

### Character To-Do List

The following characters need to be added to the character bible. Their roles and relationships are quickly captured below, with some early notes:

Character Name	Character Type	Role/Notes
Father Adebayo, a.k.a. Father Addy	Complicit Antagonist	Priest at old St. Joe's. Been there forever. He must have shriveled to half his size with age, but that low, singsong voice is the same. Smiles through layers of wrinkles. Very disarming. Deft at pulling his punches, and always delivers them with a knowing smile. Most everyone loves him. Only he could get away with some of the shit he says. The nicest curmudgeon you'd ever meet. Knows more about Luka's father than he lets on...
Harper, just Harper	Orbital Character	Local Marshall/law enforcement in Ash Town, the enforcement part is hit-or-miss. Feels that a hands-off approach works best. Wears a dark blue

		jumpsuit like Val's that is fading gray with age. No name tags. His hair is a thick tuft of salt and pepper shag, with matching stubble on his face. Exudes a charming blend of weariness and confidence. In Cahoots/on-the-take but later has a change of heart. Redemptive arc.
Hector Zardos	Orbital Character	Mentor role. Bartender (owner of the Solara Madre). Landlord. "Mayor" type. Wears many hats. Knower-of-gossip. Elder statesman in Ash Town. Used to work on the surface back in the day. Has a limp.
Frederick Sturgeon, a.k.a. Freddy Fingers	Orbital Character (Deceased)	Luka's father. Abruptly left when Luka was a child. Obsessed with The Moon/space. Tailor by family trade, part-time boxer. Good with his hands. Charming hustler that dreams of the one big score, something more. Distinct features: a crooked nose and the curl of hair that always seems to hang down on his face.
Sofia Sturgeon	Orbital Character (Deceased)	Luka's mom. When Freddy, left she was equal parts heartbroken and defiant. That pretty much summed up her personality. She saw the world as strictly glass half-empty, but she'd toss that glass in your face if you gave her too much shit about it. The topic of Luka's father was quickly off-limits, and it stayed that way until she died - far too young. Luka visits her grave at the old neighborhood church once a year to pay respect, the only times he goes back, and leaves a sunflower, her favorite.
Ezekiel Vernon	Orbital Character	Zeke. Known as the "Butcher of Ash Town." Former goon for Maddon, and third member of the trinity with Luka's dad. Unbeknownst to Luka, the 3 were old running pals in their youth on Earth. Imprisoned on the Far Side of The Moon, where the only prison/penitentiary is located. Mocks those who incorrectly call it the dark side. One way in/out, via moon train. Was overzealous in his enforcer role. Took the fall for Maddon. Has found God while incarcerated. Tall, bald, and muscular. Has answers to Luka's questions...
The Moon, capital M.	Environmental Antagonist	Much more info is included in the World Brief, but still included here as a note that The Moon is a pivotal environmental character/presence with its own personality and challenges. Locales include Ash Town, the Surface, Selena Space Port, Greater

		Lunar Industries HQ, Apollo Landing Sites, the Casino, the Far Side, etc.
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## References

### Other Relevant Documentation

<< Link to Documents >>