

# Dark Mission Profile 2

## DRAKE EQUATION

$$N = R \times f_s \times f_p \times n_e \times f_l \times f_i \times f_c \times L$$

R average rate of star formation

$f_s$  fraction of stars that have planetary systems

$n_e$  number of planets around these stars within an "ecosystemic zone"

$f_l$  fraction of planets where life develops

$f_i$  fraction of planets where intelligent life develops

$f_c$  fraction of planets where intelligent life develops species with communicable technology

L lifetime of the "communicative phase"



**Is there  
anybody out  
there?**

# DARK

## Three ways of seeing

We survived despite ourselves. We crawled out from our planetary womb and crossed the gulf between the stars. We found slime, and fungi, and microscopic worms clinging precariously to volcanic vents on ice moons.

Nothing more. Nothing intelligent. Nothing that could break our loneliness. Nothing that could tell us who we were.

*Dark.*

There is mystery. And there are three tribes, three ways of seeing.

I

The first tribe are **Optimists**. Sitting at the feet of Drake and Sagan, they have recruited raw numbers to their cause. Physics, complexity, an almost infinite universe and thirteen point eight billion years—they reason that the universe must be teeming with intelligent life.

Aliens will have mastered vast destructive energies, and thus they will have mastered themselves. They will be more technologically advanced than us. They will guide and nurture us.

*We need to find them.*

II

The second tribe are **Pessimists**, and their argument is biology. They know Darwin, they understand Fermi. Even when life abounds, they counter, intelligence has little evolutionary value. Consciousness is a wasteful extravagance. At every evolutionary turn, in every ecological niche, alternatives to conscious intelligence have prevailed. There is a single, freakish exception, poised on the edge of self-extinction. Just one.

*Humans. Us.*

And out there, it's really nasty: all radiation and rogue rocks and eccentric orbits.

So where are they? Our galaxy is ten billion years old: if aliens existed, they would be here by now.

QED. We're alone.

III

There is a third tribe. They don't tend to advertise, don't tend to publicly debate. For the most part they are pragmatists, adverse to speculation, always looking for the bottom line. Humans, they reason, survived because they were toolmakers. Tools force the universe into unnatural shapes. Technology is only required against adversity. Technology starts a race that can't be stopped; and it grinds the losers beneath its boots. Life itself becomes an act of war. Technology implies belligerence.

Which means, if intelligent aliens are out there, they're not just going to be smart, they're also going to be *mean*.

The third tribe plans accordingly. The third tribe's name? Some might call them **Historicists**. We'll call them the **Corporations**.

## Survey

Optimist, Pessimist, Historicist. Three views on alien life in the universe. Pick one to reflect your character's philosophy and point of view. Explore it, advocate it in play.

The truth? *You'll find out soon enough.*

*What's your perspective on intelligent life in the universe? Complete the one question survey!*

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