

CORVUS BELLI iNFiNiTY

THE ROLEPLAYING GAME



MÖDIPHÜS™
ENTERTAINMENT

ACHERON CASCADE

FFFO™



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MODIPHIUS

ENTERTAINMENT

INTRODUCTION

ACHERON CASCADE



Welcome to Acheron Cascade, a set of adventures that sends the characters all over the Human Sphere as they try and untangle a trio of plots threatening the very Acheron Blockade itself – and the security of the Human Sphere. It takes place between the Second and Third Offensives on Paradiso and the Japanese Uprising is still to take place.

The campaign is designed for new characters, perhaps taking their first mission. If the GM is running the campaign for more experienced characters, they should make liberal use of Heat to add extra units to encounters or Wilderness of Mirrors objectives.

PLAYTEST TIP

While it's not needed, the *Infinity Gamemaster's Guide* is recommended for use with this campaign book. The guides for each faction are not required, but they may provide further information if needed.

OBTAIN INFORMATION – MOMENTUM SPEND

As the characters can get heavily involved in the details, it's very possible that some lines of enquiry could take days. Spending a point of Momentum generates some information on any NPC or event. The same can also be said for Infinity Points, although characters spending these will gain far more information as it is a story declaration.

CAMPAIGN SUMMARY

There are three interconnected conspiracies that the PCs will unravel over the course of *Acheron Cascade*.

SHASVASTII: The Shasvastii plan to cripple the Acheron Blockade to enable a Combined Army fleet to penetrate the Paradiso system. The central cog in this plan is a twin-bonded pair of Speculo Killers. This team, supported by other Shasvastii resources, has the following objectives:

- Retrieve an experimental Teseum transmitter from Varuna.
- Sabotage the Shasvastii detector research.
- Sabotage/subvert the turbulence platforms of the Acheron Blockade.
- Duplicate a PanOceanian politician named Jhaerix Anderson and use Anderson's position on the O-12 Advisory Board to order the Acheron Blockade out of position.
- Finally, use the Teseum transmitter to signal the Combined Army fleet.

NOMADS: The Nomads are developing an experimental Shasvastii detector on the *Bakunin*. They're keeping this technology secret because they believe that ALEPH may be secretly betraying the Human Sphere to the EI. If that's true, the Nomads hope that they can use the detector to root out the infiltrators they believe ALEPH is integrating into human society. Or, at the very least, keep their own ships safe. Unfortunately, they've been duped. The research data on the Shasvastii corpses is a complete dead end. The genetic iteration of Shasvastii Speculo Killers is chimeric – it changes as required – so while Shasvastii can be detected with the invasive blood test apparatus, Speculo Killers are completely unaffected, since their DNA matches that of their copied victim.

YǎNJĪNG (YU JING): The Yu Jing military intelligence agency is overseeing an operation (codenamed Bāowéi) to smuggle Teseum from Ariadna to Satori (a moon of Paradiso). An illegal munitions facility on Satori then constructs weapons that are

funnelled to the Libertos insurgency on Varuna, which Yu Jing is using to destabilise PanOceanian interests there.

These conspiracies are not related to each other until their paths cross during the investigation. Jhaerix Anderson, the politician who gets replaced by Massamachos, is poking his nose into the source of the Libertos weapons. Anderson is later copied by the Shasvastii Speculo Killer and the characters defend his family from what at first is a Libertos attack but turns out to be Shasvastii operating from their hidden installation – an *Asharii* base hidden on a Varunan island.

- **Operation 1, Satori Sunrise:** An explosion at a Yu Jingese facility reveals a hidden weapon smuggling venture from Dawn to Varuna, Operation Bāowéi.
- **Operation 2, Killing Ko Dali:** The characters head into the Paradiso jungle in attempt to kill the Yu Jingese traitor and terrorist, Ko Dali.
- **Operation 3, Jungle Blood:** In the jungle, the characters discover the Aldini Group is experimenting on Shasvastii DNA.
- **Operation 4, Ariadna Dawning:** A routine inspection trip goes wrong when their shuttle is shot down and the characters have to trek across Dawn.
- **Operation 5, Praxis Run:** Arriving on the Nomad mothership of the *Bakunin*, the characters are charged with stealing the Shasvastii detector, the Pyxis Device.
- **Operation 6, Varuna Rising:** The characters deal with Libertos terrorists and a new threat, a Shasvastii base. They also fend off an attack by the same Shasvastii.
- **Operation 7, Paradiso Dusk:** The characters return to Paradiso and Satori, this time visiting the Zhi Shan prison. An attempted theft, an attack on Anderson, and a prison break add to the fun.
- **Operation 8, At the Gates of Acheron:** A frenetic space battle erupts as the Shasvastii plot comes to fruition.

WILDERNESS OF MIRRORS

Some Wilderness of Mirrors Objectives are suggested here, although the GM may want to tailor them for their characters.

ALEPH: A chance to access a Black Lab's network and Arachne is a great chance to plant a sniffer program or zero-day exploit inside (*Objective 1, occurs in Operation 5*). Someone's been masking data trails on Varuna. It's up to you to use your access to Anderson to access the necessary channel at his house or office (*Objective 2, occurs in Operation 6*).

Ariadna: Three months ago, an Ariadnan force got lost in the jungle around here. No one returned. See what you can find out (*Objective 1, occurs in Operation 2*). Chyll Tizon may have other information on the various team members. It might be useful leverage, especially on the PanO (*Objective 2, occurs in Operation 4*).

Haqqislam: If there is someone mutilating the Shasvastii corpses, it'd be a golden opportunity to acquire some of their genetic material (*Objective 1, occurs in Operation 3*). The Black Lab on Praxis is likely to have some useful research on their genetic creations – or their abominations. They have stolen data from us before. Make sure that data is purged from the *Bakunin's* systems (*Objective 2, occurs in Operation 5*).

Nomads: The Varuna authorities aren't happy about the mothership's presence there. The NMF are concerned some of the Jollyboat Krews are Hexas agents. See if you can get a Spotbot remote into the Deepwater Space Elevator (*Objective 1, occurs in Operation 6*). When you get to the prison, check the records for an Angel Chavez. If there's a record of them, find out where they were sent (*Objective 2, occurs in Operation 7*).

PanOceania: Not all the information from the listening post got transmitted. Find out what's missing (*Objective 1, occurs in Operation 2*). There's a Yu Jingese spy in the investigation team. Take no action, but report back – it's unlikely to be the O-12 liaison! (*Objective 2, occurs in Operation 4*).

Corporations: There's going to be a few opportunities on Satori regarding the salvage. Pass on data of the salvage op to the Acquisitions Department (*Objective 1, occurs in Operation 1*). Get a dump of the Aldini financial records and their R&D data for a future IP development (*Objective 2, occurs in Operation 6*)!

Mercenaries/Submondo: There's supposed to be an Ariadnan supply cache around here (*Objective 1, occurs in Operation 3*)! Warehouse 59 has some primo gear stored. It needs to get moved before the authorities arrive (*Objective 2, occurs in Operation 6*).

Yu Jing: One of the listening post techs was passing information to the Nomads. Get a download of the transmission logs (*Objective 1, occurs in Operation 2*). There's a rumour of possible sedition among the ship's crew – make sure there's no insurrectionist activity (*Objective 2, occurs in Operation 8*).





OPERATION 1

SATORI SUNRISE



OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

Three days ago, there was a huge explosion on Satori, the Yu Jing-controlled moon of Paradiso. The explosion wiped out Aerodome T-56, an industrial facility.

Initially classified as an industrial accident, O-12 sensors have detected a Teseum signature in the explosion. Given the Combined Army is known to use Teseum-based explosive devices, O-12 has some concerns.

The agents are being immediately dispatched to Satori to discover how a Combined Army terrorist team was able to breach Satori and eliminate the threat they pose by any means necessary.

BACKGROUND

Aerodome T-56 was officially an industrial facility that built autonomous platforms – commercial remotes, engineering waldos, automated laboratories, and the like.

The core of the facility, however, was an illegal munitions factory in Operation Bāowéi. Yu Jing smuggles Teseum and weapons from Ariadna (in violation of trade treaties) and ships the weapons to Libertos insurgents on Varuna, who Yu Jing hopes will destabilise the PanOceanian government there.

THE EXPLOSION

Three days ago, Aerodome T-56 was severely damaged by an explosion. A malfunction in the metal injection systems of the remote construction plant caused a pressure build-up that triggered the magnesium stockpiles to self-combust.

Workers were unable to get the fire under control before an explosion blew out a retaining wall, prompting a secondary explosion in the Teseum processing facility.

The secondary detonation blew out a section of the aerodome, generating explosive decompression that further devastated the facility. Eighteen people died in the initial explosion and eight more due to the dome decompressing.

MISSION BRIEFING

Read aloud or paraphrase the following.

Three days ago, Aerodome T-56 on Paradiso's Satori moon was severely damaged by an explosion. A malfunction in the metal injection systems of the remote construction plant caused a pressure build-up that triggered the magnesium stockpiles to self-combust.

Workers were unable to get the fire under control before an explosion blew out a retaining wall, prompting a secondary explosion in the processing facility. Initially classified as an industrial accident, O-12 sensors have detected a Teseum signature in the explosion. Given the Combined Army is known to use Teseum-based explosives, O-12 has some concerns. As you were available, you're being dispatched to Satori to (a) discover how a terrorist team was able to breach Satori and (b) eliminate the threat they pose by any means necessary.

SCENE 1: ARRIVAL ON SATORI

The characters' ship rushes over the muddy, reddish soil of Satori's mining fields. Half the sky is filled with the dim, silver light of Nirvana, around which Satori orbits. Below, there are impact craters left from the battles of the NeoColonial Wars.

Their flight is held in a holding pattern around Grey Lotus Spaceport for several hours. They can see other flights being allowed to land normally.

GREY LOTUS SPACEPORT

The spaceport is a cluster of a half-dozen aerodomes surrounded by a tangled spiderweb of landing strips sandblasted out of the surrounding lithosphere.

Once the ship slips through the assigned airlock, there is another lengthy delay as it's subjected to a meticulous (and unnecessary) "surface decontamination" process.

The ship is directed to a small, inconvenient hangar not connected to the main terminals. As they disembark the ship, they are met by the "welcoming committee."

WELCOMING COMMITTEE

Kui Nangfen is a diplomatic attaché from the Grey Lotus sub-procuratorate and is accompanied by four members of the Judicial Police.

Kui's job is to notify the agents that Yu Jing "fully appreciates O-12's assistance in this investigation," and that he's been assigned to "make sure their every need is met." It takes the form of informing the characters the following:

- To maintain security on Satori, the Magistracy is working tirelessly to get them the security clearances they need to leave the Grey Lotus compound.
- Wonderful accommodations have made for them in the Kuàigēn Hotel, where they'll be able to stay until the security clearances arrive.

Kui has no real authority; he is purely a functionary. At best, the characters will be able to convince him to schedule a meeting with his superior, but in the meantime they'll be able to wait in their suite at the Kuàigēn.

KUÀIGĒN HOTEL

The Kuàigēn is a deep borehole directly beneath one of the spaceport terminals. It connects to the subterranean arcology of Inmate. Virtually all outsiders — *Pipa* — are kept isolated within Grey Lotus and its arcology.

The architecture here is bulbous and asymmetrical, a result of the technology used to open the artificial caverns beneath the surface of Satori.

The hotel staff are courteous and welcoming. The agents are escorted to a beautiful suite of luxurious rooms — where they find Jia Song (p. 142) waiting for them, sitting comfortably in a chair with a snifter of brandy perched languorously in one hand.

A YǎNJĭNG PATRON

Jia Song introduces herself as a member of Yǎnjīng (true), a low-level agent (false) in the Colonial Affairs Section (false).

She'll explain the situation here on Satori. The agents will be given every courtesy. So long as they behave themselves, they will be pampered in the best luxury offered in Huìsè Loquat, and they will never get anywhere near the T-56 facility.

Song offers to cut through the red tape for them. She thinks the local bureaucracy is being short-sighted by not cooperating with O-12 in this matter, and she can get them access to the crime scene so that they can conduct their investigation.

OFFICIAL ESCORT

In the morning, Kui Nanfeng — this time without the police officers — arrives to serve as the agents' guide to Aerodome T-56.

Customs Agent —
Infinity Corebook, p. 428

Police (Trooper) —
Infinity Corebook, p. 449

PIPA

Yujingyu refer to outsiders with the slang term *Pipa*, which can be roughly translated as "hanging fruits".

JIA SONG'S AGENDA

Jia's mission is to protect the Libertos Operation, but she's concluded that O-12's knowledge of the Teseum signature in the explosion makes it impossible to prevent them from learning of an unregistered munitions factory in Aerodome T-56.

If this is the PC's first operation, she'll be looking to "assist their investigation" to tag the investigation and keep it under close observation.

If Song is aware the characters are assigned (or are going to be assigned) to the Ko Dali case, she'll also be looking to earn a favour that she'll be able to exchange for her desired outcome in the Ko Dali case.



YǎNJǐNG OBSERVERS

Working for Jia Song, the observers' job is to covertly monitor the agents' investigation.

Song doesn't care about the munition factory being exposed, but the observers will interfere if they become aware that the characters are trying to access the Yǎnjīng Data Centre (see "Scene 4").

If they can get recordings of the agents doing something Song could use as blackmail later, all the better.

Operatives (x2) use Detective — *Infinity Corebook*, p. 428

Enforcers (x2) use Elite Spec Ops — *Infinity Corebook*, p. 455

Infowar Specialist use Elite Evo Trooper — *Infinity Corebook*, p. 433

PLAYTEST TIP

NO SONG

The characters don't need Jia Song to do their job. If they get tired of Yu Jing messing around with them and decide to sneak out and make their own way to Aerodome T-56, the GM can have some fun with the characters slipping out of the hotel and possibly losing their Imperial Agent handlers.

SCENE 2: AERODOME T-56

Aerodome T-56 lacks any form of airport or spaceport. Those wanting to visit the aerodome must travel there via train. The Jíguāng maglev backbone can take agents from Grey Lotus to Nanchǎnyè, where they can transfer to the T-Loop.

T-Loop maglev services all the T-region aerodomes. A mix of passenger and freight trains run along it at regular intervals, with the latter primarily being shipped through Nanchǎnyè to the Huáng Bǎo military complex or the big cargo railgun in Dàndào.

APPROACHING T-56

The damage from the explosion to T-56 is clearly visible as the train approaches. A temporary patch has been placed over the breach, a swollen lump bubbling out the side of the dome.

The sight is blotted out as the train passes into the huge airlock tube, allowing the train to transition seamlessly from the airless surfaces of the planet to the interior of the dome without slowing down. When the train slides into the aerodome's station and comes to a halt, no one except the agents get off.

Once inside, the dome's entire interior is pressurised. The bulging patch on the side of the dome can be seen from anywhere inside the dome. Work crews labour to permanently repair the damage, although with the distance between the works and the agents, they're little more than dots flitting around.

T-LOOP STATION

The T-Loop Station is a long, utilitarian building. It primarily services factory workers travelling to and from their homes, either in T-region residential domes or back in Nanchǎnyè.

The station is eerie, like a post-apocalyptic ghost town. The depressurisation of the dome has scattered trash and debris, and cleaning it up hasn't been made a priority. There are few passengers, and strange eddies in the air cause mini dust-devils of litter to spring up and strange rustling noises to emanate from the tunnels and empty corridors.

AUXILIARY WAREHOUSES

The auxiliary warehouses contain surplus raw supplies used by the factory modules. One of the warehouses has a hidden compartment at the rear, where the Teseum is stored on pallets.

A character will notice the interior of the warehouse is smaller than the exterior with a successful **Challenging (D2) Observation test** success. A

Challenging (D2) Observation test success discovers the hidden control panel inside the warehouse to open the concealed door, and a **Challenging (D2) Thievery** or **Average (D1) Hacking test** success bypasses the quantronic lock.

The hidden compartment has several pallets loaded with Teseum. An **Average (D1) Science/Tech test** success allows a character to know none of the factory modules here at T-56 should require Teseum. The quantronic IDs on the pallets reveal they were shipped here from Kenshō Spaceport — an **Average (D1) Hacking test** will discover this.

RESERVOIR COMPLEX

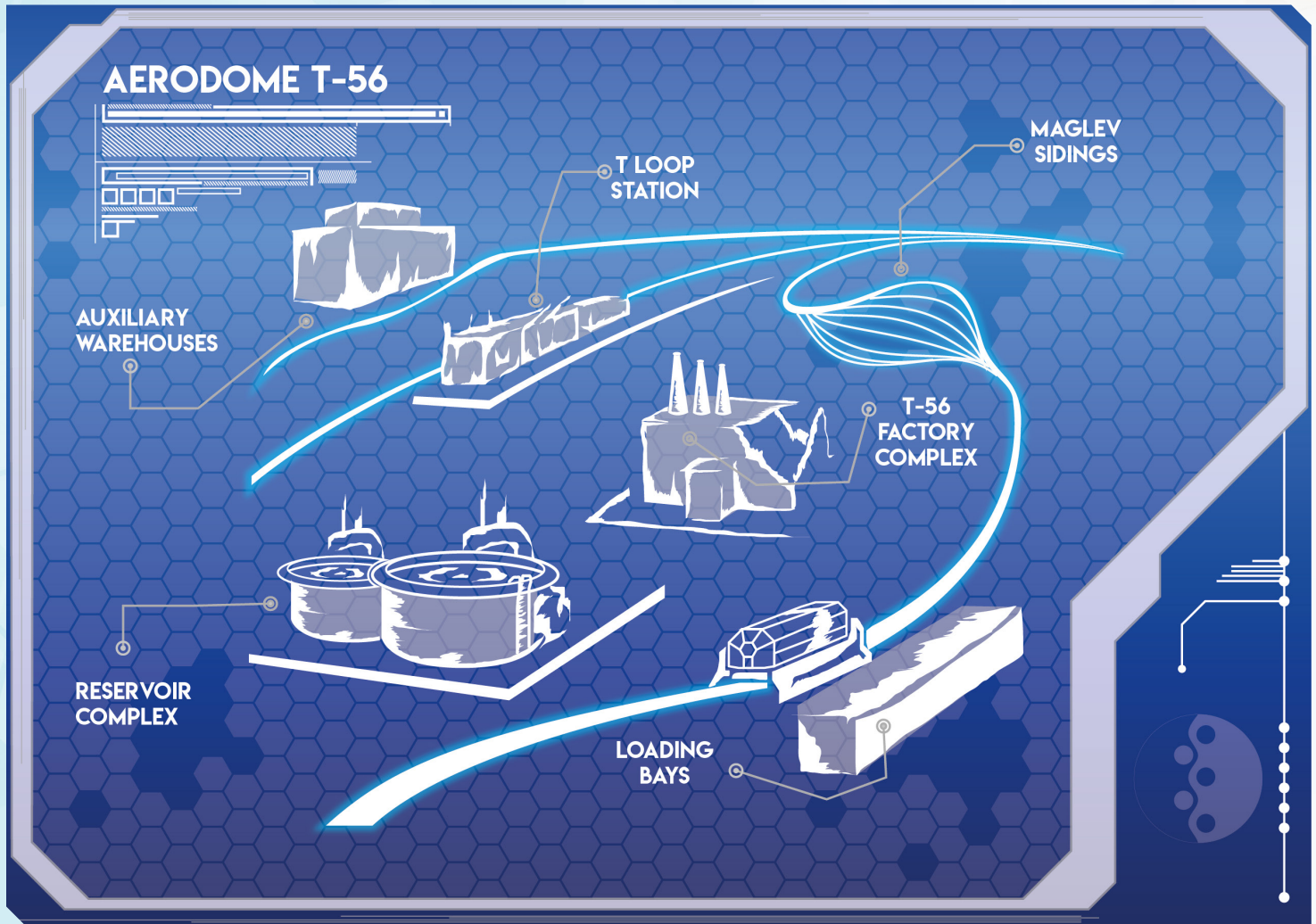
The reservoirs are two large, deep reserves of water. They supply drinking water and assist in the atmospheric processing.

- **Atmospheric Plant:** Water is drawn from the reservoirs and cracked into fresh oxygen and hydrogen. The latter is bottled as fuel, the former released into the dome. If a character spends time examining the equipment, a **Challenging (D2) Tech test** success reveals the southern reservoir has been disconnected from the atmospheric plant — water is not being sourced from there.
- **Northern Reservoir:** The level of water in the northern reservoir is higher than normal since the pipelines to the southern reservoir were shut down.
- **Sewage Works:** All the sewage produced in Aerodome T-56 is processed here, recycled, and the cleansed water returned to the reservoirs. Like the atmospheric plant, a **Challenging (D2) Tech test** success reveals the connection to the southern reservoir has been shut down — the recycled water is not being returned to the southern reservoir.
- **Southern Reservoir:** Incriminating evidence (damaged equipment, etc.) from the munition's factory has been sunk in the southern reservoir. If it's drained or otherwise accessed, an **Average (D1) Tech test** success determines the wreckage originated from a munitions plant.

LOADING LOOP

The loading loop peels off from the primary T-Loop maglev track and circles around the factory modules.

- **Loading Bays:** These facilities are designed to load cargo shipped from the factory modules into cargo pods, then loaded onto the automated cargo chasses.
- **Maglev Sidings:** These sidings hold several cargo pods on self-automated cargo chasses.




Any cargo pods containing munitions or other incriminating evidence have long since been moved to other facilities.

T-56 FACTORY COMPLEX

The T-56 Factory Complex has four factory modules, numbered one to four in Chinese (Yī, Sān, Èr, Sì), with a central tower. The factory modules are connected (either directly or via interior corridors) to the shipping warehouse which juts out from one side of the structure.

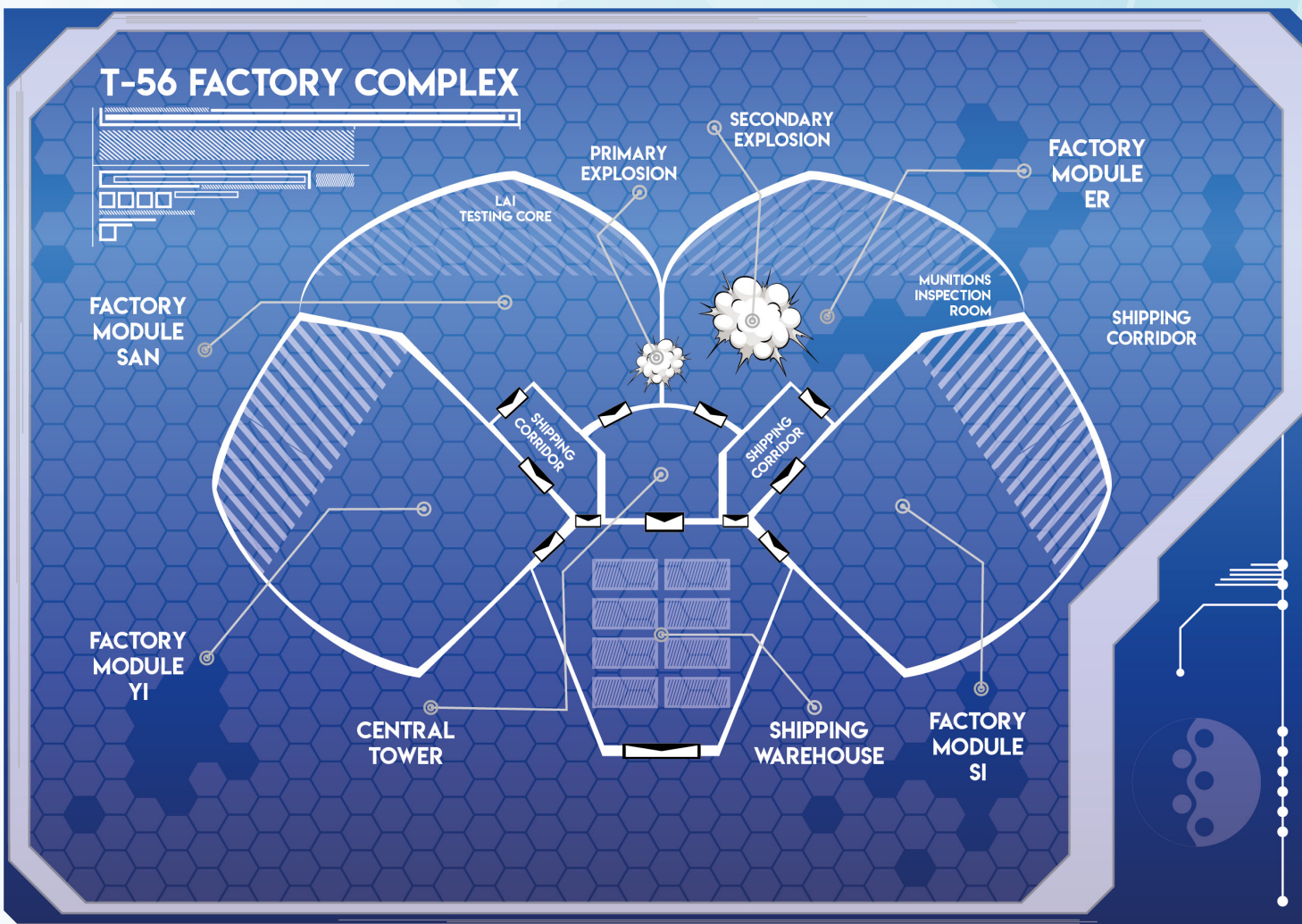
CENTRAL TOWER

Kitchen: The kitchen was cleared out and cleaned after the disaster. It has been recently restocked (although clearly at a reduced level) in anticipation of the Yī and Sì factory modules re-opening in the future. The names of some employees can be gleaned from the old work schedules still posted in the communal AR here. (See “Scene 3”)

Lunchroom: Workers would eat here in shifts. The tables and chairs here count as soft Cover Soak (+2 .

Management (2nd Floor): The factory’s quantronic hub is based out of these offices. A **Challenging (D2) Hacking test** success is required to access the hub and the records.

- Records related to Factory Module Èr have been purged from the system. If queries are made as to why, it will be stated that the damage to the module was so severe that its operations are being moved to a different facility. All local records have been transferred to the new facility, which no one can/will identify, and removed from the local servers.
- The sole exception are the employment records, which still include everyone who worked on site. (See “Scene 3: The Survivors”) These records also indicate that workers for the Yī and Sì hubs are scheduled to come back to work in two weeks.



Communications Hub (3rd Floor): The hub monitors all of the shipping QIDs, creating a massive amount of data tracking everything into or out of Aerodome T-56. A character succeeding at an **Average (D1) Analysis** or **Observation test** notices some of the QID data has been encrypted and hidden with data flux camouflage.

An **Average (D1) Hacking test** reveals that large amounts of raw materials were being shipped to Aerodome T-56 from Kenshō Spaceport and similar quantities of finished goods were being shipped from Factory Module Ēr back to Kenshō Spaceport. Spending 1 Momentum on this test also reveals some of the raw material QIDs are still active inside the aerodome. These are the Teseum palettes hidden in the auxiliary warehouses (see p. 8).

*Data Flux Camouflage –
Infinity Corebook, p. 118*

SHIPPING WAREHOUSE

The shipping warehouse did not suffer significant damage during the explosion and has since been cleaned up.

- **Warehouse Operations:** The warehouse processes incoming raw supplies then stores them in the appropriate factory modules. It receives finished goods from the modules and loads them onto autojacks, which take them to the loading bays to be packed into cargo pods.
- **QID Tracking Records:** The shipping warehouse tracks every QID, creating a record of everything moving into or through the warehouse. From the records, the characters can learn the following:
 - **Data Analysis:** On a successful **Average (D1) Analysis test**, the character realises reported output of the factory is too small for the scale of operations here in the shipping warehouse. Either this factory was operating significantly below capacity or production

and shipping records have been purged from the system.

- **Recovering Data:** A **Challenging (D2) Hacking test** success recovers the lost data, which indicates constant shipments of raw material from Kenshō Spaceport and finished items from Factory Module Ēr being shipped back to Kenshō Spaceport.

FACTORY MODULE SÂN (PRIMARY EXPLOSION)

Factory Module Sân produced *Kě'ài Kě'ài*, a petite TinBot variant with the appearance of a cute, cartoon-like animal. The equipment in this module (even the damaged equipment) has not been disturbed.

- **Primary Explosion Site – Tech (D1):** This was the site of the initial explosion, and the blast wasn't the result of explosives. The official line is a malfunction in the metal injection systems caused a pressure build-up that triggered the magnesium stockpiles to self-combust. The magnesium blew out the retaining wall between this factory module and the adjoining one. This explosion, however, does not explain all of the damage sustained by the T-56 facility. It appears a secondary explosion was sparked on the far side of the retaining wall.

- *GM Note:* This analysis will not explain where the Teseum signature detected by O-12 came from.

- **Security Cameras:** There are security cameras monitoring the entire factory module. Their records have been purged, however. An **Analysis (D1) test** will indicate that the data was transferred to an offsite data centre (see "Scene 4: Yǎnjīng Data Centre").
- **LAI Testing Core:** The factory includes an LAI core for testing *Kě'ài Kě'ài* programming. The LAI – which speaks with an adolescent, extremely over-enthusiastic personality strewing its speech with animal-based puns that only make sense in Chinese – is essentially an eyewitness to the explosion. Its quantronic recordings (which it volunteers with proper social persuasion or obtained through an Infowar attack) were overlooked by the Yǎnjīng clean-up crew. The recordings only show the Sân side of the explosion. Either one confirms the forensic analysis of the primary explosion site – there was no sabotage.

FACTORY MODULE ĒR (MUNITIONS)

Factory Module Ēr was an unregistered weapons factory and storage. Its work included Teseum-based weaponry. The cover story is that this factory module was producing automated engineering facilities. All the equipment in this section has been purged and the factory floor emptied.

- **Secondary Explosion Site:** A smaller explosion from the neighbouring factory module breached the retaining wall, and according to the trace energy signatures, ignited a massive stockpile of Teseum T-2 ammunition and the volatile chemicals used in their manufacture. This secondary explosion was channelled upwards, blowing out the roof of the building and a section of the aerodome above it. A character succeeding at a **Challenging (D2) Science** or **Tech test** will notice the explosion was multi-directional and consisted of a number of smaller explosions.
- **Munitions Inspection Room:** Anyone with an appropriate skill (Ballistics, Tech, etc.) will recognise this small sub-complex as being designed for the testing of munitions – redundant safety precautions, blast-proof construction, and so forth – not something one would expect to find in an automated manufacturing facility. A character succeeding at a **Daunting (D3) Observation test** finds a partially melted T-2 shotgun shell embedded in a crack in the wall.
- **Security Cameras:** There are security cameras monitoring the entire factory module. Their records have been purged, however. An **Average (D1) Analysis test** success indicates the data was transferred to an offsite data centre (see "Scene 4: Yǎnjīng Data Centre").

OTHER FACTORY MODULES

- **Factory Module Yī:** This module produces quantronic processing wafers, used in a large number of commercial products. Some are delivered directly to the Sân and Sì modules, but most are shipped out. None were used in the Ēr module.
- **Factory Module Sì:** This module manufactures implantable comlogs. It is a standard commercial product, marketed under a variety of brand names.

LAI –
Infinity Corebook, p. 443





SCENE 3: THE SURVIVORS

GM TIP:

EMPLOYEES

It is recommended not to start with an Ēr employee unless the characters specifically target one.

Most of the former T-56 employees will speak freely if approached. Some, particularly those working in Factory Module Ēr, require an **Average (D1) Persuade test**.

What individual survivors know depends on where they were stationed in T-56 (see below). There are hundreds of employees; the GM should frame a handful of scenes, each focused on one type of employee.

Ask the players who they want to talk to. If they name a specific type of employee, go with that. If the criteria or metric they use would result in an essentially random selection, do so.

THE SURVIVORS

All survivors can provide general background on Aerodome T-56 and its official operations. If the GM needs a name, they can use the list on p. 148.

- After the explosion, the upper dome was blown out. Decompression evacuation procedures were chaotic. Some people remained locked down inside the interior rooms for hours until they could be cycled out to the T-Loop Station.
- Depending on their circumstances, they are likely to know well one of the eighteen people killed in the initial explosion or the eight additional people who died in the dome decompression. The GM is encouraged to add a personal tragedy in here: a close friend, fiancé, or relative.
- Factory Module Ēr had high security and workers there had special clearances. Those working outside Factory Module Ēr won't know exactly what was going on in there.

OUTSIDE THE FACTORY COMPLEX

- Workers outside of the factory complex (T-Loop, warehouse, taking a break, etc.) heard fire alarm klaxons sound.
- A few minutes later, an explosion ripped out the top of the factory of the complex. It was like a "pillar of fire" and blew a hole in the side of the dome.
- Those outside and away from facilities were at greatest risk from decompression, as they were far away from emergency equipment. Key information: there was a gap between the initial fire alarm and the explosion that destroyed the dome (an **Average D1 Analysis test** success).

SHIPPING WAREHOUSE SURVIVORS

- There was an explosion from somewhere inside the factory complex, followed immediately by alarm klaxons. Workers started pouring out of

the Sân module, followed by billowing smoke.

- A few minutes later, the entire building shook with the force of a second explosion, this one in the Ēr module. This was followed by decompression alarms. The automatic systems sealed the factory exits, but the air was still being sucked out of the building.
- If asked about Factory Module Ēr, warehouse workers will note that there was a lot of unusual autojack activity surrounding Ēr-related matériel. Ēr would ship out stuff already pre-packaged in cargo pods. Why wouldn't they just use the automated systems in the T-Loop loading bays for that? If pushed, they'll remember that the Ēr cargo pods were quantronically addressed to a cargo agent at Kenshō Spaceport named Okamoto Hiroshige.

FACTORY MODULES YĪ SÌ SURVIVORS

- They can describe the products manufactured in their units (quantronic processing wafers in YĪ; implantable comlogs in SÌ). They're expecting to go back to work in about two weeks.
- There was the sound of an explosion (YĪ workers will identify it as coming from Sân; SÌ workers will only be able to say that it came from the "far side of the compound"), followed immediately by alarm klaxons.
- A few minutes later, the entire building shook with the force of a second explosion. This was followed by decompression alarms and chaos.

FACTORY MODULE SÂN SURVIVORS

- They'll talk about the *Kě'ài Kě'ài* remotes they produced. (Some Sân workers are actually hyperfans of the cute, cartoon-like animals and are willing to wax rhapsodic about them.)
- Everything was fine that day until there was a malfunction in the metal injection systems. They had to hit the big red button and halt production while repair techs swarmed all over it, plugging in diagnostic boxes. People had just started chattering about needing to work overtime to make up the production shortfall when the entire apparatus exploded.
- It blew a big hole in the wall. Fire was spreading fast. Alarm klaxons were going off. The whole place filled up with smoke very, very quickly.
- Most Sân workers began evacuating at this point and may not have seen what happened next. If not, they'll still be able to report that there was a second, much bigger explosion from "behind them" followed by the dome decompressing.



FACTORY MODULE ËR SURVIVORS

- **Finding Ër Workers:** Unlike the other T-56 employees, who are mostly on leave and waiting to go back to work, the workers from the Ër facility have been broken up and scattered around other facilities across Satori.
- **Secrecy Agreement:** Ër workers were forced to sign secrecy agreements. It requires a Metanoia Effect to get them to agree to talk about what happened.
- The Ër workers have been given a cover story and will claim that they were creating portable automated engineering facilities. If they're cracked, they'll reveal that they were making

Yungang Xing 4.2 Combi Rifles, shotguns, Type 8.7 and 8.9 missile launchers, and a variety of micro, high-yield explosives.

- Ër workers will give a largely accurate description of what happened. A fire started in the neighbouring factory module, triggering an explosion that ripped through the wall. The fire spread to the Teseum stockpiles used in the Ër munitions projects, and caused the volatile chemicals used in Teseum processing to explode, blowing out the roof of the building and a section of the aerodome above it.

SURVIVOR STATS: Personality 8, Discipline +1/1, Persuade +0/0, Stress 8

SCENE 4: YǎNJĪNG DATA CENTRE

NETWORK SECURITY

Authentication: Yǎnjīng's user accounts include biometric verification and a passkey.

- **User:** Can access all zones except *Zone 5*. Scanned by Security LAI (requiring Stealth test).
- **Security:** Can access *Zone 5*. Ignored by Security LAI.

Military HighSec: The entire data centre network has Military HighSec, +4 Interference Soak.

Security LAI Patrol: Starts in *Zone 3*. Moves once every 1+1 rounds to a random *Zone 1*, then back).

Auxiliary Agents: If an alarm is raised (due to the Crybaby IC in *Zone 1*, from any of the Security LAIs, or from the Sysop in *Zone 6*), three auxiliary agents will log into *Zone 6* 1+1 rounds later.

DATA NETWORK

Zone 1 – Crybaby Entrances: These zones are the access points which can be discovered by the agents during their investigation, including the data transfer of the security camera feeds from the T-56 factory, the data purge of Okamoto Hiroshige's personal network, and a signal trace from the Qinping black box transmitter.

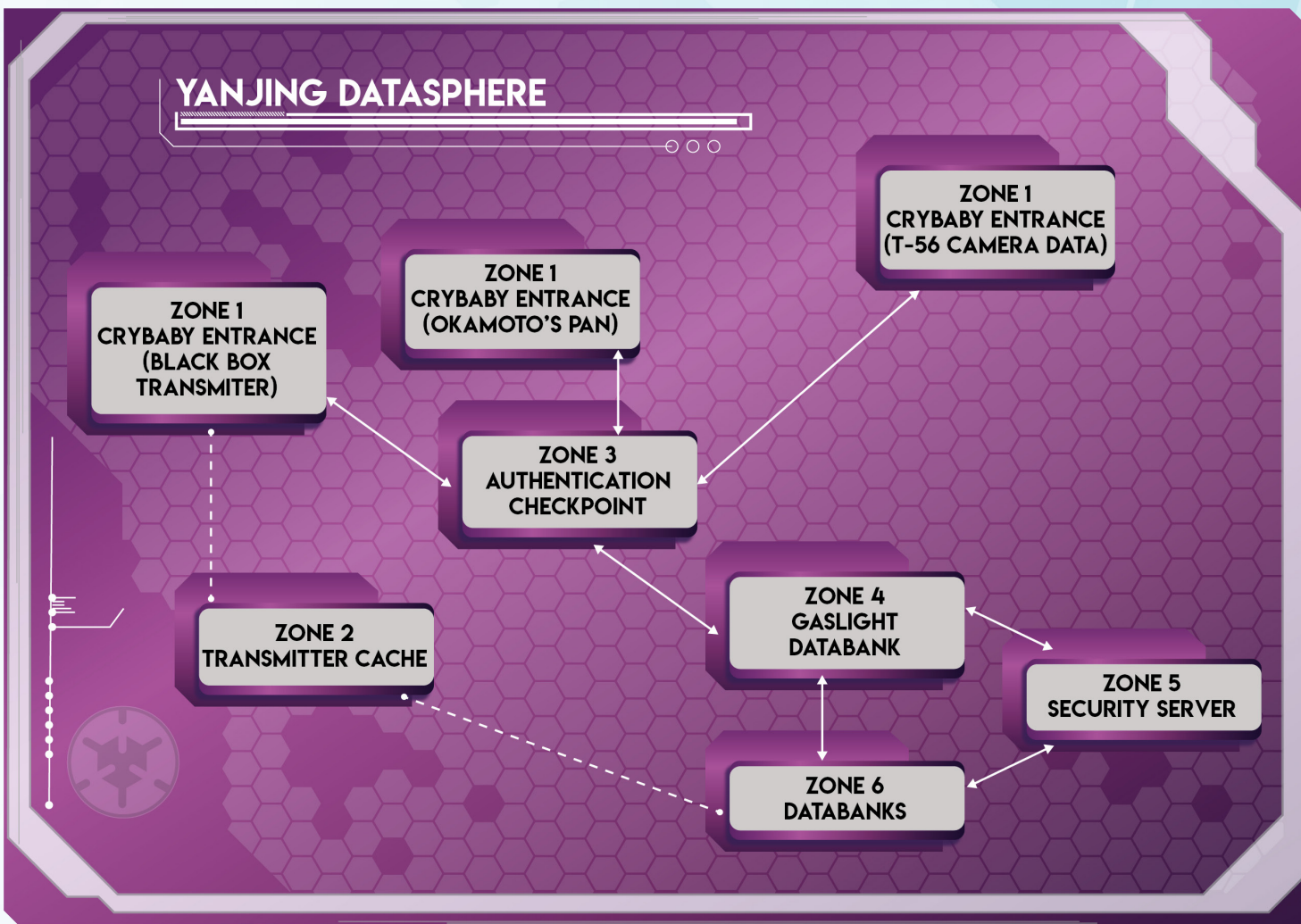
- **IC-1 Crybaby:** Triggering the Crybaby causes four wardrivers to enter *Zone 5: Security* on the following round.
- **Transmitter Data Tunnel:** The black box transmitter access point has a data tunnel to *Zone 2*. It has data flux camouflage (noticed with an **Average (D1) Observation test**) and requires a **Hacking (D1) test** to access.

PLAYTEST TIP

It is not anticipated characters will attempt to physically access the data centre. If they are creative enough to come up with a scheme that might succeed, the GM should concoct a scenario which will give them the opportunity to do so.

LAI –
Infinity Corebook, p. 443

EVO Trooper –
Infinity Corebook, p. 433



PLAYTEST TIPS

Pulling down the entire databank is impractical unless characters have prepared to set up a huge server farm of their own and are able to deal with Yǎnjīng security pouring down in response to the massive data traffic. If they decide to just randomly yank out data, call for an **Analysis (D0) test** and create a dedicated Momentum pool that the characters can use to answer questions later (1 question per Momentum).


Zone 2 – Transmitter Cache: This is a hole in the network's security. A data cache is created by the Qīnpíng black box transmitter as the information is being sent to Yǎnjīng, but it hasn't been properly secured.

- **Transmitter Data Tunnel:** To *Zone 6: Databanks*. A **Hacking (D1) test** to access.

Zone 3 – Authentication Checkpoint:

- **Secured Zone:** Firewall 2

Zone 4 – Gaslight Databank:

- **IC-1 Gaslight:** Those who fail to bypass this Gaslight IC will believe that they have accessed the Yǎnjīng databanks. They will be able to search for and pull data (as described in "Zone 6"), but a casual **Analysis (D1) test** will reveal that the intel is garbage.
- **Identification Hack:** As a zone effect, each round that a character remains in this zone they suffer 1+2  quantronic damage. If the character is

under the effects of the Gaslight IC, this is a sneaky action which can be noticed with an **Analysis or Observation (D2) test** or (D1) if a Breach is inflicted. An inflicted Breach will identify the character; a second Breach will install a well-hidden program that will activate in two weeks and track the character's data traffic and location. This requires a **Dire (D4) Analysis test** to detect before activation and a **Challenging (D2) Analysis test** after activation. This zone effect can be disabled with a **Hacking (D1) test**.

Zone 5 – Security Server:

- **Secured Zone:** Firewall 4
- **Sysop:** Wardriver (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 461)

Zone 6 – Databanks: This node contains everything stored in this data centre. This should not be mistaken for all the information Yǎnjīng possesses; this is a local, compartmentalised network.

- **Secured Zone:** Firewall 12

- **Security LAI** (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 443)
- **Security Footage:** The security footage from the T-56 facility. This footage clearly reveals that the facility was an illegal munitions factory. It also reveals (or confirms) that the explosion was an industrial accident. An **Analysis (D1) test** notes that an older segment of footage from 3 months ago has been flagged by Yǎnjīng analysts. That footage shows the exact same worker being present in two locations at the same time. One of these workers can be seen sneaking into the communications hub and accessing the records there.

- **GM Background:** This is evidence of Massamachos's operation here on Satori. Because the records at T-56 had not yet been cleansed, Massamachos was able to identify the operation name. He then pursued an independent line of investigation

that eventually allowed him to identify Aka Technologies.

- **Operation Bāowéi – Teseum Shipping Manifests:** These are duplicates of those found in the Qínghing Shipping Warehouse. The Teseum originates from Aka Technologies, located in the Snark Lands on the planet Dawn. (See "Scene 5: Kenshō Spaceport".)
- **Operation Bāowéi – Munitions Shipping Manifests:** Pulled from Okamoto's system ("Scene 5: Kenshō Spaceport"), these reveal that the munitions from the T-56 factory are being shipped to the Riojas Tecnos warehouse on Varuna.
- **Worker Secrecy Agreements:** There are records here of the T-56 workers who were forced to sign secrecy agreements and then reassigned. (See "Scene 3: The Survivors".)

SCENE 5: KENSHŌ SPACEPORT

Kenshō is a small spaceport isolated out on the far edge of the Satori maglev network. It primarily services a cluster of Japanese labour colonies. Yǎnjīng is using Kenshō as a locus for Operation Bāowéi, smuggling T-2 ammunition to Aerodome T-56 through the Qínghing Shipping Warehouse and then shipping the illegal munitions produced using the Teseum to the Libertos terrorists on Varuna via a quantronic cargo agent named Okamoto Hiroshige.

QUANTRONIC CARGO AGENT

- As a roving agent, he doesn't have an office and conducts all business quantronically.
- **Personal Area Network:** If the characters can access his PAN, they'll discover that the data records relating to T-56 have been scrubbed. An **Analysis (D1) test** success traces the data purge to the Yǎnjīng Data Centre (see "Scene 4").

OKAMOTO HIROSHIGE

Appearance: A well-groomed businessman with oily black hair and a silvery business suit, Okamoto has a small, star-shaped tattoo next to his right eye. The tattoo is keyed to Hiroshige's halo. Anyone studying it will find it unfolding with endless fractal detail.

Roleplaying:

- Refuses to shake hands (or engage in other physical contact).
- Contemplatively taps his index finger against his cheekbone.
- Curiously uninterested in proffered business opportunities.

Background: Okamoto Hiroshige is a Yǎnjīng agent. His Japanese heritage alternately makes him highly valued and highly suspected by the agency. He's

operated on Satori under his cover as a cargo agent for the past six years, facilitating a wide range of cover smuggling operations. The T-56 catastrophe, unfortunately, has left him exposed. Yǎnjīng has temporarily purged his portfolio and left him with the purely mundane work of his cover identity until the smoke clears. If it becomes clear that the characters have blown his operation, however, it will most likely be permanently shut down.

Okamoto is proud of the work he's done here, but increasingly feels as if he's been side-lined in a dead-end assignment.

Key Info: Okamoto is a loyal, well-trained operative. Breaking him requires overcoming Intransigence 3.

- He does not know the full details of Operation Bāowéi, only his small part of it.
- Munitions are assembled at Aerodome T-56. He arranges their covert shipment to the Riojas Tecnos warehouse on Varuna.

Stats: Information Broker (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 440)



QINPING SHIPPING WAREHOUSE

LAI –

Infinity Corebook, p. 443

Qinping is a completely automated shipping warehouse on the outskirts of the Kenshō Spaceport complex. The prefabbed walls of the building basically form one large room with a barebones landing facility on one side and a set of three loading doors on the other.

- Remotes are used for both security and loading/unloading.
- Spaceships arrive on an irregular schedule. Remotes unload the cargo, and LAI-operated trucks ship material out.
- **Qinping LAI:** The LAI can be physically accessed via a maintenance hatch in the floor at the centre of the warehouse. It is quantronically accessed via any of the onsite remotes.
 - **Black Box Transmitter:** The Qinping LAI sends status reports to the Yǎnjīng Data Centre via a black box transmitter. This is a one-way method of communication. The LAI pushes information into the black box; the black box encrypts it and sends it via a burst transmission. This process can be seen by someone accessing the LAI's network, but there's no way to trace where the data is going. (If one can physically access the transmitter – which is physically attached to the LAI's quantronic core – the signal can be traced to the data centre.)

GM BACKGROUND

The Speculo Killer Massamachos used their ghost ship to infiltrate the Qinping facility to trace Yu Jing's covert supply of Teseum. It hacked the Qinping LAI and extracted the same data about the Kardell Corporation shipments the characters have discovered. It will follow that trail as described in "Operation 4: Ariadna Dawning".

part of Operation Bāowéi is masked by a patina of legitimate commercial shipping activity, but an **Analysis (D1) test** success pulls out the pertinent data.

- The shipments of materiel to Aerodome T-56 all arrive on Kardell Corporation transports originating from Dawn.
- These are the *only* Kardell Corporation shipments processed by the Qinping warehouse.
- Following the explosion at T-56, it appears all upcoming Kardell Corporation shipments were cancelled.
- If the characters spend 1 Momentum on the **Analysis test** (or specifically go looking for any unusual flights), they'll notice that the telemetry on one of the Kardell Corporation transports from three months ago had anomalous readings. If they spend 2 Momentum (or make an additional **Analysis test** to specifically look at the anomaly), they can identify the readings as being consistent with a Shasvastii remora ghost ship invisibly attached to the hull of the transport.

A SUMMARY OF THEIR FINDINGS

Throughout their investigation, the agents find a pattern of evidence indicating that the explosion was, in fact, an accident and not the result of sabotage.

Their findings indicate that there is something odd going at Aerodome T-56 linking to both Dawn and Varuna.



OPERATION 2

KILLING KO DALI

OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

This mission is a simple seek and report mission. The target is Ko Dali, a thorn in the side for Yu Jing honour and a powerful Combined Army propaganda tool. She and her Combined Army friends have been busy.

It's assumed that the characters are entering this adventure from "Operation 1: Satori Sunrise" — but this mission can be also used as a springboard to the first operation in this book.

MISSION BRIEFING

Ko Dali was a member of the Tiger Soldiers Regiment. She was a hero to both her native Yu Jing and all the allied forces fighting in the Paradiso theatre. Tragically, however, she was believed killed in action while commanding Operation Jing Fēng (Silent Wind) as part of the Paradiso Affair.

Three months ago, she reappeared, leading a force of Combined Army soldiers in an attack on a Technological Investigation Centre with an uplink to Satori.

The official position of Yu Jing and O-12 is that Ko Dali died in 65 NC and the Combined Army has been using her likeness as a propaganda tool. Unofficially, intel strongly indicates she's been either suborned or sepsitorized.

The revelation of Ko Dali's unwilling — or willing — betrayal of humanity would be a crushing blow to morale on Paradiso. The knowledge and personal connections she possessed also represent a security breach of unknown parameters. It's even possible that she is connected to other moles.

The situation cannot be allowed to persist. And, to that end, you're assigned to track down Ko Dali, verify her location, then bug out. A specialist strike team — Tiger Soldiers — will then take her out. It's probably a bad idea to get between the Tiger Soldiers and Ko Dali. Hell of a grudge match. It's a risky mission. Ko Dali is unlikely to be alone.

Twenty minutes ago, Ko Dali's guerrilla group hit a military listening post 100 miles outside the fallen city of Xiongxiang. Guess where you're headed.





BACKGROUND

XIONGXIANG CONFLICT REGION

During the Second Offensive, an Armed Imposition Detachment of Shasvastii Gwailos fought their way through a series of well-defended enemy positions. The Shasvastii cemented the Combined Army victory in the city by taking the factory complex of Huà Miàn Systems. Yu Jing High Command believes that there is no way of retaking Xiongxian, but regular air drops allow the defenders of the city to hold out until High Command can organise a counter-offensive.

Yu Jing evacuated a sizeable portion of the population into underground bunkers beneath the city. The Yu Jingese forces harass the Combined Army forces roaming the streets and use guerrilla tactics from the booby-trapped caverns. The routes to the bunkers are a well-guarded secret, and the soldiers who protect the city's population keep the secret as safe as they can.

Determined to fight on against the alien invaders, the remnants of an Invincible Army Regional Combat Team have taken to calling themselves the protectors of Xiongxian. Their use of fade and strike tactics and their local knowledge of the area allow them to constantly hinder the Combined Army. They are often able to strike vital enemy positions with minimal risk. However, even a small casualty rate is problematic for their unit which is so short of reinforcements and materiel, especially now that the EI has deployed highly skilled Oznat hunters to track them down.

Xiongxian was one of the first targets of the Combined Army during the Second Offensive. Although the Combined Army seized the surface, most of the population was evacuated into labyrinthine caverns below the city. A resistance effort, known as the Ghosts of Xiongxian, arose, and as a result, the Combined Army's advance became bogged down.

Efforts by the Combined Army to advance en masse out of Xiongxian resulted in debilitating strikes from the Ghosts behind their lines. As a result, since the end of the Second Offensive, a vast no man's land has opened in the jungles south of Xiongxian. It is a chaotic snarl of small action teams jockeying for position.

The Combined Army's sphere of influence, however, has been inexorably advancing south towards Neiting. Evacuation convoys are moving the populations of the smaller settlements north of Neiting to relative safety (either within the city or to the west).

KO DALI'S CURRENT OPERATION

Ko Dali and her team arrived in the Xiongxian region one week ago. They plan to remain here indefinitely, with a full mission profile that is opportunistic and multi-tasked. Her initial purpose in the area is to serve as a resource for Massamachos, who she has been coordinating with since the beginning.

- **1 Week Ago:** Massamachos lands its ghost ship in the area and begins preparations to insert itself into a refugee caravan. It draws genetic samples from the population of Yangshuo village.
- **3 Days Ago:** Ko Dali sets up camp near Xiongxian to coordinate with Massamachos. She delivers the intel she took from the Satori facility.
- **Today:** Ko Dali and her team physically rendezvous at Massamachos's ghost ship, then attack a Yu Jingese listening post to pinpoint the location of the refugee convoy.

Ko Dali's group will target the convoy, insert Massamachos, and then return to their base camp to prepare for their next operation. Massamachos will travel with the convoy to Neiting, then rapidly swap through a variety of identities. Its eventual goal is to reach the space elevator in Valkenswijk and book transport to Varuna (see "Operation 5: Praxis Run"). Once it learns of the Pyxis Shasvastii Detector, its twin Tokloshii takes that trip in its stead.

JIA SONG'S AGENDA

Jia Song and Ko Dali were partners before Ko Dali was "killed". She wants Ko Dali to be brought in alive and believes that Ko Dali can be saved. When Jia learns the PCs have been assigned to the Ko Dali mission, she'll approach them with the request they try to take Ko Dali alive. If she thinks she has leverage, she'll try to push them to deliver Ko Dali to her personally at a Neiting safehouse. It doesn't quite go according to plan for her in that respect.

O-12'S AGENDA

O-12 have plans of their own. Ko Dali's capture would provide an effective insight into Combined Army tactics and motivations as well as the

possible psychological profiling of an enemy agent. Even if the interrogators fail to break her, it is entirely possible Ko Dali – or what's left of her – could still provide vital insight into the Combined Army.

DANGERS OF THE JUNGLE

While travelling through the jungle during this operation, the PCs can run into several tangential dangers.

ACIDIC CHERRY BLOSSOMS

The dangers of Paradiso flora and fauna are legendary. These beautiful, white-blossomed trees resemble the cherry trees of Earth, but the flower petals are actual wind-borne seed cases, extremely acidic, and capable of burning through body armour. A **Challenging (D2) Science test** success recognises the seeds and the danger they pose. The effect on the zone is 1+2 (N) (Anti-Materiel 1) damage per round. This encounter could also be used to complicate any combat encounter the PCs have in the region (such as the Shasvastii snipers described below).

HEAT SPENDS

- **Getting in Deep (1 Heat):** The “petals” don't start falling until a strong wind blows, which means the PCs could be far into the grove before recognising their peril. For every 1 Heat the GM spends, the PCs are that number of zones into a grove before the petals fall.

COMBINED ARMY BOOBY TRAPS

The Combined Army has laced the Xiongxian Conflict Region with booby traps.

- **Monofilament Decapitation Wires (2 Heat):** Strung between two trees or similar terrain at neck height, the traps require a **Challenging (D2) Observation test** success to notice the wire before walking through it.
 - 2+4 (N) damage (Monofilament)
- **Needle Mines (2 Heat):** When triggered, they spring up into the air and then explode in a cloud of needle micro-missiles. They are nicknamed “howlers” for the distinctive screech they make as they go airborne. A **Challenging (D2) Observation test** is required to avoid stepping on the mine; other characters in the zone can make an **Average (D1) Athletics test** to dive out of range.

- 2+5 (N) damage with the Comms, Disposable, Indiscriminate (Close), Piercing 2, Spread 1, Unsubtle, and Vicious 2 qualities.

- **Spiked Pits (1 Heat):** As much for the effect on human morale, these nasty little traps are often poisoned by the Shasvastii. A **Challenging (D2) Observation test** spots the camouflaged pit.
 - 2+2 (N) damage. For 1 Heat spent, the spikes also have the Toxic 2 quality.

SHASVASTII SCOUTS & SNIPERS

The Xiongxian Conflict Region is crawling with Shasvastii covert operatives and patrols. PCs travelling through the region could easily end up playing hide-and-seek with the most dangerous covert combat operatives in the galaxy.

HEAT SPENDS

- **Shasvastii Patrol (1 Heat):** Elite Shasvastii equal to the number of PCs and an equal number of Trooper Shasvastii
- **Sniper! (2 Heat):** An Elite Shasvastii with Sniper Rifle (Range L, 1+7 (N) damage, Burst 3, Unwieldy, Unforgiving 2)

MUTILATED BODIES

As described in “Operation 3: Jungle Blood”, there is a Nomad scientific team active in the region field-testing a Shasvastii detector. The agents might stumble across mutilated corpses as described in the first scene of that scenario (“Scene 1: Shasvastii Corpse Sites”, p. 36), triggering the beginning of the scenario.

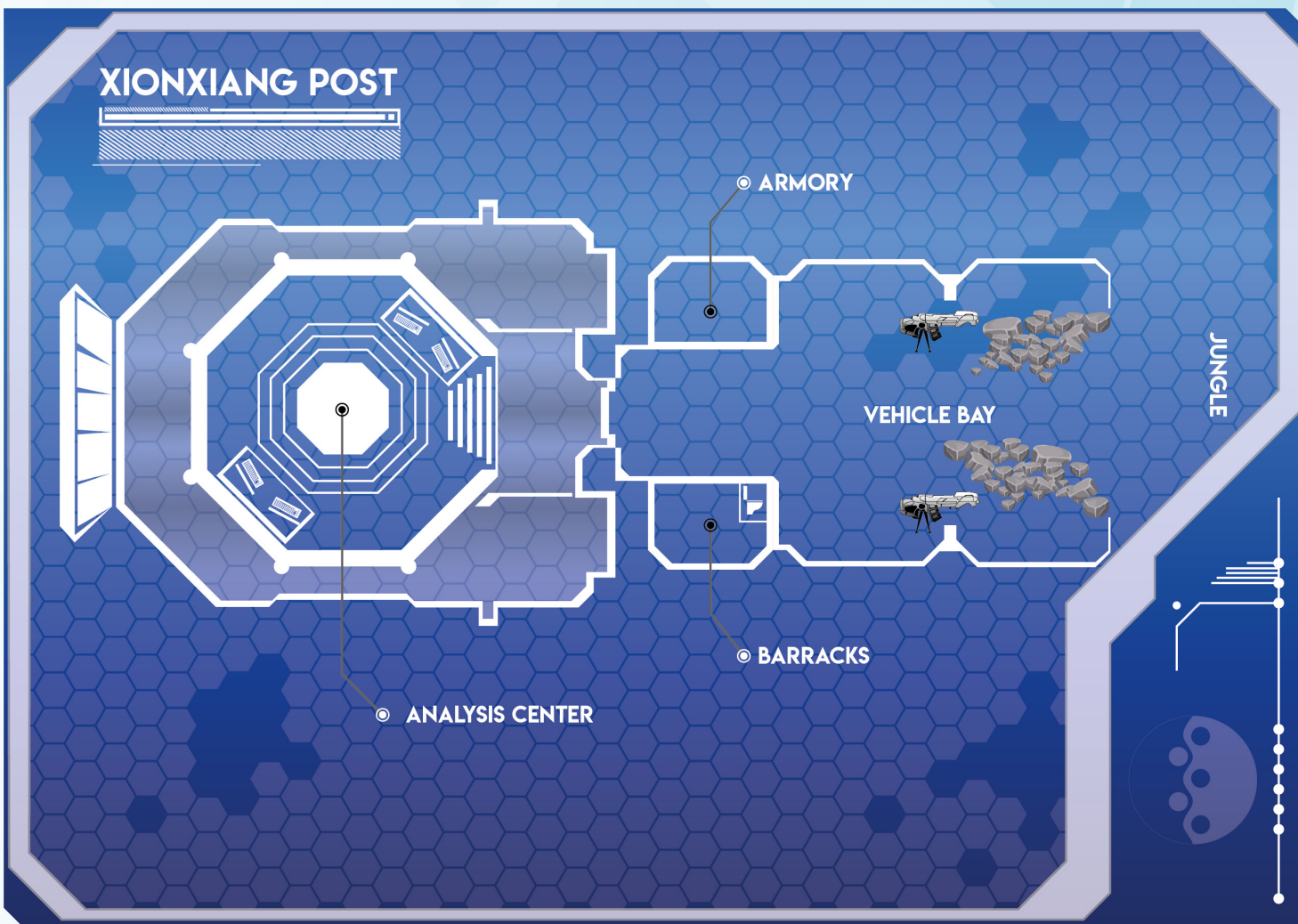


Shasvastii – Infinity Corebook, p. 471

ADDITIONAL ENCOUNTERS

As well as the encounters here, the GM may wish to have the characters happen upon some of the creatures from the Adversaries section of the *Infinity Corebook*. Gāyatrī Moehau, Jorōgumo, Kavara Vinetrap, and Scorpionette all reside on Paradiso.

If the GM also owns the *Paradiso Sourcebook*, there are additional encounters to be found there, as well as rules for jungle combat. Both the Combined Army and Human Sphere have laid traps throughout the region, and the character will also encounter these.



SCENE 1: XIONGXIANG LISTENING POST

The listening post is located about 100 miles south of Xionxiang, spying on Combined Army transmissions. It also helps coordinate covert O-12 communications within the Xionxiang Conflict Region.

ARRIVAL

The listening post was based out of a berm bunker originally built during the NeoColonial Wars. The natural camouflage of the jungle growth was enhanced with holographic emitters, which now sputter and flicker — their damaged circuits still trying to project illusory terrain across the black, gaping defensive fenestrations. One whole side of the wall has been ripped open by a massive explosion, laying bare a jagged passage to the dark recesses beyond.

TRACKING KO DALI

An **Average (D1) Survival test** success reveals the tracks of a large force of alien soldiers (from the non-human boot-prints) approached the bunker from the east.

Any additional successes can be used as Obtain Information Momentum spends, each revealing the following:

- One or more Shasvastii were present, along with Morat and at least one smaller humanoid (the Sygmaa Tohaa).
- An MRAP (Mine Resistant/Ambush Protected) vehicle left *after* the attack.
- Tracking back leads to the ghost ship (see “Scene 3: Shasvastii Ghost Ship”).
- Following the MRAP allows the characters to begin “Scene 2: Yangshuo Convoy”.



VEHICLE BAY

The vehicle bay is a wide, flat space thrust back into the berm; the concrete surfaces are pitted by explosive damage, which gets more severe the farther back the characters look. The large, double security doors at the far end of the bay have a giant hole bored through them with some sort of cutting tool.

Within the bay, most of the vehicles have been flipped over, and one of them is still on fire. Lights dangle from the ceiling, a majority of them dead. The remaining lights strobe erratically, sending crazed shadows dancing on the walls. A 1 Heat spend here increases the difficulty of all Observations test by one step.

There are eleven corpses strewn across the floor. Most of them are human, but there is one massive Morat, his bulk collapsed against a truck, crushing the side.

- **Vehicles:** None of them are salvageable. An **Average (D1) Tech test** success indicates that they were deliberately disabled. Checking the vehicle manifest, however, discovers that an MRAP vehicle logged in here is missing. A character can track this MRAP with an **Average (D1) Tech** or **Hacking test** success to track the vehicle's transponder signature from the manifest. It will indicate that the vehicle has joined the Yangshuo refugee caravan (see "Scene 2: Yangshuo Convoy").
- **Morat Corpse:** An **Average (D1) Tech test** success repairs the Morat's comlog, and an **Average Hacking (D1) test** success accesses it. The Morat's comlog is linked to Ko Dali's action group, which can be used to track the action group's current location (see "Scene 2: Yangshuo Convoy"). It also stored waypoints of the current op, including its origin point (see "Scene 4: Ko Dali's Camp"), the listening post, and a waypoint between the two (see "Scene 3: Shasvastii Ghost Ship"). For 2 Heat, **needle mines** were left as



booby traps by the Morat. When triggered by the characters' searching of the body, they spring up into the air and then explode in a cloud of needle micro-missiles (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 349).

ARMOURY

The armoury is a burnt-out husk. The explosives stored here detonated, blasting out of the walls, catching one of Morat in the blast.

BARRACKS

The barracks are a bloodbath, with six dead Yu Jingese soldiers lying both on the floor and in their cots. It's apparent they couldn't do much more than get out of bed before they were gunned down by weapon fire.

ANALYSIS CENTRE

Banks of ultra-cutting edge quantronic computers are nestled between high-tech monitoring equipment. Most of the equipment has been damaged, and one side of the room has partially collapsed.

- **Lin Xue:** An **Average (D1) Observation test** success hears Lin Xue groaning, the sound coming from beneath some collapsed rubble. A character specifically examining the collapsed rubble will find evidence it appears to have been deliberately placed on top of Lin Xue (instead of simply falling there) with a successful **Challenging (D2) Observation** or **Analysis test**.
- **Data Network:** Although much of the equipment has been damaged, the actual network of the listening post is intact. A successful **Hacking (D1) test** can access the network, while simultaneously revealing that it was recently compromised by Combined Army hackers.
 - **Forensic Data Analysis:** A successful **Average (D1) Analysis test** reveals that Ko Dali's team used the network to pinpoint the location of an evacuation convoy leaving Yangshuo (see "Scene 2: Yangshuo Convoy").
 - **Personnel Records:** If the agents check the listening post's personnel records and compare them to the corpses, they can confirm on an **Analysis (D1) test** that everyone is accounted for and that Lin Xue appears to be the only survivor. A 1 Momentum (Obtain Information) spend searching the work logs will indicate Lin Xue had been reported as AWOL from the listening post three days ago when he failed to return with his regular work crew from a furlough in Neiting.

LIN XUE

Appearance: Broad-faced with jowly cheeks, his short black hair is thinning on top. There's a nasty

cut on his forehead that's bleeding down into his left eye. His eyes are bloodshot, and he still moves jerkily, which could be attributed to his concussion.

Roleplaying:

- Compulsively touches the wound on his head and winces.
- Squints his eyes and has trouble focusing on people. His glasses were broken in the attack.
- His sepsitorized nature means he is vague and disassociated, which could be construed as concussion.

Background: Lin Xue was a data tech at the listening post. Five days ago, while on furlough in Neiting, he was captured by Combined Army operatives and taken to Ko Dali's camp. There he was sepsitorized and, subsequently, betrayed the location of the listening post.

Ko Dali has left Lin Xue here in the hopes that he will be able to continue his work for the Yu Jingese military intelligence as a double agent. If not, it's no loss. Ko Dali has no other use for him.

Key Info:

- Lin Xue will tell a story that's consistent with the physical evidence. He was doing his job when the listening post was wracked with explosions. The team had less than two minutes before the door to the Analysis Centre was breached. He briefly saw Ko Dali silhouetted against the flames (her mechanical wings flared wide), and then Morats were charging through the door. There was an explosion; the ceiling collapsed... and that's the last thing he remembers before the PCs woke him up.
- He overheard Ko Dali's group planning to hit a refugee convoy. This is scratch intel designed to build trust. Ko Dali was confident that the convoy operation would be completed before anyone discovering Lin Xue could respond to it.
- **Discovering the Cuckoo:** If the agents aren't actively suspicious, it's a **Dire (D4) Psychology test** success to spot something suspicious in his behaviour. A character who has seen the tell-tale signs of sepsitorization before gains a +2 bonus to the test. Once the agents are suspicious, they can push at him. A single Metanoia Effect (1 Intransigence) is sufficient to crack him.

If Lin Xue Is Revealed:

- He can tell the story of how he was captured.
- He can reveal the location of Ko Dali's camp (see p. 28).
- **Stats:** Tech Support (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 457)

SCENE 2: YANGSHUO CONVOY

The refugee convoy contains what was once the entire population of Yangshuo. The village (lying several dozen clicks to the north) has been completely abandoned.

The convoy consisted of a dozen large transport vehicles, each carrying roughly fifty refugees, escorted by an O-Yoroi TAG and a squad of *Zhànshi* (light infantry). Some were riding in a jeep at the head of the convoy with others stationed in machine gun nests located on top of the transports.

THE ATTACK

The refugee convoy from Yangshuo was travelling along a narrow, ill-kept road (already partially overgrown by the invasive Paradisan vegetation) when Ko Dali's group hit it.

The attack happens at roughly the same time the agents arrive at the Xiongxiang Listening Post. There's virtually no way that the agents would be able to stop the attack; they're still playing catch-up with Ko Dali.

Ko Dali's crew used an interference device to cut off the convoy's communication equipment, and then a pair of Morat Raizot engaged the O-Yoroi, but the O-Yoroi put up a good fight, taking out one of the Raichos and badly damaging the other one before being destroyed itself.

Ko Dali's team rammed the commandeered MRAP vehicle into the rear vehicle of the convoy, preventing it from backing up. The lead vehicle was simultaneously targeted with a pair of grenade launchers, causing it to flip over and turn sideways, skidding down the road before lodging between two large trees.

While the TAG battle raged, Ko Dali's crew engaged the light infantry escort. The driver of the jeep was hit by sniper fire and crashed the vehicle. Several of the machine gun nests were hit with additional grenade strikes.

Ko Dali and her group captured a dozen prisoners, using the confusion to insert Massamachos, who had assumed the form of one of the prisoners. Once that was done, they withdrew.

AFTERMATH

If the agents arrive shortly after the attack, the lead vehicle is still burning. If not, it's a burnt-out wreck.

- **Vehicles:** All of the transport vehicles show signs of damage – bullet holes, tops ripped open by grenade strikes, slanted askew where axles or struts have been broken. Three of the vehicles

are too severely damaged to move. The MRAP can be identified as coming from "Scene 1: Xiongxiang Listening Post".

- **O-Yoroi:** The shattered remnants of the O-Yoroi are half-lodged in a tree, held aloft by its left arm, which has become awkwardly lodged between two branches. Its chest cavity is a still-smoking ruin.
- **Raicho:** A destroyed Raicho TAG lies nearby. Its pilot is alive, but unconscious and wounded (see below).
- **Casualties:** Everyone in the lead transport was killed, either immediately or in the ensuing fire; the scene is grisly. Thirty-two refugees were killed by gunfire in the transports, and eighteen *Zhànshi* were killed.
- **Survivors:** A half dozen *Zhànshi* and 515 refugees survived, of which 32 have been injured (three seriously and in need of medical attention, see below). None of the *Zhànshi* commanding officers survived.

TRIAGING THE SCENE

Things are likely to still be in a state of chaos as the PCs arrive.

- **Helping the Wounded:** Thirty-two people have been injured, three of whom are in critical condition and will die without medical aid. Agents can make treat tests (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 103) to assist them.
- **Securing the Perimeter:** Ko Dali's team has left the scene, and there are no other immediate threats, so there should be no difficulty in securing the perimeter.
- **Signalling for Help:** The Combined Army cut off the convoy's communications during the attack, and all of their long-range communication equipment was damaged during the fight. The characters, however, should have no difficulty signalling for help.
- **Getting the Convoy Moving:** If the agents want to get the convoy moving, they can do so by (a) clearing the wreckage of the lead vehicle and (b) either repairing the three vehicles which have been too badly damaged to move (treat as having 1 Fault each) or moving them off the road, too, and then cramming the survivors on the transports which are still operable.

QUESTIONING SURVIVORS

The survivors can provide general background on the convoy. Refugees will express their dismay and anxiety over being forced to abandon their former lives. They had no choice – people were disappearing in the jungle every day, presumably to Shasvastii snipers, but Ko Dali's troops were gathering extensive genetic samples from live subjects.

PLAYTEST TIP

OUTSIDE THE BOX

If the agents think outside of the box, they might conclude that if Ko Dali hit a listening post, she might make additional strikes in the same area. If, instead of going to the listening post to investigate, they position themselves as a rapid response team and establish some sort of monitoring program (getting access to the Eye in the Sky orbital surveillance network perhaps), they might be able to detect the convoy attack and respond to it while Ko Dali is still on the scene. Go for it! Use the stats from Scene 4 for Ko Dali's group. Massamachos will prefer to withdraw and find a different route if it feels the mission has been completely compromised.



Raicho Pilot –
Infinity Corebook, p. 467. The
pilot currently has 4 Wounds, 0
Vigour, and 8 Resolve.



- The *Zhànshì* don't know that Ko Dali's group took prisoners, but many of the refugees saw it happen. (That activity took place at the far end of the convoy from where the *Zhànshì* survivors were located.)
- Some survivors will lean into a "We drove them off! We won!" version of the narrative. Others won't be so sure, aware that they were completely outgunned. One might even say, "It was like they *wanted* us alive. To remember what they did."
- One of the survivors is Massamachos. It will purposely provide misinformation or contradictory statements (1 Heat spend).

THE MORAT PILOT

The surviving Morat isn't likely to talk since they failed in their mission. The pilot is likely to shoot first, rather than speak to the agents. Even injured and captured, it will still do its best to attack the characters. Getting a Morat to talk isn't easy, and this one doesn't know much. It requires an **Epic (D5) Persuasion test** to extract any information.

For the soldiers, this was supposed to be a "milk run". The front line is far away, and many of them have already run several of these convoy escorts without any incident.

They will provide a generally accurate account of the attack. Refugees will be comparatively likely to exaggerate (mistaking the Raicho for an El Avatar, overestimating the number of attackers, etc.) or get details completely wrong (misidentifying the Sygmaa Tohaa as Shasvastii, believing that gunfire was coming from both sides of the convoy, claiming that the O-Yoroi was working with the Combined Army, etc.), but the *Zhànshì* may also get confused on particular points.

The Morat Raicho were assigned out of a firebase on the outskirts of Xiongxian as a support team for the assault on the convoy, but otherwise aren't involved in Ko Dali's operation. If this one can be tricked or coerced, however, he *does* know the location they were supposed to rally (see "Scene 4: Ko Dali's Camp").

TRACKING KO DALI

- Backtracking Ko Dali's team back to the Xiongxian Listening Post requires an **Average (D1) Survival test**.
- Following Ko Dali's group back to their camp (see p. 28) requires a **Challenging (D2) Survival test**. Those successfully following these tracks will note that they have human prisoners with them. A 1 Momentum spend will correctly estimate the number of prisoners at thirteen.

PLAYTEST TIP

FAILURES

On tracking failures – and particularly on complications! – use the encounters described in *Dangers of the Jungle* (see p. 19).

SCENE 3: SHASVASTII GHOST SHIP

Massamachos (the Speculo Killer) landed its ship here one week ago and began gathering genetic samples from Yangshuo. The disappearances from Yangshuo were attributed to the war.

Ko Dali's group met with Massamachos on their way to the listening post at which point Massamachos, knowing it would not return, took steps to destroy the ship.

THE GHOST SHIP

The ship has been gutted by fire, leaving it a hollowed-out husk. The craft is not human built, constructed on odd lines and an alien aesthetic. A **Challenging (D2) Tech test** success identifies it a Shasvastii ghost ship. Shasvastii ghost ships are stealth-capable vessels that can run blockades like the Acheron Blockade. This appears to be one of the smaller examples, carrying a maximum of a pilot and a single passenger.

A **Challenging (D2) Observation test** success reveals this ghost ship also appears to have been outfitted with remora clamps, allowing it to latch onto the hull of other ships while maintaining a stealthy profile.

A character succeeding at a **Challenging (D2) Analysis** or **Science test** will be able to confirm that the destruction is deliberate. The fire is also clearly the result of arson, with multiple ignition sites chosen to wipe out the key systems on the ship.

- **Utility Compartments:** Although the piloting compartment inside the ship is small, there are six utility compartments located along the outside of the ship (three on each side). Four of these were configured for storage, and two were configured as workstations. Before being damaged, they would fold open and could function as workspaces. One of the workspaces was outfitted with smart tools and a micro-fabricator. A **Challenging (D2) Tech test** success identifies similar components to a Sophotect's Mother-Forge (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 454). These have been damaged beyond all use, but the latter might still be of interest to the "TechHeads" in Bureau Agni's Section Metis. These tools were also linked to the ship's datasphere, providing an access point (see next column).

- **Genetic Station:** Amidst the wreckage in this compartment is what appears to be a set of Shasvastii genetic samples, harvested human tissue. An **Average (D1) Medicine test** success identifies human tissue from a variety of sources – blood, bone, and viscera – and a genetic analysis on the samples will identify them as belonging to the nearby village of Yangshuo (see p. 23), although it may take several days to confirm this.

TRACKING KO DALI

- **Tracking Ko Dali:** An **Average Survival (D1) test** success reveals a large Combined force of Morat and humanoid soldiers approached the site and rendezvoused with an individual already present, then left in a different direction.
- **Backtracking:** Tracks can be followed in either direction, either towards the listening post (see p. 20) or back to Ko Dali's camp (see p. 28) with a successful **Challenging (D2) Survival test**.

GHOST SHIP DATASPHERE

The ship's datasphere appears to still be intact. Anyone with a hacking device or performing any kind of quantronic scan will detect the activity.

As part of the scuttling procedures, the entire original datasphere of the ghost ship has been hollowed out. What remains is an infotronic trap, designed to lure in and destroy enemy hackers who attempt to access the system.

VIRAL LAI ROSTER

Viral LAI (hidden)	Zone 1 (two per zone)
Viral LAI (hidden)	Zone 2
Viral LAI (hidden)	Zone 3
Viral LAI (1 visible, 1 hidden)	Zone 5

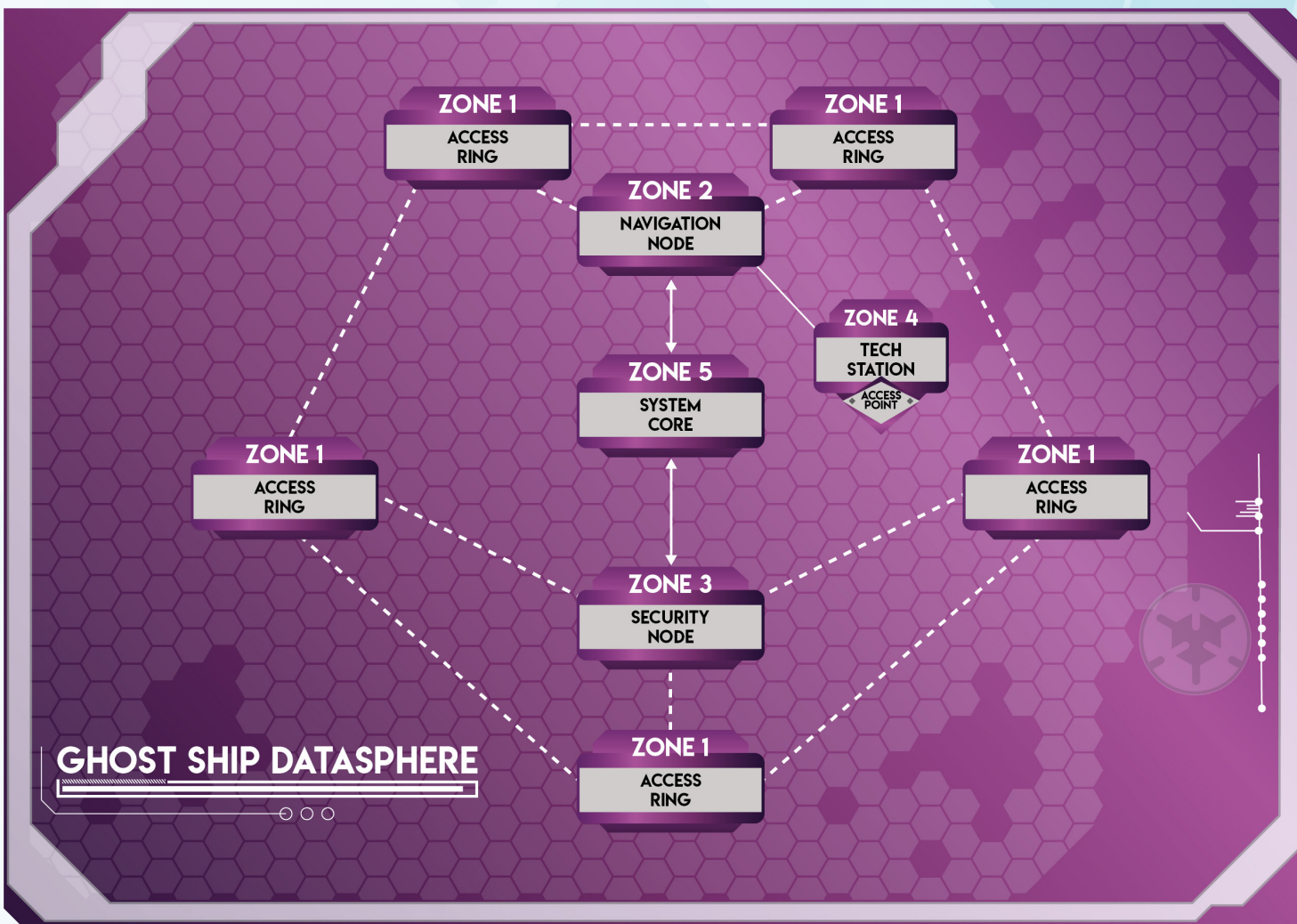
VIRAL LAIS

The ghost ship's datasphere is riddled with Viral LAIs, most of them hidden in the structure of the datasphere itself and requiring a **Daunting (D3) Observation test** performed as an active scan to detect (see "Viral LAI Roster").

Unless they are spotted, the Viral LAIs will wait until they detect an enemy hacker in the System Core (Zone 5). Once that happens, or if they are spotted, they will launch the Ambush Protocol.

PLAYTEST TIP

It's unusual for a network's architecture to be primarily built around data tunnels, but it works best if the GM doesn't call the players' attention to that fact. If they notice it on their own initiative, that's all to the best.



PLAYTEST TIP

The desired dynamic is that the agents become trapped in the System Core or possibly separated from each other when the data tunnels collapse. As they cut their way back towards the access points, they give additional Viral LAIs access to them. If they've found the hidden Tech Station access point, they may have a shortcut to escape.

PLAYTEST TIP

Remember that hackers cannot see past secured zones. Although the data tunnel architecture of the network allows them to move freely between these outer zones, the lack of vision should create a claustrophobic sense of disorientation.

Ambush Protocol: Note that most of the zone connections in the ghost ship's datasphere are data tunnels. When the Ambush Protocol is activated, all the data tunnels collapse, preventing movement between most zones.

Simultaneously, the location of the access point will be scrambled, reappearing randomly in one of the Access Ring zones.

The Viral LAIs emerge from concealment and begin an assault. Their primary objective will be to inflict System Lock Breach Effects on enemy hackers in order to prevent them from escaping the trap.

As per the normal rules, hackers will be able to re-open a data tunnel (recreating it) with a **Challenging (D2) Hacking test**. The difficulty of this test is reduced by 1 if they've gained authentication in the system.

DATA NETWORK

Zone 1 – Access Ring: Agents seeking to find an access point to the network will appear in one of these zones.

- **Secured Zone:** Firewall 2
- **Dead Access Points:** Although each of these zones *can* be an access point, only one of them is at any given time. An **Analysis (D1) test** performed in any of the zones will reveal the architecture which allows the zone to become an access point. (The access point's location is controlled from the Zone 3 – Security Node.)

Zone 2 – Navigation Node: This node was originally the ship's navigation systems. Any analysis, however, quickly concludes that the system has been purged and is no longer functioning.

- **Secured Zone:** Firewall 4
- **IC-2 Redtape:** Those affected become Hindered in quantronic zones. If they were already Hindered, they become Stuck.

ELITE

VIRAL LAI

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
5	10	6	9	12	9	12





FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+1	—	Movement	+2	—	Social	—	—
Fortitude	—	—	Senses	+2	1	Technical	+3	3

DEFENCES

Firewall	12	Resolve	12	Vigour	6
Security	—	Morale	—	Armour	—

ATTACKS


- **Killer Hacking Device:** CLAW-0, SWORD-2, SHIELD-0, GADGET-0, IC-1, UPGRADE Datamask, Piercing 3, +3  bonus damage (included in attack stats)
- **IC-1 Hivemines:** Hacking (D1) to install. Inflicts 1+1  (Vicious 1) quantronic damage
- **SWORD-1 Brain Blast:** 1+7 , Piercing 1, Vicious, spend 2 Momentum vs. targets with Neural quality to deal physical damage
- **SWORD-2 Redrum:** 2+8 , Grievous, Piercing 2, Unforgiving 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **UPGRADE Datamask:** The Viral LAI can disguise its presence by masquerading as part of the system architecture (effectively "blending in" with the zone's structure; the equivalent of phasing into a wall). It requires an **Observation (D3)** test performed as a zone scan to detect a Viral LAI's presence.
- **Quantronic Native:** Viral LAI benefit from 1 bonus Momentum on stealth state tests.
- **System Lock:** When inflicting a Breach, a Viral LAI can inflict a special Breach Effect which prevents the target from disconnecting. (The victim can only log out by either removing the Breach Effect or reaching an access point.)

- **Data Fragments:** With a successful **Challenging (D2) Analysis test**, data fragments can be recovered from the original substrate of this node. The primary points of interest are scraps of flight data, which can be pieced together to indicate that (a) this ghost ship ran the Acheron Blockade four months ago, (b) three months ago it entered Satori space while using its remora clamps, travelling to somewhere in the vicinity of Kenshō Spaceport (see p. 15), and (c) it arrived at its current location one week ago.
- **Connection to Zone 4:** This connection requires a **Daunting (D3) Observation test** to discover unless the Tech Station access point was used (see "Zone 4").

Zone 3 – Security Node: This node was originally the ship's security protocols. Its functions have also been almost entirely purged; only the Viral LAI remains to provide security here.

- **Security Zone:** Firewall 6
- **IC-2 Hivemines:** Inflicts 2+2  (Vicious 2) quantronic damage.
- **Authentication Protocols:** It will initially appear that it's possible to secure system authentication in this node (as you would in any other security system), but an **Analysis (D1) test** will reveal that these functions are another trap. Those who attempt to access the authentication protocols will automatically activate the hivemines.
- **Access Point Control:** Hidden behind a layer of advanced data flux camouflage – a **Challenging (D2) Observation test** to notice – is the remaining set of protocols here. An **Average (D1) Hacking test** will grant control, allowing the user to set which zone in the Access Ring will currently contain the system's access point. Attempts to access this system, however, will cause the Viral LAI in this zone to trigger the Ambush Protocol and attack.

Zone 4 – Tech Station Access Point: This is the access point from the Tech Station on the side of the ghost ship. It is only active when the Tech Station is open, and as a result was overlooked during the scuttling process.

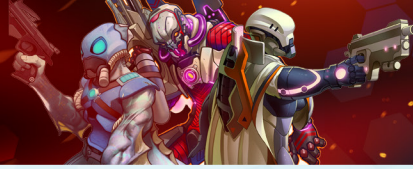
Zone 5 – System Core: This will initially appear to be the primary databanks and system core of the datasphere. But it's all been hollowed out by the scuttling protocols and the system now only serves as the heart of the Viral LAI's trap. Once enemy hackers reach this zone, the Viral LAI will trigger the Ambush Protocol.

- **Data Fragments:** With a successful **Analysis (D2) test**, data fragments can be recovered from the original substrate of this node. It's clear that there was once an incredibly large data file, of which only a handful of original sectors can be recovered. There's little of use in any of it, except for a reference to an Ariadnan corporation called Aka Technologies (see "Operation 5: Ariadna Dawning").

GM NOTE

Further research (or visiting the site) will track the specific location at Kenshō to the Qingping Shipping Warehouse (see p. 16).





SCENE 4: KO DALI'S CAMP

Ko Dali is wrapping up this operation. She is currently in the process of sepsitorizing the prisoners taken during the convoy raid (see p. 23). Once that is done, her team will return to Xiongxian and resupply before moving on to their next operation.

KO DALI'S CREW

Ko Dali leads a mixed force of Sygmaa Trihedron and Morat troops. Her ranks have been somewhat depleted in the confrontations of the current operation, however, and the remaining bulk of her Morat troops have been temporarily sent away to deal with another situation in the conflict region (see "Operation 3: Jungle Blood").

- **Maakrep Tracker:** The Maakrep Tracker serves as Ko Dali's infowar specialist, but his primary mission is to monitor Ko Dali herself. If he sees any signs that her conditioning — and, thus, her loyalty to the EI — is breaking down, he has been ordered to kill her.
- **Morat:** Two members of the Morat squadron remain behind. One is Ko Dali's lieutenant (Rasthat). The other is a Raicho pilot whose TAG was heavily damaged during the convoy raid. (He remained behind to finish repairing it.)
- **Sygmaa Troopers:** Ko Dali's Tohaa troopers are organised into three fireteams, each consisting of three Tohaa. At any given time, one of these fireteams is charged with securing the camp's perimeter (with one member on patrol and the other two in lookout posts located along the patrol route).

Maakrep Tracker —
Infinity Corebook, p. 478.

Morat —
Infinity Corebook, p. 465.

Raicho Pilot —
Infinity Corebook, p. 467.

Tohaa Trooper —
Infinity Corebook, p. 475.

LAY OF THE LAND

A. The Camp: The centre of Ko Dali's camp. The vegetation has been flattened from frequent travel. At the centre of the camp, there's a technological artefact that looks like a silver bowl with purple crystals growing out of it. The artefact appears to be Morat-based technology designed to repel Paradiso insects — a **Challenging (D2) Tech test** is required to guess the device's purpose.

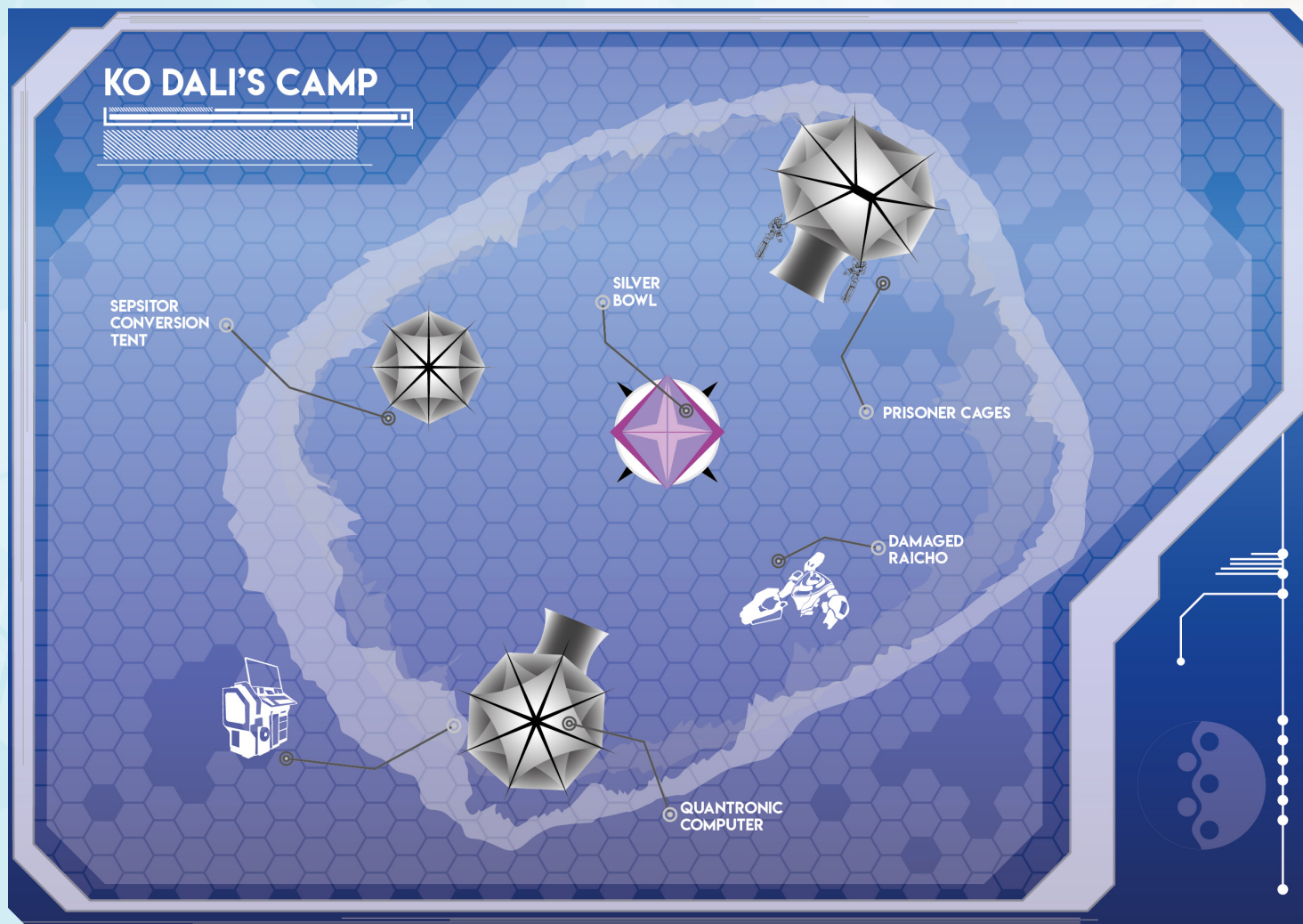
B. Sepsitor Conversion Tent: The primary surface structure of the camp is a hexagonal, multi-chambered pop-up tent. The surface of the "tent" is composed of a hardened bio-resin, which is EI-enhanced Sygmaa Tohaa technology.

- **Chamber 1:** This chamber has seating arrangements for a variety of alien body types (Morat and Tohaa). The quantronic computer used by Ko Dali's crew is also set up with various display, projection, and input equipment along one side of the chamber.
 - A **Challenging Hacking (D2) test** success allows access. Most of the information on the system is heavily encrypted, but there's a large chunk of data that's using a Human Sphere data format, making it considerably easier to untangle. The files appear to primarily consist of communications intercepts performed by Yǎnjīng's Communications Surveillance Section against a variety of targets, apparently as part of an assessment on whether or not the Teseum trade of something called Operation Bāowéi is causing blowback on the Aka Technologies research projects. The data tags on the Yǎnjīng intercepts identify them as coming from a datacenter on Satori (see p. 6).

- **Chamber 2:** Two prisoners from the Yangshuo convoy have been strapped to tables here, surrounded by horrific, invasive Combined Army technology. Biomechanical tubing snakes into and around the victims delivering psychoactive drugs designed to facilitate the delivery of the sepsitor payload. An **Average (D1) Tech** or **Challenging (D2) Medicine test** allows a character to recognise a sepsitor suite. It includes specialised equipment for implanting EI Cubes as well (acting as Surgical Waldo 3 for that purpose). An Obsidon Medchanoid (Elite) becomes active if the characters enter.

KO DALI'S CREW – ADVERSARY ROSTER

Ko Dali	Area B – Sepsitor Conversion Tent
2 Prisoners	Area B – Sepsitor Conversion Tent
Obsidian Medchanoid	Area B – Sepsitor Conversion Tent
2 Slave remotes	Area B – Sepsitor Conversion Tent
Raicho Pilot	Area C – Damaged Raicho (repairing)
Sygmaa Fireteam	Area D1 – Fast Bunker
Maakrep Tracker	Area D1 – Fast Bunker
Sygmaa Fireteam	Area D2 – Fast Bunker
Morat	Area E – Prisoner Cages (guarding)
11 Prisoners	Area E – Prisoner Cages
Sygmaa Trooper	Area G1 – Lookout Post
Sygmaa Trooper	Area G2 – Lookout Post
Sygmaa Trooper	Area H – Patrol Perimeter (on patrol)



ÓBSIDON MEDCHANOID

Med-Techs are adaptive bio-cybernetic creatures with hyper-rapid access to a vast library of medical programs for each of the races in the Combined Army, as well as an exhaustive database of military electronics and engineering programs.

The principal problem facing the Combined Army is its diversity. To reduce supply and management problems, the armed forces of the different races that comprise the Combined Army have similar basic equipment. But the medical services can't handle issues of biological diversity so easily.

A field hospital can't be separated into sections according to race because it would require too many personnel and would be inoperative. The maintenance of the equipment and machinery of the Combined Army presents the same level of complexity as the sanitary assistance. To resolve these problems, the Ur Rationalists developed the Med-Tech line, bio-artificial intelligent units, adapted to the medical necessities and the

SEPSITOR SUITE

A sepsitor suite is designed to both immobilise the subject and subject them to sepsitorization. It holds the subject still while the sepsitor does its work.

Sepsitors do not use conventional ammo and contain only two Reloads. Once exhausted, the weapon takes several hours to recharge. Normally this would be a problem, but sepsitor suites are designed to use multiple sepsitors. Five tables are arranged around a central node that rotates sepsitors out as needed. It is a terrifying example of Combined Army efficiency.

Only characters with a Cube can be affected by a sepsitor. The weapon inflicts mental damage, with bonus damage based on the wielder's Willpower.

The target's BTS acts as a bonus to Morale Soak against sepsitor attacks. As a special rule, damage dealt from its Toxic special Harm Effect has the Terrifying 3 quality. If a sepsitor or its Toxic special Harm Effect deals five Metanoia Effects, the character's personality is overwritten by the EI and they become an NPC under the GM's control. (Range C, 1+3^{IN} mental damage, Burst 1, 1H, Munitions, Terrifying 3, Torrent, Toxic 3).



PLAYTEST TIP

Hearing the panicked, painful scream of a prisoner from Chamber 2 or Chamber 1 (or even outside the tent) is an effective horror technique.

ELITE

ÓBSIDON MEDCHANOID

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
9	10	8	10	11	7	7

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+1	—	Movement	+1	—	Social	—	—
Fortitude	—	—	Senses	+3	1	Technical	+3	1

DEFENCES

Firewall	11	Resolve	7	Structure	8
Security	—	Morale	—	Armour	—

ATTACKS

- **Surgical Blades:** Melee, 1+4 damage, Vicious 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **The Doctor Will See You Now:** Using their built-in nano-forge, Óbsidon Medchanoid have the equivalent of a MediKit and Surgical Waldo 2.
- **Nano-Forge:** A sophisticated, personal-scale fabricator and nanite re-programmer like the Mother-Forge used extensively by ALEPH Sophotects (only better), nano-forges count as kits and provide 3 bonus Momentum for Medicine and Tech tests. They are also carefully booby-trapped unless removed properly with a **Daunting (D4) Tech** test. On failure, automatic protocols quickly disable and then comprehensively destroy the nano-forge from within.

GEAR: MediKit, Surgical Waldo 2.

technical maintenance of the Combined Army. The Med-Tech are bio-cybernetic units, that have a rapid-access library, stocked with medical-sanitary programs for each race (the human included) and also complex technical programs for electronic engineering and military use. A nano-forge is installed on the back of the unit so that it can create the nanobots needed to heal a member that has fallen in battle. The nano-forge also gives the Med-Tech the option to reconfigure tools and handling equipment by adapting them to the necessities of the moment. The current version is the tactical evolution of the series — faster, more shielded and armed than its predecessors. The Óbsidon Medchanoid has been designed and adapted exclusively to operate under the toughest frontline combat conditions.

HEAT SPENDS

1 Heat: The biomechanical tubing suddenly lashes out at a human drawing near. It deals 2+2 physical damage with the Grasping quality. The tubing attaches to the character and attempts to draw them onto a table, as additional tubes attach and inject the victim. It requires a **Challenging Athletics (D2) test** success to rip free (dealing 1+1 physical damage), otherwise the character suffers 2+2 mental damage (Toxic 2) each round as their

systems are flooded with psychotropic drugs.

- **Chamber 3:** A techno-harness suspended from the ceiling takes up most of this room. It's designed so that the prehensile biomechanical tubes will lower and pluck Ko Dali up into its structure. She "sleeps" in this harness, which uses nanotechnology to maintain her hybrid tissues.

C. Damaged Raicho: This currently non-functional Raicho TAG was damaged during the attack on the Yangshuo convoy. Its innards have been splayed out, and it's undergoing field repairs.

HEAT SPENDS

1 Heat: The Raicho pilot rips the Heavy Flamethrower off the Raicho (Range C, 2+5 damage, Burst 1, 2H, Incendiary 3, Munition (5 Reloads), Terrifying 2, Torrent).

D. Fast Bunker Entrances: These bunkers were built using Shasvastii and Combined Army rapid-construction technology. A digger seed roughly the size of a briefcase is placed that then rapidly excavates a 1,500 square foot space (a 20-foot-long concavity in this case) which is then accoutred based on various sub-modules and settings.


- **Bunker D1:** This bunker contains a quantronic tactical table. Its recessed, black-glossy surface contains a holographic projector array allowing for ops planning in three dimensions. An **Average (D1) Hacking test** can extract recent intel in the form of Ko Dali making a report:
 - *Mutilated Shasvastii:* Ko Dali's scouts have reported discovering mutilated Shasvastii bodies at several locations throughout the Xiongxian Conflict Region (see p. 18). Their EI Cubes and SeedEmbryos were untouched and have been harvested by the Shasvastii — although the characters have encountered no Shasvastii in the camp.
 - *Yangshuo Surveillance:* The data here indicates that Ko Dali's group has been observing the village of Yangshuo for several days, and standing orders are to seize any humans they come across for "Massamachos", whoever or whatever that is.


- **Bunker D2:** This bunker is the primary barracks for the Sygmaa and Morat troopers. They sleep in shifts.

E. Prisoner Cages: Four crude cages are built side-by-side. Constructed out of eukantha, a fast-growing, bamboo-like plant native to Paradiso with a bluish colour. Each cage holds two to four prisoners (11 total) in cramped conditions.

- The prisoners can relate their personal stories of being evacuated from Yangshuo and having their convoy assaulted (see “Questioning Survivors”, p. 23). They’ve been kept captive in these cages since arriving at this camp, but two of them have been taken into the tent, and the remaining prisoners heard some screaming that abruptly cut off. Neither returned. The locks are basic, but strong. Ko Dali and Rasthat have their own keys, but there is a set in Bunker D1. An **Average (D1) Thievery test** success picks the lock and opens the cages.

F. Forest: These zones represent the heavily forested area immediately surrounding the camp. The thick foliage and tree cover provide soft Cover

Soak (+2 ) and increases the difficulty of all Observation tests by one step.

G. Lookout Post: These two lookout posts are ad hoc affairs, not permanent structures. One is a small platform located about thirty feet above the ground in a tree. The other is a convenient outcropping of rocks (+4  hard Cover Soak).

H. Patrol Perimeter: The Sygmaa perimeter guard rotates through these zones (and Zone G).

STAGING NOTES

If significant time has passed since the prisoners were taken, it’s possible some of them have already been sepsitorized. The other patients may, or may not, realize what’s happened to their compatriots.

SCENE 5: EXTRACTION & EXECUTION

The characters aren’t there to kill Ko Dali, but they are there to verify her presence. The camp is currently empty, but Ko Dali’s troops are due back at any time. Seasoned jungle troops, both the Sygmaa Tohaa and Morat are likely to be dangerous opponents especially since they are on their home turf, so to speak.

Likely, the characters also freed the prisoners and may have Lin Xue (p. 22) along as well. This

creates something of a risk for the characters, given their mission parameters. The characters’ most effective tactic is to plant the locational beacon and await reinforcements.

It should be easy enough, but now the characters also have the prisoners to tend to. The characters are either releasing the prisoners or planting the beacon when Ko Dali and her crew show up. Unless the characters have taken steps to conceal themselves, they’ll be spotted.

The Morat will charge straight towards the characters, while the rest of Ko Dali’s group take cover in the treeline and open fire. If the characters attempt to contact their reinforcements, they learn they’re still some way out and consist of a group of Tiger Soldiers hell-bent on destroying the stain on the StateEmpire’s record. The characters need to survive for six rounds.

At that point, the roar of the Tiger Soldier jump packs can be heard shortly before they deploy with pinpoint accuracy, systemically raking the Combined Army troops with Spitfires and boarding shotgun blasts. Ko Dali and her group begin a fighting retreat into the trees. The characters can follow if they wish, but they will lose sight of Ko Dali in the battle.

The characters can consider their part in the mission a success. They’ve located Ko Dali and tagged her for the Yu Jingese troops to reclaim their honour. Of course, that’s another story...



*Locational Beacon –
Infinity Corebook, p. 373*

YOU KILLED KO DALI?

If the characters do somehow kill Ko Dali, she will be Resurrected by the EI. The Yu Jing Tiger Soldiers will be unhappy with the characters, and there is likely to be considerable animosity towards the characters as a result. Of course, Ko Dali returns but the characters won’t be forgotten.



OPERATION 3

JUNGLE BLOOD

OPERATIONAL
SUMMARY

The characters are sent back into the Paradiso jungle to investigate the cause of the Shasvastii corpse mutilations. It's unusual for the Shasvastii to treat their dead in such a way according to the xeno-anthropologists of O-12, so unlikely to be them.

The Aldini Group, a module in the *Bakunin's* notorious Praxis Black Labs, are responsible. They are amassing research material for the Pyxis Device, a so-called Shasvastii detector. Working out of the Nomad Commercial Mission in Neiting, they've been harvesting genetic material from Shasvastii corpses courtesy of the Wildcats of the NMF, who are covertly funding the research.

The characters track down the scientists to their camp and follow the lead back to Neiting and ultimately the Bakunian lab.

MISSION BRIEFING

Combat operations groups in the Xiongxian Conflict Region have reported encountering mutilated Shasvastii corpses abandoned in the jungle.

Paradiso Coordinated Command has been unable to identify any human military actions which could explain the remains. Shasvastii remains are almost unheard of.

Your mission is to ascertain the force responsible for these mutilations: a rogue mercenary company, internecine conflict between factions of the Combined Army, or some native fauna of Paradiso.

Identify the threat and, if appropriate, assess its potential utility for the war effort.

BACKGROUND

The Aldini Group, one of the Black Labs of Praxis, has been secretly developing a Shasvastii detector. After several promising breakthroughs, their research came to the attention of the NMF, which is now covertly supporting and financing the project.

Plans to share the research with the other G-5 nations were scuttled by the Black Hand when the Dark Sapphire analyst group gave the project WHITE classification and designated it as part of the Black Hand's PROJECT RED QUEEN ALPHA.

RED QUEEN ALPHA

RED QUEEN ALPHA is the Nomad contingency plan for a scenario that Dark Sapphire rates with an extremely high-risk probability: that ALEPH is, or could become, an EI-aligned infiltration agent, designed to subvert the Human Sphere, the ultimate, catastrophic fifth column. Other Black Hand analyst groups rank the probability for the RED QUEEN ALPHA scenario as being lower – some considerably lower – than Dark Sapphire. But all concur that the jeopardy mandates a precautionary plan.

According to Dark Sapphire's analytical simulations, if ALEPH is a quisling, then it is likely that Bureau Toth has been (or will be) riddled with Speculo Killers. While an effective Shasvastii detector could have many applications in the war, the Black Hand maintains that none is more important than rooting out the potential corruption of ALEPH.

And here's where the paranoia comes in. If RED QUEEN ALPHA is true, then ALEPH cannot be allowed to learn of the Shasvastii detector, as that would allow it to shield or relocate the Shasvastii collaborators, which would reveal its true purpose. That means that O-12 can't be allowed to learn of it, either. The development of the Shasvastii detector must be carried out not only in secret from the Combined Army but also from the Nomad's mercu-rial allies in the Paradiso Coordinated Command.

THE ALDINI GROUP

The Aldini Group is a Black Lab operating out of a fully owned module on the *Bakunin* (see "Operation 5: Praxis Run"). It is a relatively small concern, but still large enough to run several research teams concurrently. The lead researcher on the Shasvastii detector programme, the Pyxis device, is Adriano Calvo. She remains in the Aldini module, working on the detector itself.

ALDINI FIELD TEAM

The detector project requires a constant supply of Shasvastii test material. A field team of six scientists led by Lisa Padfoot and Colin Davis (use the Research Scientist profile from *Infinity Corebook* p. 452) has been sent to the Xiongxian Conflict Region to capture Shasvastii. They are supported by two squads of Wildcats under the command of Sergeant Major Estanislao Vickery (see p. 34).

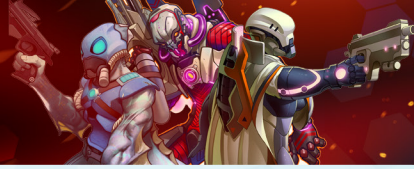
The field team and its support are managed by an analyst coordinator from the Black Hand's Dark Sapphire group named Chloe Barnes. Barnes is currently operating out of the Nomad Commercial Mission in Neiting (see "Scene 4: Neiting Commercial Mission") but is planning to return to the *Bakunin* with the latest Shasvastii samples.

NEITING

Nicknamed the Shelled City, Neiting is surrounded by a massive, hundred-foot tall modern "shield wall" built during the NeoColonial Wars. These walls repelled the Morat fighter wings of the First Offensive and have withstood the brutal assaults of the Second Offensive. They are heavily reinforced against bombardment and packed full of cutting-edge ECM (Electronic Counter Measures) and missile point defences, in addition to large batteries of heavy artillery.

The walls extend out into the Xiajuxu Ocean, helping to shield the city's ports. Neiting is one of the Shuāng Duānkǒu (Twin Ports), along with Wuyi, that strive to keep the Combined Army naval fleets bottled up in the Barrier Sea so that the Xiajuxu trade routes remain unmolested.

The eastern half of the city is riddled with canals. It's a place of low-slung buildings and green spaces. The western half of the city, built on firmer ground, is marked with three huge pyramids and a cluster of skyscrapers around them. Two of the pyramids are of yellow stone; these are storage centres for supplies, construction equipment, and war material. The third is an arcology of black glass and neon lights. In comparison, the ziggurat of the Nomad Commercial Mission nearby (*Yóumù shāngyè qū*) – or "Petit Michoacán" to the residents – looks tiny.



WILDCAT DEFENCES

There are two squads of Wildcat troops supporting the field operation. One is stationed in the base camp (see p. 39), while the other is usually out on patrol. The patrol team usually consists of:

- 10 Wildcat Troopers (assembled in 2-3 fireteams)
- 1 Wildcat Hacker

Sergeant Major Vickery: Vickery can be found either in base camp or with the patrol unit, as appropriate.

On Patrol: The patrol team is an element which can be used flexibly.

- *Scene 1 – Shasvastii Corpses:* The patrol could be disposing of bodies (burning them, burying them, etc.) at the site early on, or arriving to do the same during the scene.
- *Scene 2 – Cryogenic Pits:* The patrol could be guarding a team of cryo-technicians loading bodies or simply securing the site from either the characters or the Morat team in the area. The team could also arrive on site (with or without cryo-technicians) after the PCs have been there for a while.
- *Scene 3 – Base Camp:* The GM can spend Heat to bring in the patrol as reinforcements.
- *Between Locations:* The Wildcats could also be encountered while the PCs are moving between any of the Aldini field team locations.

Questioning the Wildcats:

- Their commanding officer is Sergeant Major Estanislao Vickery. He would know about the powers-that-be behind the operation.
- They can identify any of the Aldini field team locations: Shasvastii corpse sites (Scene 1), cryogenic pit (Scene 2), or base camp (Scene 3).
- Some of them may have been on a patrol that observed Ko Dali rendezvousing with an alien at a landed spacecraft (see “Shasvastii Ghost Ship” on p. 25).
- They know the names of the scientists in at the base camp (see p. 39), but they believe they’re designing a form of anti-Shasvastii super-weapon.

Questioning the Scientists:

- The scientists are terrified of Vickery.
- They are working on some form of Shasvastii detector – codenamed Pyxis, and their mission there is to provide research material.
- The scientists can be cold and unfeeling, secure in the fact that they are doing the right thing. Alternatively, the scientists are terrified that their work is going to get them into trouble or killed.
- They have a healthy respect for Shasvastii and will not be left alone without a Wildcat bodyguard.

- The scientists’ notes are scattered throughout the camp, but aside from vague descriptions of the device and methods, there is little about the Shasvastii detection device aside from its existence.

Tracking the Wildcats: The GM will need to decide where the current patrol came from based on circumstance. Any trail will eventually lead back to “Scene 3: Base Camp” (see p. 39). It requires a successful **Daunting (D3) Survival test** to follow their tracks.

SERGEANT MAJOR ESTANISLAO VICKERY

Appearance: His jet-black hair is styled into an aggressive undercut. Vickery’s broad, flat nose has obviously been broken several times. A small, spherical, gunmetal-grey spotbot flits and buzzes around his head like a dragonfly.

Roleplaying:

- Rubs at the corner of his eye when making decisions.
- Distrusts anyone who’s not a Nomad.
- Refers to the Shasvastii as shiny-eyes and the Morat as fur-tails.
- Asks his spotbot (Tommy) rhetorical questions. (“Think we should trust ‘em, Tommy?”) Its buzzes do sometimes sound like legitimate answers.

Background: When Vickery was 11 years old, his mother and father were murdered by ALEPH’s SSS troops during the Second Phantom Conflict. Orphaned and shipped back to *Corregidor*, he fell in with the *vatos* gangs. He was scooped up by the *Alguaciles* at 17 when they caught him smuggling military supplies out of NMF supply caches and forcibly enlisted in a Wildcats reclamation project.

When he joined the active ranks as a full-fledged Wildcat, he was sent to Paradiso to guard Arachne nodes from ALEPH agents. He arrived just in time for the First Offensive to erupt. He’s been prowling these alien jungles ever since.

Key Info:

- Chloe Barnes oversees the operation. (He hates working for civilians.)
- Can confirm or identify all the Aldini field team locations: Shasvastii corpse sites (Scene 1), cryogenic pit (Scene 2), base camp (Scene 3), and the Neiting Commercial Mission (Scene 4).
- Can identify Lisa Padfoot and Colin Davis. He’s uncertain what the goal of their project is exactly, but he no longer thinks it’s a weapon.
- One of his teams observed Ko Dali rendezvousing with an alien at a landing site (see “Shasvastii Ghost Ship” p. 25).

Stats: *Wildcat Lieutenant*, p. 146



MORAT OFFENCE

A team of six Morat have entered the area to investigate (and avenge) the murdered Shasvastii. They are also there to retrieve any EI Cubes and SeedEmbryos.

- *Scenes 1-3:* The Morat can attack the PCs at any of the Aldini field team locations (most likely believing them to be involved). Alternatively, the PCs might catch them keeping these locations under observation.

- *Between Locations:* The Morat team can also be encountered while the PCs are moving between any of the Aldini field team locations.
- *Wildcats and Morat and PCs, Oh My!* If the PCs and Wildcats engage in combat, the Morat complicate the scene by attacking both. Alternatively, the Wildcat squad can show to rescue the PCs from a Morat ambush.

A successful **Average (D1) Hacking test** reveals the Morat's operational intelligence includes the locations of the cryogenic pit and the base camp. They've identified the Nomad operation and are here to clean up.

*Morat —
Infinity Corebook, p. 465*

GROUNDWORK: KILLING KO DALI

If this operation is being run in close parallel with "Operation 2: Killing Ko Dali", the Morat team were dispatched from Ko Dali's action group. Their comlogs include a navigation waypoint for Ko Dali's camp.





SHASVASTII CORPSES

Normally a Shasvastii corpse begins the autolysis process of rapid decomposition within minutes of death, providing a nutrient cocoon for any viable SpawnEmbryo. The Shasvastii corpses the characters find have suffered freezer burn, their bodies rapidly – chemically – frozen. A **Daunting (D3) Medicine test** success identifies the cellular damage as such. For 1 Heat, a Shasvastii corpse is carrying a barely surviving SpawnEmbryo, likely to attract the attention of any Shasvastii group nearby.

The EI Cubes of dead Shasvastii are beyond the ability of the Human Sphere to reverse engineer or decode, and the link to the EI makes such research exceptionally dangerous. Of course, that's unlikely to stop someone trying it...

Shasvastii Seed Soldier – Infinity Corebook, p. 471.

Karava Vinetrap – Infinity Corebook, p. 485.

PLAYTEST TIP

Don't forget that the Wildcats' tracks can be followed (see p. 34).

SCENE 1: SHASVASTII CORPSE SITES

The Aldini field team has been "collecting" Shasvastii from across the Xiongxiang Conflict Region, namely killing them and harvesting the biological components they need from them. The bodies are usually flash-frozen given the Shasvastii's inherent precautions or genetic predisposition toward concealment.

There are multiple corpse sites, and this scene can be encountered multiple times. As detailed below, there are three different site types, as determined by the condition of the corpses. There are also different types of corpse, and both can be encountered in the same scene or spread across multiple scenes.

EXCAVATION

This encounter only happens once. A Shasvastii Seed Soldier was hidden here, and their capsule torn out by the Nomads. A large pit has been dug out of the ground, already hidden by the jungle. A character can make a **Challenging (D2) Observation test** to notice it or will fall in, suffering 1+2 (Stun, Vicious 1) damage.

For 1 Heat, the character also notices movement in the walls. The bio-organic sensor feed tendrils still entwine through nearby vegetation and are reacting to the character's body heat. They are harmless but are likely to cause the character to notice something slithering inside the walls of the pit.

For 2 Heat, the Seed Soldier isn't the only one hidden in the area. Each additional point of Heat spent adds another Seed Soldier hidden nearby. If they activate, they are likely to make their own way to the Nomad camp and attempt to free their kindred.

Characters succeeding at a **Daunting (D3) Tech test** will recognise the VoodooTech of a Shasvastii Seed Capsule.

KILLING FIELD

The Wildcats turned a natural chokepoint created by a patch of Karava Vinetraps into a kill-zone and ambushed a squad of Shasvastii. Most of the corpses remain *in situ*. It's possible the Wildcats may return to this site to burn or bury these bodies (1 Heat), or the Shasvastii find it instead (2 Heat). There are three Karava Vinetraps, plus 1 more for every point of Heat spent.

PYRE PILE

At this location, Wildcats have piled up the Shasvastii corpses and then set them on fire. Smoke is visible from a distance, and the technique is

effective at destroying the bodies, so evidence collection and medical examination is at +1 difficulty.

SHALLOW GRAVES

At these sites, the Wildcats have dug shallow graves for the Shasvastii corpses. The presence of the graves is obvious. Excavating a grave takes 4 hours, although this time can be cut in half with two people working simultaneously. An **Athletics (D0) test** success can further reduce the time required.

SHASVASTII WITH THEIR DEAD

2 Heat: This encounter can be used during any of the first three operations. The characters come across what must have been a fierce pitched battle. Human bodies lie everywhere (possibly some Nomad Wildcats) and Shasvastii corpses.

If the characters are relatively weakened or lack firepower, around 3-5 Shasvastii Troopers are reverently preparing the dead by extracting any SpawnEmbryos and removing the EI Cubes of their fallen kindred. They will be incensed by the characters' appearance, gaining +1 Morale Soak.

Their last act is to inject a fast-acting catalytic agent. This accelerates the decomposition process from days to minutes, turning the Shasvastii corpse amino acids into a corrosive agent, a biological self-destruct.

CORPSE TYPES

If the characters discover actual Shasvastii corpses during their adventures, they are likely to be victims of the Nomad expedition and are less than a day old.

AUTOPSIED

An **Average Medical (D1) test** success indicates that these corpses have been subjected to a post-mortem autopsy. The procedure must have been carried out somewhere else, and the body dumped here.

For 1 Momentum (Gain Information), there's evidence the Shasvastii were exposed to specific types of trauma before death (burning, blunt impact, etc.). The autopsies seem to have focused on the genetic structures most affected by the trauma, particularly the physiological adaptations.

BODY WITH QID TAG

The Nomads were sloppy and left a quantronic ID tag in one of the bodies. The signal pings the characters' personal networks and can be located with a **Challenging (D2) Observation test** success. A successful **Average (D1) Analysis test** tracks the QID signal to the base camp (see p. 39). An **Obtain Information** Momentum spend identifies a secondary cluster of activity on the QID network at the cryogenic pit.

An **Average (D1) Hacking** or **Tech test** success identifies the QID's architecture (either quantronic or physical) source address as originating from Neiting. Some simple research in Neiting will trace this specific QID to a batch sold to the Nomad's Neiting Commercial Mission last year.

DEEP TISSUE SAMPLES

An **Average Medical (D1) test** success indicates deep tissue samples have been extracted from these corpses. The samples were clearly drawn by trained personnel, the process clinical and precise. A **Challenging (D2) Analysis test** success allows a character to ascertain that the samples focus on

the macro-chromatin fibres running throughout a Shasvastii body, storing the genetic library which allows them to rapidly "evolve" or adapt their physiology.

MISSING CORPSES

Not exactly a specific corpse type as such, but at some sites, it will be clear that some of the Shasvastii dead were removed from the area. Tracks and other signs indicate that living Shasvastii were captured and escorted from the location. These can be tracked with an **Average (D1) Survival Test** and always lead to the cryogenic pit.

VIVISECTED

Like the "Autopsied" encounter above, the bodies show the same signs of experimentation, but the Shasvastii was still alive when it took place and was obviously restrained. Two shots to the head and chest attest to their fate, execution-style.

A **Daunting (D3) Tech test** identifies the bullet used as being of Nomad make. A character recognises the ammunition as being of *Bakunin* manufacture if they from a Nomad background.

SCENE 2: CRYOGENIC PIT

The *Cavas colaesseeus* is a Paradiso plant with the appearance of a huge, squat tree several dozen feet across. It grows in a hollow ring structure: if you climb to the top of the "trunk" or chop through it, you'll find that most of the interior is open space.

The Aldini field team have taken advantage of this *Cavas colaesseeus* to create an offsite holding facility for the cryogenically frozen Shasvastii for reasons of both security and redundancy.

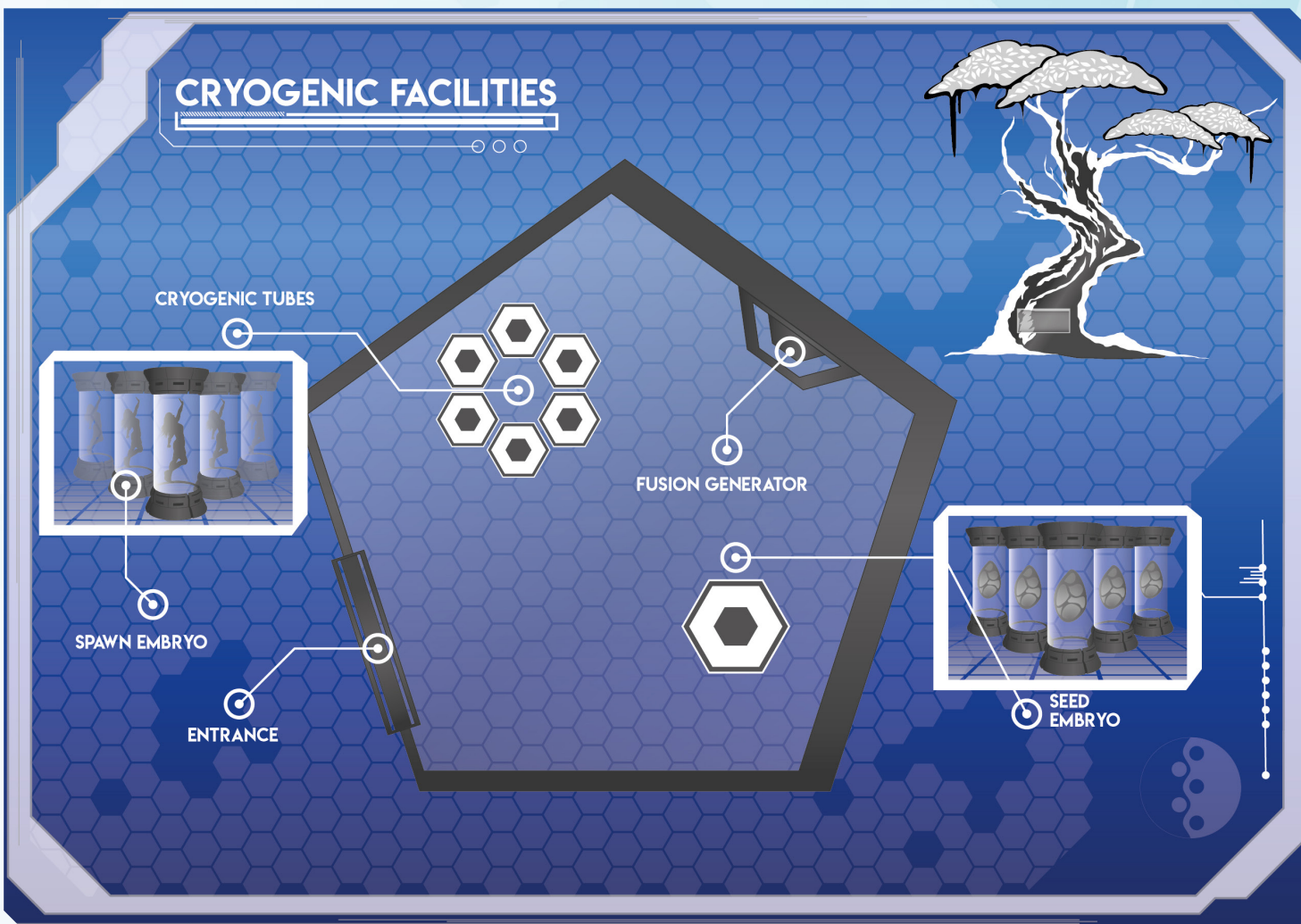
CRYOGENIC FACILITIES

A huge, mass of globular machinery fills the centre of the pit, with rings of industrial, mesh scaffolding erected within the interior of the tree. These are lined with portable cryogenic capsules, several dozen in total. The air here is freezing, and the characters' breath is visible.

- **Cryogenic Capsules:** Roughly 75% of the capsules contain Shasvastii bodies or harvested organs. The Aldini operation draws to a close. The remainder are either empty or contain Shasvastii corpses, killed by shots to the head and torso. Alternatively, the Shasvastii are still alive, leaving the characters with a choice: to leave them behind, kill them, or use them as allies if the Nomads are strong opponents. The Shasvastii will betray the characters at the first opportunity.

- **Fusion Generator:** A small fusion generator tucked into an access passage behind one of the rows of cryo-capsules provides power for the whole facility. If a character – or desperate Nomad – is so inclined, it requires a **Dire (D4) Tech test** success to rig it to explode, taking out a square kilometre of the jungle (and anyone in it). It can be shut down, but the cryotubes will immediately begin to thaw out, and some very angry Shasvastii will wake up.
- **SeedEmbryo:** The Nomads managed to capture a SeedEmbryo. Although technically outside of their mission's scope, they've scavenged several different cryo-capsules to create the bulky contraption that currently keeps it in deep freeze.
- **SpawnEmbryo:** A tiny capsule compared to the others, but within is a sac of amniotic fluid in which a nascent Shasvastii SpawnEmbryo, a tiny Shasvastii, sleeps. Any Shasvastii will do their best to secure the release of the SpawnEmbryo and retrieve it at all costs.

Some of these Shasvastii capsules (including the SpawnEmbryo and Seed Soldier Capsule) will be transported back to Neiting and then shipped to the *Bakunin*. Others will be left on ice, to be retrieved later.



PLAYTEST TIP

THE SPAWNEMBRYO

The SpawnEmbryo is a flexible scenario element. Spend 1 Heat here to have the containment fail and complicate the scene with the arrival of SeedEmbryo soldiers who will begin working to free their frozen comrades. Or if the agents end up befriendng the Nomads in Scene 3, have alarms go off as the surveillance equipment detects a containment breach on the SpawnEmbryo, triggering a big, splashy finale for the scenario with the agents and Wildcats fighting side by side to contain the Shasvastii escapees.

ENTRANCE

The entrance to the Aldini encampment requires an **Average Observation (D1) test** success to find and is a steel door built into the side of the tree. The physical lock can be opened with a key carried by all the Nomads, and an **Average Thievery (D1) test** success picks the lock. The lock takes five point of physical damage before breaking but adds 2 Heat to the GM pool if the characters shoot or attack it.

SURVEILLANCE

The facility uses primitive surveillance cameras. An **Average (D1) Hacking test** success accesses the surveillance system. The system can be shut down and/or surveillance records from the last twenty-four hours can be accessed. The latter will show Wildcats troops accompanied by a small team of Nomad technicians, possibly including either

Lisa Padfoot or Colin Davis, arriving with sedated Shasvastii prisoners for cold storage. An **Average (D1) Analysis test** success triangulates the surveillance signals as being monitored from the base camp (see p. 39).

TRACKING THE NOMADS

An **Average (D0) Survival test** success reveals the site has seen heavy traffic, both coming to the site and leaving in a variety of directions. On two or more successes though, it's clear most of the traffic is coming from the northeast.

Other tracks may lead to other corpse sites (see Scene 1) or simply out on patrol. The tracks to the northeast lead to the base camp but require a successful **Daunting (D3) Survival test** to follow.

SCENE 3: BASE CAMP

The Nomads are packing up their gear. It will take a few days to store everything and get stored in the storage crates (p. 41).

BLUE RING

The Aldini base has been erected in an artificial clearing of verdant green grass. There are clear signs that the vegetation has been cleared using flamethrowers and cut down.

The camp is surrounded by a “blue ring” -- a short-lived, bio-engineered lichen acting as a living exfoliant that helps keep the Paradiso jungle at bay. The blue ring is only harmful to plants, and it's perfectly safe to simply walk across it.

CELLS

These open cages of composite neo-material carry a light electrical charge that escalates each time the cage is touched – 1+1 (Stun) physical damage on the first touch, with an additional 1+1 damage each time. The cages contain 1+4 Shasvastii prisoners (each effect indicates the presence of a Shasvastii who is injured or dying). If the site is compromised, the Wildcats will shoot the prisoners inside the cells.

DOWNTOWN

What the Nomad team refers to as “Downtown” is a large, multi-chamber tent.

- **Entrance / Community Area:** The entrance chamber opens into the centre of Downtown, which serves as a community area. Furniture is a few low-slung couches (cheap foam-inflatables) and flimsy tables.
- **Medical:** This side chamber includes a surgical bay, including a Surgical Waldo 1, along with a twelve-pack of Serum and three MediKits. A successful **Average (D1) Hacking** or **Tech test** reveals the Surgical Waldo is linked to the medical facilities at the Neiting Commercial Mission.
- **Mess:** Simple kitchen and supplies tightly packed into gleaming, stainless steel cases.
- **R&R Area:** The centre of this chamber is a folding holographic projection table allowing the play of billiards, animated wargames, and more. Surrounded by several Vitruvian rigs, motile frameworks of smart metal that engage their user in a fashion to Da Vinci's Vitruvian Man. They allow them to act as compact exercise equipment or portable VR force-feedback rigs.

ALDINI BASE CAMP - ADVERSARY ROSTER

The occupation of the camp is quite fluid and active. The following present a few options, but the GM should feel free to improvise to best effect. There's always one Wildcat platoon in camp (unless the agents do something to draw them away), and any other “missing” personnel are out in the jungle doing field work. Unless they've already been dealt with, the GM can also bring in the second Wildcat platoon at any time if they're not already present.

TYPICAL BASE CAMP A

Lisa Padfoot + 2 Scientists	Field Lab
Colin Davis + 2 Scientists	Science Bunks or Downtown
2 Wildcat Fireteams	Downtown
1 Wildcat Fireteam	Patrol

TYPICAL BASE CAMP B

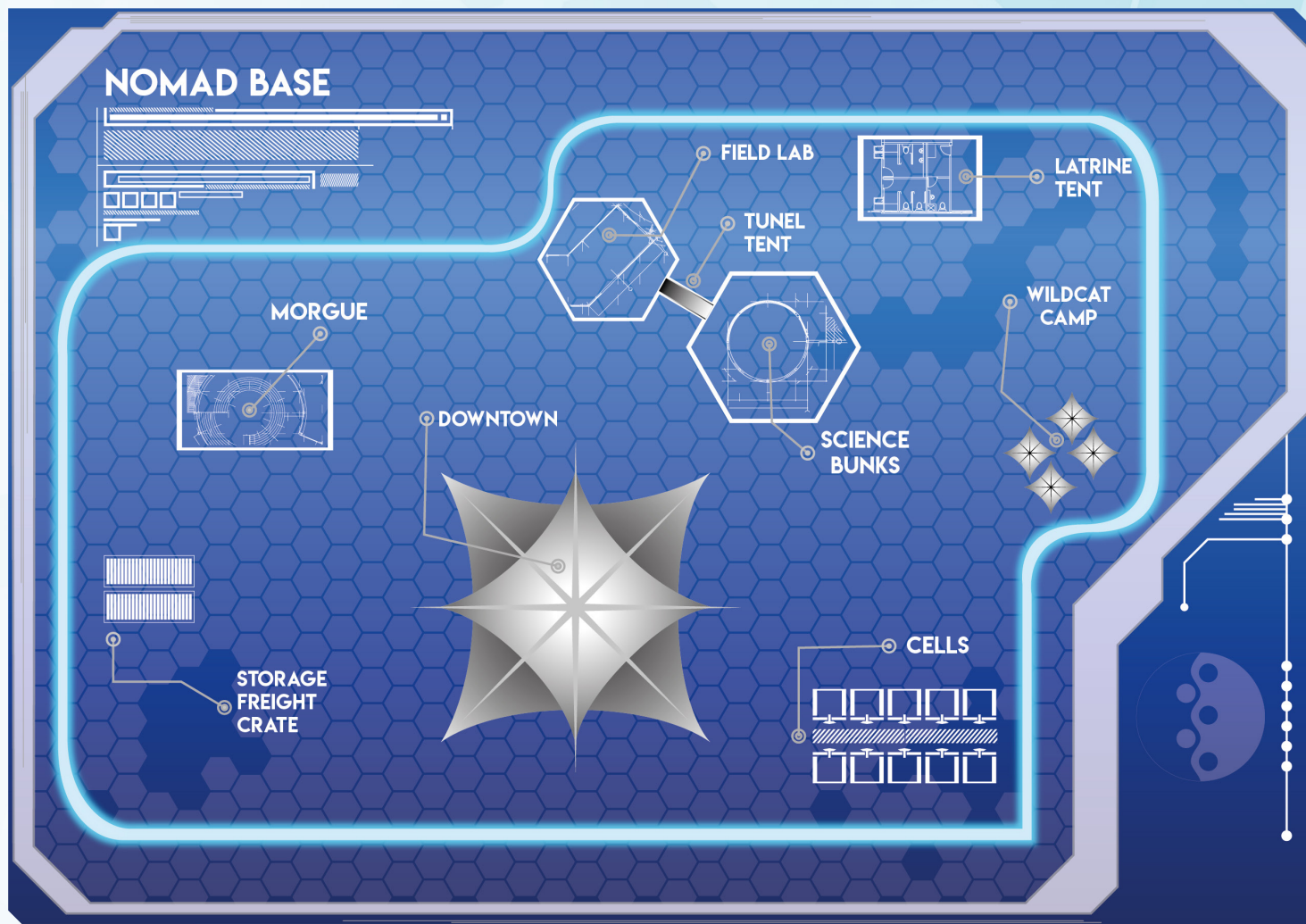
Lisa or Colin + 2 Scientists	Morgue
Sergeant Vickery + 1 Wildcat Fireteam	Downtown
1 Wildcat Fireteam + Wildcat Hacker	Wildcat Tents
1 Wildcat Fireteam	Patrol

BASE CAMP AT NIGHT

Lisa and Colin + 4 Scientists	Science Bunks
2 Wildcat Fireteams	Patrol
1 Wildcat Fireteam	Downtown
Sergeant Vickery + 3 Fireteams + Hacker	Wildcat Tents

BASE CAMP ON ALERT / EVACUATING

Lisa and Colin + 3 Scientists	Field Lab (packing up)
1 Scientist	Morgue (packing up)
3 Wildcat Fireteams + Wildcat Hacker	Patrol
Sergeant Vickery + 2 Wildcat Fireteams	Centre of Camp (on guard)
1 Wildcat Fireteam	Wildcat Tents (packing up)



FIELD LAB

A surprising amount of scientific and engineering equipment has been packed into this tent. Various field racks are designed to roll out from banks flanking the tent, making various pieces of specialised equipment available on demand. A central work bench holds the tangled morass of what is clearly a custom-built device.

This device is NOT the Shasvastii detector. It's a developmental field unit that's custom-designed (and being modified on-the-fly) to analyse Shasvastii tissue structures. It might be thought of as *part* of the Shasvastii detector, but even that isn't strictly accurate. It's a specialised system designed to collect data that's used in the development of the Shasvastii detector on the *Bakunin*.

Despite this, there are references to some form of the Shasvastii detector, basic schematics, and jotted-down notes are everywhere.

LATRINE TENT

Like many veterans of the Paradiso jungle, no one in the camp wants to sit on a Scorpionette while answering the call of nature in the jungle, Paradiso myth or not. The latrine tent provides a certain amount of privacy, safety, and essentially a bucket. The process of "slopping out" is a task hated by everyone. For 1 Heat, a Wildcat or scientist is in here using the facilities.

MORGUE

Cold and clinical, the purpose of this place is obvious. A dissection table, a slab of cold metal, is in the centre of the tent. There is a partially dissected Shasvastii corpse on it for 1 Heat. For 2 Heat, the Shasvastii is still alive. At one end of the tent is a portable bank of sixteen freezer drawers. Several of them contain Shasvastii corpses.

SCIENCE BUNKS

The sides of this long tent roll up during the day, although the interior is still guarded with insect netting. Within are four cots, arranged along the

sides, and two hammocks are strung between the central line supports.


Footlockers contain a variety of personal effects with labels identifying them as belonging to the research scientists. Small knickknacks, holo-sculptures, and the like lend a personal touch. Those tapping into the communal AR here can listen to the group's shared music channel. They have an eclectic range of tastes – Neoterran astro-jazz, classic teen punk from *Bakunin*, sedate symphonic selections – and the tracks have been tagged with good-natured ribbing as the scientists all talk about how the others have terrible taste.

Characters successfully winning a Psywar against one of the Nomad scientists or a Breach against their firewalls can link them to the Aldini Group and discover their quantronic communication is currently being routed to/through the Neiting Commercial Mission.

SHOWERS

Sheets of mould-resistant plastic sheeting create several semi-private stalls. The showers are flanked by a pair of water-collection tanks, one outfitted with a fist-sized heating unit and the other with a similar cooling unit.

STORAGE FREIGHT CRATES

Around 8 metres long, these storage crates are large and empty and are unlocked. They can be climbed with an **Average (D1) Athletics** test. The crates themselves provide hard +4  Cover Soak. They are actively scheduled to be delivered to the Nomad Commercial Mission.

SUPPLY DUMP


A basic quantronic lock is linked to the Nomad expedition comlogs and allows them access to this large steel freight storage container. Without one of the Nomad comlogs, a **Challenging (D2) Hacking** or

Daunting (D3) Security test success is required to gain access. Rations and other foodstuffs are neatly stored alongside scientific supplies such as latex gloves, scalpels, and enough medical supplies for two MediKits.

A second quantronic lock protects several secured cases. Restricted to the Wildcats and Vickery, this is the Wildcat armoury. Inside the cases are 10 Reloads of ammunition for the Wildcat combi rifles, 8 Reloads of shotgun rounds, 2 spare sets of medium combat armour, 12 pistols plus 2 Reloads each, and 10 knives. Five Reloads of flamethrower fuel are also securely stored in their own case.

All the crates are tagged with the Michoacán quantronic ID leading to the Nomad Commercial Mission in Neiting.

TUNNEL TENT

Linking the scientists and the field lab, the tunnel is full of packing crates and storage shelving. The crates provide soft +2  Cover Soak. One of the scientists is often in here, packing some of the kit away (1 Heat).

WILDCAT TENT CAMP

These are standard two-man combat tents. The Wildcats share the tents on a scheduled rotation and most off-duty Wildcats spend their time in Downtown.

The tents are built from composite smart “memory” fabric, an electric charge causing them to reform or collapse into a flat-pack mode. Built-in holo-emitters add adaptive camouflage, and the tent incorporates heating and cooling elements to keep the temperature comfortable.

For 1 Heat, two Wildcats are dozing (or engaged in some other activity!) when the characters are moving around this area.

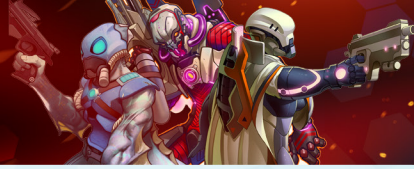
SCENE 4: NEITING COMMERCIAL MISSION

Petit Michoacán, the Neiting Nomad Commercial Mission, is officially designated and named as *Yóumù shāngyè qū* by the StateEmpire Authorities. The Nomads (and most of the locals nearby) call it “Petit (Little) Michoacán” after the notorious Mexican region. While the area isn’t particularly dangerous, the Nomad presence there adds a sense of the exotic and does attract a certain type of individual.

To describe the Nomad Commercial Mission is to describe a ziggurat that melted. There are no sharp

edges on the outside and the stepped terraces are softened by tempered glass designed to let in the maximum amount of light. The larger arcology nearby creates an “afternoon dusk” plunging the whole of Petit Michoacán into shadow for a few hours in the early or mid-afternoon. Many of the Nomads use this time to close business and relax for a few hours, especially if they are used to life on the Motherships.

The interior of the Mission is central open space, with a circular column waterfall plunging vertically



through several levels. This artificial waterfall provides the centrepiece for the Mission's lower-key version of the *Bakunin's* Sunset Boulevard. Every night at ten, the top floor nightclub, Aerie, begins the StarFall Sequence. As much a piece of performance art, it is as a breath-taking piece of hydrological engineering, keyed to a different piece of music every night.

Beneath the glass floors of Aerie, currents of water ebb and flow, with tiny nanobot remotes programmed to react in time to the music. They also act as filtration maintenance, removing harmful organisms and keeping the water filters clean, but they do make a pretty effect. At the culmination of the music, the water is suddenly released to cascade down the central waterfall. The lights are dimmed, and it seems like the whole of the Mission plunges downward as the remotes surge upwards in formation. The excess water splashes down into Venice Beach, a series of canals and artificial berms designed to facilitate aquatic Uplifts visits (depending on their salinity preferences). This area is also

home to Wet & Wild, a night club where anything goes during the StarFall – it's the kind of place that gives the Nomads their reputation.

The three Motherships are well-represented within the Mission, although it is currently the Bakunian Nomads who are running many of the Mission's higher-end enterprises. There's no outright animosity from the other Nomads in this – the *Bakunin* just got to Neiting first. *Tunguska* handles the bureaucracy involved in running the Mission and generally keeping things running, while *Corregidor* provides a great deal of the labour – and occasionally muscle – needed to keep the Mission running. Petit Michoacán somehow works, and despite the anarchy on the surface, the three Motherships play to each other's strengths. Nowhere is this more evident than when outsiders cause trouble for the Mission residents.

The characters are likely to enter the Mission following the Shasvastii cargo or the Aldini scientists.

GAME CHANGER: NEW PLAYERS

If the characters have already completed the first two operations, O-12 have a special assignment for the characters as they leave the jungles – they'll be working an unusual project for a high-ranking politician and have a new handler, Wade Bailey (see p. 145). Read aloud or paraphrase accordingly:

Depending on your point of view, you've either done well or screwed up somehow. Fact of the matter is, you've got noticed by someone higher up the O-12 chain of command and been seconded to a special project by them. It's been green lit by your superiors.

Wade Bailey seems affable enough, the very definition of the Varunan Ripper Dude, but you don't get to be a handler in O-12 without making hard choices.

Club Owner –
Infinity Corebook, p. 425.

If the characters do a little digging on his background, an **Average (D1) Analysis test** success reveals Wade has been working out of a Senator Jhaerix Anderson's office. He'll freely offer this information if asked but will be impressed if the characters figure it out.

Anderson's war record on Paradiso and background are a matter of public record, but characters will need to do a deep dive of his data to even find his minor infractions as a Darwin teenager. His squeaky-clean record may well make the characters suspicious.

Later in the campaign the Speculo Killer, Massamachos, replaces Anderson and begins to use the characters for his own ends. Wade remains unaware of the switch and becomes a tool in the Shasvastii plan – a human bomb.

PETIT MICHOCÁN NOTABLES

The inhabitants of Petit Michoacán are many and varied. A few sample individuals and groups the characters are likely to encounter are listed here. If the GM has access to the *Nomads Sourcebook*, they may also encounter some of the groups and adversaries from there, too.

ALDINI GROUP SCIENTISTS

As well as the Black Hand, the Aldini Group scientists also have their own furtive agenda. Their superiors in Praxis have advised them to lie low until they can be evacuated off world with their test subjects (see "Precious Cargo" on p. 49). If the characters dealt with them directly – and especially violently – they will literally do a U-turn on seeing the characters, and immediately start looking for the Mods (*Bakunin* Moderators who police the Mission) or Wildcats nearby (see "The Jig Is Up!" on p. 48). They are doing their level best to maintain a low profile, and the difficulty to locate them through Psywar or Observation tests increases by one step. They are staying in the Salazar Dosshouse.



ANOSI “GLITCH” KUMALO

Kumalo, despite many rumours to the contrary, is not some Submondo kingpin. Although he has previously played the role of Petit Michoacán’s “Madame Lu”, those days are far behind him. He still wears sharp suits and likes to party, but the suits are a little tighter these days, and he prefers to hold court in his VIP area of Aerie. He takes a very dim view of out-of-towners (non-Nomads) who treat his club as their own private plaything — or shooting gallery.

He doesn’t seem to sleep, and his suits are impeccably tailored. He is well-connected outside Petit Michoacán, especially in the Neiting underworld. Beneath his polite manners and charming, if foppish, demeanour is a highly intelligent and analytical mind. The characters may find him a useful ally since he tends to notice Petit Michoacán’s political currents and Social Energy trends.

BAKUNIN MODERATORS

Petit Michoacán has a police force of its own since the last thing the Nomads want is the StateEmpire’s police meddling in their affairs. Technically, they are supposed to liaise with the local Imperial Judicial Police force. The local *Bakunin* Moderators are perfectly capable of solving most matters “in-house” — usually dumping a

miscreant hogtied and labelled outside a local police precinct.

Compared to policing *Bakunin*, the task of looking after Petit Michoacán is a relatively cushy posting.

The Mods (Moderators) are likely to become involved if the characters are becoming something of an impediment to the daily commerce and general security of the Mission. Of course, a Praxis Black Lab operation happening under their nose is not likely to improve their goodwill toward either side, Bakunian Nomad or no. See “The Jig Is Up!” on p. 48 for how the Mods will deal with such an event.

THE BLACK HAND

The Black Hand are deeply entrenched in the Nomad Commercial Mission — at least in the datasphere. They are hiding in plain sight with the information brokers of the Feria, but the local chaos and colour of the Feria hides them well. The coffee drinker humming tunes to himself while checking his comlog is subtly pinging local personal networks using an acoustic carrier wave, while across the street, the performance artiste dancer is monitoring social trends and data streams in her moves.

Bakunin Moderator —
Infinity Corebook, p. 421

Chloe Barnes — p. 141



While the Black Hand are only likely to be peripherally aware of the characters' interactions with the Aldini Group, one of the group is familiar with the characters: Chloe Barnes. She is the Dark Sapphire Coordinating Analyst for the Pyxis Project, the Shasvastii detector. Forewarned by the scientists and Wildcats (if any survived), the characters' appearance escalates her plans to move both the data and test subjects off site as soon as possible.

With that in mind, she also wants to remove the characters as a threat – permanently. See “The Jig is Up!” on p. 48 for her actions when the characters begin their enquiries.

THE GROUNDED

“Not all who wander are lost.” That’s true for the Grounded, an expatriate group of meteor heads, mainly from *Corregidor*. For whatever reason, a handful of them have set up home in the Petit Michoacán. Some are stuck waiting to get back home. Most hire themselves out on Neiting deep-sea mining rigs where the cramped confines and pressured environment resemble those of the Motherships.

Used to working hard and playing hard, they often blow off steam in the Commercial Mission. They are a loud and boisterous crew whose days (and nights) largely consist of getting hammered at the NuMoyo Bar and pitching up at Gunnar’s, off their faces on drinks and drugs.

A handful of the Grounded have taken up Dog-Bowl, albeit without the level of violence common to the Ariadnan sport. A few of them gather at Venice Beach for a knockabout game, which frequently devolves into a brawl much to the consternation of the Mods and nearby property owners.

INFORMATION BROKERS

Information is like any other commodity. It can be bought, sold, and traded. The information brokers of Petit Michoacán are unlikely to be found in the Feria though. They have a taste for the finer things in life and are found in the Kardomah Coffee House.

While they affect an old-world style sense of “their word is their bond”, they’re not above stabbing their contemporaries in the back to get exclusive access to a scrap of data. In many cases, their information is traded again for profit.

Despite their genteel manners and politeness, they are still well-informed and pay well for Submondo or even O-12 covert data. Sooner or later, Petit Michoacán information brokers know exactly what’s going on.

If the characters decide to make some enquiries with the brokers regarding the Aldini Group, it can be carried out as a Negotiate Action (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 130). Most information brokers will provide information for a Cost of 5. Offering additional Assets reduces the difficulty by 1 step. For 1 Heat (or a Complication), the broker also informs Chloe Barnes, the Black Hand Data Analyst in charge of the Aldini operation.

They can provide the following snippets of information, and require the characters to be specific in their questions:

A group of Nomads returned from the jungle a few days ago. They were pretty beaten-up and headed to the Salazar.

- Wildcats moved some large and heavy cargo crates to the Vaults. Not normally used to handling cargo crates, they got into a scuffle with some of the Grounded.
- Any of the Aldini scientists or Vickery will be known to the brokers.
- The Wildcats have been hanging around in DownBelow for several days. They appear to be waiting for a transport back to *Bakunin*.
- The Aldini Group are a Black Laboratory, based out of Praxis on the *Bakunin*.

MADAME LU: ARDA PRENKPALAJ

Every Nomad Commercial Mission has their version of Madame Lu. In Petit Michoacán, it’s Arda Prenkpalaj. A small individual from the *Tunguska* Mothership, they’ve been running a stall in the Feria for a long time, time enough to see both Offensives and decide war is bad for business. The last thing they need is a bunch of Morat breaking up the place as well.

Prenkpalaj has a long-standing feud with Kamosi, mainly due to his possessive attitude regarding Petit Michoacán. The nightclub owner was once Madame Lu himself and still treats the underground as his personal plaything. They also dislike the way that Kamosi still uses Chimera as an exploited workforce.

Prenkpalaj is also a Chimera – their face and body surgically altered to make them appear as fox. As with most Chimera, Arda’s life was to be the subject of curiosity and exploitation. Breaking out of that to become a trader in the latest fashions and a becoming a trendsetter was something of a surprise to Arda as well. With their ties to the Underworld of Petit Michoacán, Prenkpalaj is a useful person to have on your side.

Meteor Heads –
Infinity Corebook, p. 444

Information Brokers –
Infinity Corebook, p. 440.

Chimera –
Infinity Corebook, p. 423

Trader –
Infinity Corebook, p. 460.

MADAME LU

Who is Madame Lu? The answer varies by location, but the result is always the same. They are the outsider’s guide to the Mission Underground.

Comparatively tame when contrasted with *Bakunin*’s Ultraviolet Quarter, each Mission Underground is nevertheless an anarchic spectacle. Whether they’re looking for contraband, esoteric, or erotic services, or simply a place to conduct business away from ALEPH’s prying eyes, the Mission Underground is more than happy to oblige – provided that the customer can pay.

MERCHANTS OF THE FERIA

A little slice of Mothership life, the mercantile concerns of the Nomad Mothership are well-represented. Many of the Nomad stereotypes are present, including Tunguskan financial advisers, Corregidoran gang bosses, and Bakunian body-modders. What the merchants also offer is no ALEPH oversight, and there are many ways to arrange shady trade deals between any of the factions — ideally without O-12 or their respective governments knowing. More than a few shady consortiums and holding companies are registered to Petit Michoacán, including several fronts for O-12 ops, and even some Hexahedron ones. The latter are careful to use intermediaries and proxies. It is likely the Black Hand allow them to operate, if only to keep an eye on what they are up to.

While services and information are commodities to trade, there are other goods available of course. Items and gear normally restricted to Nomads only and listed as such in the *Infinity Corebook* are available here. If the group has access to the *Nomad sourcebook*, then the gear from that book is also available.

Merchants from all three Motherships are present, and while there is a certain amount of bantering and heckling among the merchants, there is rarely any hostility. And any “ground-pounder” from a non-Nomad faction is the subject of healthy competition and market forces — and an easy mark.

WILDCATS

The Wildcats are maintaining a low profile and are quartered at the Salazar. Chloe Barnes has warned them (via Vickery, if he survived) to steer clear of trouble. They are keeping to DownBelow while they await transport, as well as guarding the cryogenic capsules in the Vaults.

They are in a foul mood after their sojourn into the Paradiso jungle, dealing with alien threats like the Shasvastii and, of course, the characters. They are unlikely to have forgotten the characters, and their appearance in the Mission causes the Wildcats to act violently (see “The Jig is Up!” on p. 48).

YǎNJĭNG SPIES

Neiting is StateEmpire territory, and Yu Jing’s Yǎnjīng security service have their spies outside but none inside the Mission itself. Of course, if Jia Song accompanies the characters, then that is no longer true. Song will be keen to find any news of Ko Dali.

The Yǎnjīng would also love to get access to the Arachne node. It is entirely possible that Yu Jingese agents (such as Jia Song) use the confusion of the characters’ visit (or complications resulting!) to infiltrate Petit Michoacán’s Arachne node.

LOCATIONS

Petit Michoacán’s appearance is of a stepped pyramid, with the edges softened by glass panels. The presence of the nearby arcology plunges the Mission into shadow for much of the afternoon. This isn’t a problem for the inhabitants of the mission, since they are used to the artificial light of the Nomad Motherships.

Within the mission itself are a number of levels surrounding the central waterfall. In itself, this can be a shock for Nomads unused to seeing expanses of water. The view from each level is dizzying, and not recommended for those who suffer from vertigo. Most Nomads are indifferent to the heights or depths. Each floor of the Mission is divided up into modules, much in the same way as the Motherships, and no two are alike.

The levels of the pyramid extend below ground as well, where much of the Mission’s heavy plant machinery and environmental controls are based. These lower levels also hold the storage warehouses and Skid Row, a warren of makeshift and low-cost accommodation, or Dosshouses. It’s here that the true Nomad Underground is evident, and a far cry from the more polished appearance above.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

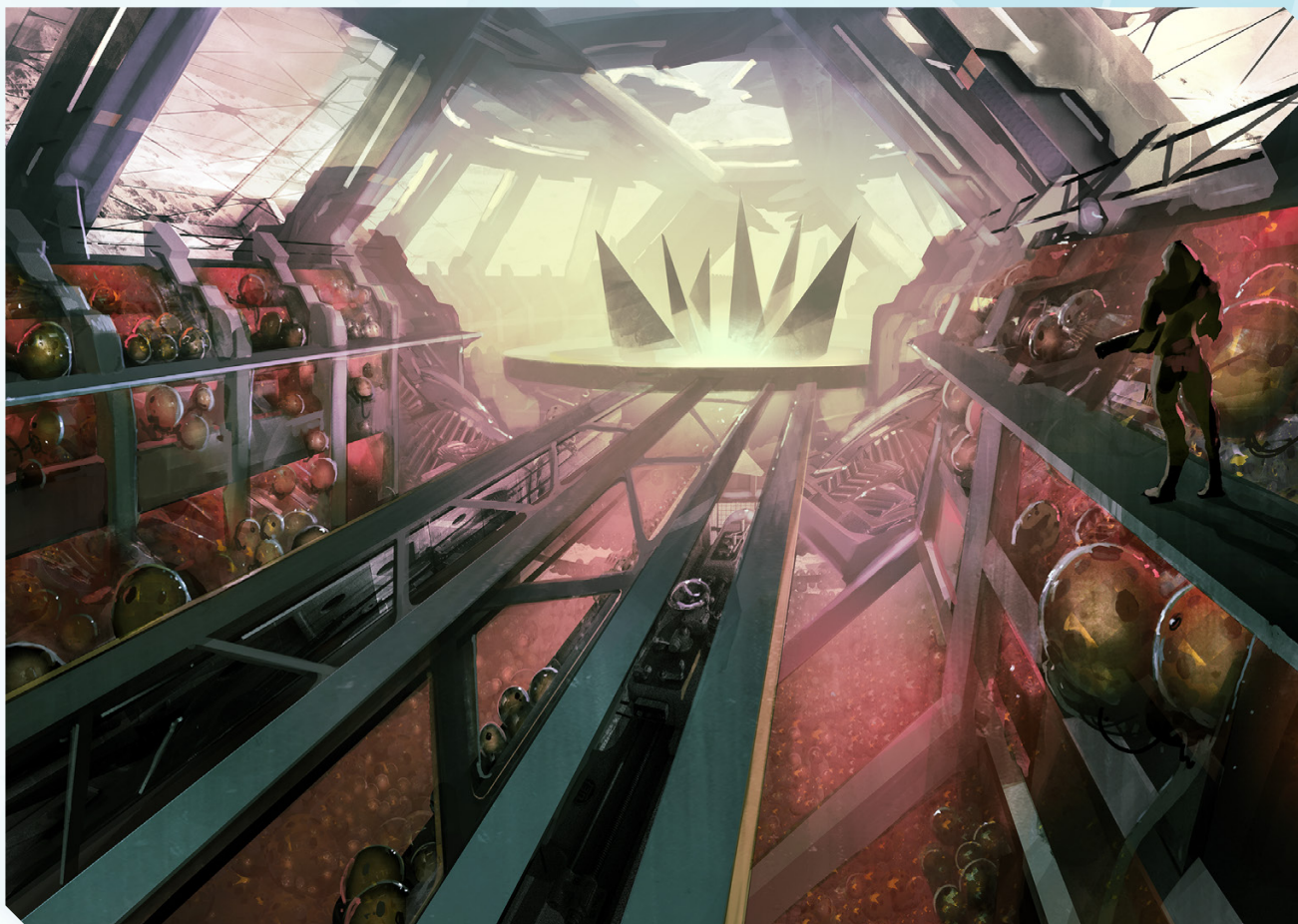
Set aside from the Feria are the various complexes that deal with the Nomad systems of governance, the various bureaucratic, military, and legal (and not so legal) offices. The characters are unlikely able to access these areas without spending Momentum or an Infinity Point. If the characters do somehow get access to this area, the GM may wish to give them more information on the Aldini Group and their operations (see p. 74).

AERIE

The highest point of the Mission, Aerie (just Aerie, not the Aerie) is a nightclub owned by Anosi “Glitch” Kumalo. A glass floor and complicated hydrological systems create a breath-taking and vertiginous vista. Watery sculptures act as counterpoint to Chimera stage dancers, while Kumalo spares no expense in the latest DJs and music from across the Nomad culture. It is also the source of the StarFall spectacle, a nightly downpour of water and light set to music.


ANTANANARIVO HOTEL

A highly luxurious hotel, the Antananarivo has a old-style colonial feel that often jars oddly with the modern, cocktails at six in the evening jar with the opening of the Neoterra financial markets and a data download. Every night is a theme night at the Antananarivo, an Agatha Christie night in Cairo, the 21st-Century Raffles of Singapore, or the Glacier



Melts of Svalarheima. It is a constant challenge to come up with new ideas.

BANK OF TUNGUSKA

Most of the Nomad Commercial Missions finances and contracts go through here. The building is an imposing structure of black stone and gold fittings, and almost funereal compared to the rest of Petit Michoacán. A secure datacrypt sits beneath the bank itself linking through Arachne to *Tunguska* and the other Nomad Motherships. The bank also controls access to the secure storage unit, the Vaults. A single elevator shaft (large enough for cargo transports) heads down through the depths of DownBelow and into the bedrock. Four Corporate Security Guards (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 427) watch each end of the elevator behind screens providing +2  Cover Soak. They are led by a single Elite, but 2 Heat upgrades the remaining Troopers to Elites as well.

CHURCH OF THE OBSERVANCE OF MERCY

Maintaining a low profile outside of the Mission, the Observance does their best to keep the more-rabid anti-ALEPH sentiments in check. A handful of Reverend Moira and Custodiers are on site, forming

an Operative Conclave (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 175). The majority are off site during the adventure. While they are unlikely to be of any help to the characters directly, Chloe Barnes will call upon their help as the tactical section of the Black Hand.

DOSSHOUSES

Dosshouses are cheap hotels, very similar to old-fashioned motels. Literally a bed and bathroom and nothing else, they are inexpensive and mostly clean, although the décor is often tired and previous occupants have lent their own distinctive odour. Three exist on Skid Row: the Salazar, De Medici, and Gunnar's. The Aldini Group scientists and their Wildcat guards are staying at the Salazar.

DOWNBELOW

DownBelow is actually a series of compartmented modules with varying degrees of salinity and all underwater. Designed to house Nomad Uplift Aquatics such as whale or dolphin variforms, it is a hotel of sorts and a security measure. To get to the Vaults below requires access to either the central Vault elevator or to swim through pressured depths. And of course, there might be genetically engineered sharks, because the Nomads would do that sort of thing.

ENTRANCE

It could be argued by the Nomads that Petit Michoacán has never been closed. The entrance remained open, even during the attacks on the city. It's also one of the most heavily watched areas in the city. Characters attempting to sneak into the Commercial Mission require a **Daunting (D3) Stealth test**. There are smaller entrances (emergency exits and boltholes in most cases), but they are secured from the inside. A **Daunting (D3) Thievery** or **Hacking test** success allows a character to open one of these doors. Failure adds 2 Heat to the GM pool. The entrance is large enough to allow cargo transports access to the interior of the Mission, including the Vaults.

HIRING HALLS

One of the main reasons the other factions come to Nomad Commercial Missions is for their people, not only manual labour such as meteor heads, but infowarriors, mercenaries, and spacecraft pilots as well. The Hiring Halls are shielded from scrutiny by quantronic interference and more mundane privacy such as confidential meeting rooms and anonymous contact drops.

KARDOOMAH

Opened by an enterprising Haqqislamite, Abbas Malik, this coffee house is a favourite of visiting Haqqislamites as well. As a result, there's a popular rumour that if you're looking for a Silk upgrade (for yourself or others), it's the place to make friends. It's also a place where the Haqqislam Muhafiz are rumoured to station their agents for the occasional scrap of intelligence regarding Arachne.

MATE-MARKET

One of the less-salubrious establishments in the Mission, this bordello is hidden in Skid Row. No one knows who owns it, but business is always good there. Catering for a wide variety of tastes and proclivities, the place has been shut down twice but reopened elsewhere later. It's as close to an urban myth among the Nomads, a place where anything goes provided you have the cash.

FERIA

Most of the Mission is taken up by the Feria, a trading forum and marketplace that extends upward through several levels. The merchants live within their pitch and make use of as much available space as they can. The precincts of the Feria are haphazardly lit so many of the stallholders use digital patinas and quantronic projections. The result is a jumbled maze of vendors and winding streets, with blaring advertisements that startle the passer-by. Like an old-fashioned bazaar, the Feria is an assault on the senses, with the multitude of aural, visual, and olfactory stimuli.

NUMOYO

Like the Antananarivo Hotel, NuMoyo is one of Petit Michoacán's more expensive bars with good reason. The Mission long ago realised that particular visitors expected to do business in a certain atmosphere. Essentially, the NuMoyo is very much a "tame" bar by Nomad standards. There is little of the Nomad rebelliousness and rambunctiousness to be found here. And the drink costs are astronomical.

SKID ROW

A warren of makeshift shelters and prefabricated screens, this shanty town below the Feria is for the Nomads whose reserves of Social Energy are depleted. It's also home to the more illicit trades on offer — drugs, illegal body mods, and more. Many of the locals believe the Praxis Black Labs uses Skid Row for testing.

VAUDEVILLE

Nowhere near as grand as its bigger Bakunian cousin, VaudeVille, this is still an intense experience for anyone who has never experienced the Nomad Mothership. The place is always open and is a psychedelic jolt of Nomad culture. Here you get the drugs you're looking for, but those hallucinations of beast-faced humanoids are real — they're surgically altered Chimeras. Art and body-modification come together here, and anything is permitted. You can even get brought back from the dead and put into an Lhost body.

THE VAULTS

Secured by a numerical system tied to a quantronic ID key, the ciphers involved in the Vaults are complicated even by Nomad First Tunguska Bank standards. These are more than safe deposit boxes. They are actually secure storage units in varying sizes, including some capable of maintaining and holding the research from the jungle site. Chloe Barnes (p. 141) has an area assigned and two Wildcats are always on duty here. Neither the Wildcats (including Vickery) or Aldini Group scientists have the account number and keypair needed to access the unit containing the cryogenic-frozen Shasvastii. Barnes is guarding that carefully. The Wildcats are not the only private security guarding the Vaults. Several other security guards also guard the larger vaults (see "Corporate Security Unit", *Infinity Corebook*, p. 427).

Hacking into the Vaults requires a **Dire (D4) Hacking test** success, and even then, it provides no clue regarding the location of specific vaults. What it does do is allow the characters to view the security feeds or the access logs.

VENICE BEACH

Euphemistically named for the area of old Earth's Los Angeles, Venice Beach is no strip of sand.



WHO WATCHES THE WATCHERS?

The characters' appearance at the Mission will not go unnoticed. Both Yu Jing's Yǎnjīng and PanOceania's Hexahedron have agents with an interest on getting inside the Mission. These may also factor into a Wilderness of Mirrors subplot as well.

FACE OF THE ENEMY

Any social interactions within the Mission by characters who are obviously ALEPH-affiliated suffer a -1 penalty to all tests.

Reverend Moira —

Infinity Corebook, p. 452

ALGUACILES

To many, the Alguaciles are the face of the Nomads. It happens only naturally, as most of the mercenaries sent to work outside of the Nomad Nation are recruited from among the ranks of the Alguaciles.

Experienced and unrelenting, but also stubborn and sometimes foolhardy, the Alguaciles are the backbone of the Nomads. But, continuing with the metaphor, they could be also likened to the tired hands of the labourer, toiling for the betterment and comfort of the future generations.

Many Alguaciles spend more time outside of *Corregidor* than they do at home, but they don't seem to mind. They work so that others may live, placing them squarely among the unsung heroes of the Nomads.

Instead, it's a circular ring of concrete and steel canals surrounding the plunge pool for the StarFall. It does have a tide of sorts when the water drains away before the StarFall. Remotes keep the water clean and remove impurities. Their flash pulses are what gives the StarFall its appearance.

WET & WILD

Venice Beach's most popular nightclub, it is nowhere near as fancy as Aerie, but it is cheaper and somewhat freer. Designed to look like a coral reef, the organic interior is all curves and soft edges. Wet & Wild has all number of shadowed hollows and semi-private nooks as a result, perfect for free assignations, and no one bats an eyelid at the behaviour in the club. The StarFall splashes down into this nightclub through a carefully arranged sprinkler system at a random time, fuelling the drug- and drink-soaked debauchery. It is hardly private, but it is difficult to overhear — or hear at all — over the thumping bass-subliminals and sensory stimulants.

WATCHING & WAITING

The characters are likely to decide to venture into the Mission if they want to follow the Shasvastii detector research or if they want to follow the Aldini scientists. Wade may also ask the characters to follow up the comms chatter between the Mission and the Aldini camp in the jungle.

THE JIG IS UP!


Sooner or later, Barnes becomes aware of the characters' presence in Petit Michoacán. How does this happen? It can be as easy as spending 2 Heat, or as the result of a Complication. If the characters enter the Mission and specifically make a point of looking for the Aldini scientists and Wildcats, she'll take steps to remove the impediment to the grand plan.



First, she'll arrange a private transport of both the cryogenic tubes and the Shasvastii detector, the Pyxis device. She has planned this anyway, but the characters' involvement advances her designs. The same transport will also take the surviving Wildcats and scientists off world.

It doesn't stop the characters though or prevent further interference by O-12. Instead, she uses her contacts on the *Bakunin* to create rumours of a covert raid by ALEPH infowarriors. This occurs two hours after the characters enter Petit Michoacán. The characters can initially escape Barnes's notice and avoid surveillance for 4 hours by succeeding at a **Daunting (D3) Stealth test**. Each additional success or Momentum spent increases the time by an hour.

Barnes's plan is simple: make the characters look like the scouts for an advanced ALEPH raid or terrorist attack. It's straightforward, untraceable, and highly effective at diverting the resources of the Mission at a perceived threat.

As soon as the rumours begin filtering through, the characters find the whole Mission going into a pseudo-high noon mentality. Businesses suddenly close or the owner refuse to serve the characters, and the streets empty. Even the infosphere empties of traffic. The characters find anyone in the Mission to be far more difficult to talk to, increasing the difficulty of all social tests by 1.

That's just the start of the characters' difficulties. A Reverend Moira and a group of Alguaciles are dispatched to take care of the characters. The Reverend Moira will attempt to take out any obvious infowarriors first, while the Alguaciles provide fire support. There are two Alguaciles per character, and the Reverend Moira will coordinate them as fireteams while staying in hard Cover Soak (+4 )

The frontage of the Mission's storefronts provides soft (+2 ) Cover Soak, and the walls hard Cover Soak (+4 )

. Once the firefight is over, it quickly becomes obvious the characters are no longer welcome. Four Bakunin Moderators and four Alguacile heavies arrive if the characters dither, and they are not intending to ask questions. It's time for the characters to leave.

ELITE

ALGUACILES

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
8	8	8	8	8	8	8




FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+1	—	Movement	—	—	Social	+1	—
Fortitude	+1	—	Senses	+1	—	Technical	+2	—

DEFENCES

Firewall	8	Resolve	8	Vigour	8
Security	—	Morale	—	Armour	1

ATTACKS

- **Combi Rifle**: Range C/M, 1+5  damage, Burst 2, 2H, Expert 1, MULTI Light Mod, Vicious 1
- **Pistol**: Range R/C, 1+4  damage, Burst 2, 1H, Vicious
- **Knife**: Melee, 1+3  damage, 1H, Concealed 1, Non-Hackable, Subtle 2, Thrown, Unforgiving 1

GEAR: Light Combat Armour, Micro-torch, Powered Multi-tool

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **More Than a Job**: For many Alguaciles, being a mercenary is not a job, but a way of life. They travel all over the Human Sphere, picking up different skills as they go. Each point of Momentum or Heat spent to add dice to a test provides two d20s instead of one.

PRECIOUS CARGO

If the characters were able to hack into the Vaults or otherwise figure out where the Aldini Group have been hiding along with their research data, they may well want to stop the Aldini Group leaving Paradiso. If the characters were unable to track down the Aldini scientists or the research materials, Wade has identified some chatter regarding transportation from the Nomad Mission. They're moving a large number of containers.

Alternatively, surveillance of the Mission shows a large number of cargo trucks arriving from the Mihin Lankha transport company.

- **Hacking the Transport Company Records:** The characters can find out who and what these trucks are there for. A **Daunting (D3) Hacking test** success allows the characters access to the Mihin Lankha records and manifests. Three of the container trucks require refrigeration and cryogenic facilities. The remaining one is a

personnel transport. A **Daunting (D3) Analysis test** success allows a character to track the finances back to the *Bakunin* and the Praxis lab there.

- **Following the Trucks:** An easy option, although it takes a **Challenging (D2) Pilot test** to remain unnoticed. The trucks are all heading to a private landing pad where a cargo shuttle waits to transport the Aldini scientists.
- **Following the Shuttle:** While it is unlikely the characters are able to physically follow the shuttle, it still leaves a data trail. The shuttle is destined for the C3 Circular bound for Svalarheim, then another for Varuna. It takes a **Challenging (D2) Hacking test** to discover this.

If the characters do try to stop the shuttle taking off, Vickery and his remaining Wildcats will do their level best to allow the shuttle to take off. A straight-out firefight between the characters and the Wildcats will likely ensue. See "Praxis Run" on p. 71 for more details.

SCENE 5: REPORTING IN

If the characters decide to avoid the Nomad Commercial Mission entirely and head straight back to Valkenswijk with their findings, Wade will listen to the characters responses but will ask the characters to find out the destination of the crates and the Pyxis device— (see "Precious Cargo" on p. 49).

This may well have the characters stymied in how they can proceed, but all is not lost. Anderson (or Wade) will be quick to point out that getting off Paradiso is not easy. Paradiso is a warzone, and commercial traffic is monitored. It leaves one of two options, one of the Space Elevators or an atmosphere-capable craft, possibly off the books.

Neither are common on Paradiso (see "Precious Cargo", p. 49).

If the characters did visit Petit Michoacán, then the events there have since been passed off as a "regrettable misunderstanding" by the Nomad Nation to O-12.

When the characters arrive to meet Wade, their handler advises them a senior O-12 member will also be present, as he has a vested interest in their case, Jhaerix Anderson, an O-12 Überhaus Senator. He may already be known to the characters (see p. 141).

JHAERIX ANDERSON: AGENT PROVOCATEUR

Anderson will crop up regularly throughout the campaign from this point. He is both an antagonist and ally to the characters. Initially investigating the Operation: Bāowéi affair (see p. 90), Anderson is later killed and replaced by the Speculo Killer, Massamachos. The Shasvastii uses the characters as pawns, manipulating them for the Combined Army's own ends.

In that regard, Anderson/Massamachos drives much of the adventure forward, along with the twinned Speculo Killer, Tokloshii, embedded within the command structure of the Acheron Blockade's forces.





OPERATION 4

ARIADNA DAWNING



OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

The characters arrive on Dawn via Circular. Their mission is to guard a group of O-12 weapons inspectors looking into the evidence the characters found on Paradiso and Satori. In this case, it involves looking at the Kardell shipping company that has dealt with weapons shipments to Satori.

After a shuttle accident forces the characters to crash land in the interior, they finally catch the Transtartaric train to Dalniy. Tensions come to a head on the train, and one of the O-12 experts, Chyll Tizon, is murdered by one of the team.

In Dalniy, they find the links to Xin-Jinfeng, an abandoned mining town in the Snark Lands. Once in the town, they find they are not alone, the experimental *Lángren* (controlled and enhanced Antipodes) are being assessed by an LAI named Mèiguǐ.

BACKGROUND

Jia Song set up several holding companies for Operation Bāowéi, on both Varuna and Dawn. The Dawn operation was established through Kardell Corporation, based in Dalniy.

Yu Jing (and Jia Song) had time to move most of the weapons as well as the indentured Japanese workers before the characters' team arrives. A boat trip to the Snark Lands allows the characters to find a link to Varuna, notably the Riojas Tecnos company.

However, Yu Jing is now using the abandoned town of Xin-Jinfeng as the testing ground for their own Antipodes pack controller, an experiment which the characters will step straight into.

THE EXPERTS

CHYLL TIZON

Appearance: Weaselly and handsome, he uses far too much product in his hair, giving him a greasy look. The scent of his pomade and cologne tend to fill up small spaces quickly.

Roleplaying:

- Sneaky little conniver, he happily uses blackmail to get his way.
- Always messing with his hair.
- Dirty little secrets – everyone's got them. Tizon like to find them and use them as leverage.

Background: While Nomads usually have an open mind, they do have their limits. Tizon is one of those rare individuals that managed to reach them. He's a former *Bakunin* Moderator who abused his authority and was subsequently fired. He's an unpleasant individual who only cares for himself and his own personal gratification.

Key Info:

- He is blackmailing Volkova and Perez. He knows their secrets and is extolling money and favours (sexual and otherwise) from them.
- Vassileikos terrifies Tizon. He's been unable to find any dirt on the "Meatshield".
- Will try to hack the characters' networks during combat if he thinks he can get away with it.

Stats: *Bakunin* Moderator – *Infinity Corebook*, p. 422

GALBADRAKH "GALA" BATJARGAL

Appearance: Batjargal has a slightly battered and scruffy appearance. He contrasts strongly with the smartly dressed members of the group, such as Perez. Despite this, he is scrupulously clean, and the battered overalls he wears are more for utility than style. He's the group's medic.

Roleplaying:

- A clean freak, he wipes down any surface he touches.
- Gives away little, keeps quiet, gets the job done.
- Doesn't trust Tizon and has his own plans to deal with him.

Background: The StateEmpire's spy service has many different faces, and sometimes they wear one like Gala's. He's been embedded in O-12 for many years now but remains loyal to the StateEmpire. He grew up on Sol but has never suffered from conflicting loyalties.

Key Info:

- He's the true spy for StateEmpire.
- Will quietly sabotage efforts to implicate Yu Jing's involvement in Operation Bāowéi.
- Gala is a popinjay who can take the brunt of hostility toward Yu Jing.

Stats: Doctor – *Infinity Corebook*, p. 429

JUPITER PEREZ

Appearance: If being good looking was a criminal offence, Perez would be a Submondo overlord. Unfortunately, they also know it.

Roleplaying:

- Always impeccably dressed, somehow.
- Vain and self-conceited – and lazy.
- Perez should be running the team, not Volkova.

Background: Maya shows tend to over-exaggerate certain personality aspects of the Hexahedron agents of the Human Sphere. Sometimes, those agents believe the hype. Born to a rich PanOceanian family on Neoterra, Perez is one such agent. The rest of the team believe O-12 stuck Perez with them for some previous transgression. Perez does have a secret – Jupiter was bribed to look the other way when a Yu Jingese assassin needed access to a high-ranking official.

Key Info:

- Perez is having a romantic affair with Vassileikos, hates Volkova.
- Being blackmailed by Tizon over the bribery.
- Knows both Jia Song and Ko Dali. Perez is visibly jumpy when their names are mentioned.

Stats: Hexas Agent – *Infinity Corebook*, p. 439

JANOS VASSILEIKOS

Appearance: Vassileikos is the embodiment of Knighthood. He is tautly muscled, with close-cropped black hair and piercing blue eyes.

Roleplaying:

- Always sits in a corner with a clear view of the room.
- Tends to hover over Perez.
- Revels in the arrogant jock stereotype.



Background: Vassileikos has spent several lifetimes in service. He doesn't remember much of where he came from — he thinks it's Neoterra — just a near eternity of life as a novice. He recalls books though and the tactile sense of a story held in the hand.

Key Info:

- Willing to risk himself for the group.
- He is in love with Jupiter Perez, although he cannot understand why.
- Believes that Tizon has compromised the group too many times now.

Stats: Knight — *Infinity Corebook*, p. 441

KSENIA VOLKOVA

Appearance: Volkova has the coldly beautiful features and perfect symmetry of an Lhost body. She keeps her curly black hair tied back, since it gets in her eyes.

Roleplaying:

- She has an economy of movement, being exactly where she needs to be.
- Has the kind of temper that does not suffer fools.
- Being blackmailed by Tizon over the Taittiriya incident.

Background: Resurrected recently, Volkova was previously in charge of the defences of the city of Taittiriya on Paradiso. She and the defenders under her command deserted their posts when the Morat began to overrun the city. By dint of astronomically good luck, they fortuitously called an airstrike on their own position, rather than an evacuation transport. It halted the Offensive into the city and earned Volkova a Resurrection as the Phoenix of Taittiriya.

Key Info:

- Tizon located Volkova's original comlogs from Taittiriya and has been blackmailing her ever since.
- She's aware of Perez's and Vassileikos's complicated romantic situation.
- She's discussed removing Tizon from the team with Batjargal.

Stats: Spec Ops (Elite) — *Infinity Corebook*, p. 455

HSIAO XI-WANG

Appearance: Tall for a Yu Jingese diplomat, Hsiao Xi-Wang can look Janos Vassileikos in the eye. He wears the kind of clothes suitable for the Dawn frontier, expensively tailored but with a strong Yujingyu motif.

Roleplaying:

- The Party has my back; the StateEmpire is at my side.
- Excited to visit Dawn but doesn't want to show it.

- Taps his chin when negotiating.

Background: Born on a Yu Jingese orbital, Hsiao Xi-Wang has spent a lifetime bouncing around the worlds of the Human Sphere. First as a child, then later as part of the Party's Foreign Service. He's visiting Dawn for the first time.

Key Info:

- Hsiao is possibly one of the few aware of the true cascade of errors leading to Volkova's award for valour on Paradiso. If he needs to, he'll use it as leverage.
- He suspects there's more to Gala Batjargal. Is he possibly a Crane Rank agent?
- While he tries to be patient, he dislikes Vassileikos.

Stats: Diplomat — *Infinity Corebook*, p. 429

MISSION BRIEFING

It's been a few hops to get here, but Dawn is ahead. You've been babysitting this crew for the whole trip, and it's going to be a relief to be back in the fresh air. It doesn't get any fresher than Dawn.

Ksenia Volkova is the lead investigator. She has the aesthetics of an Lhost body and has obviously been Resurrected.

Chyll Tizon would be good looking if he cleaned himself up a little and was a little less obsequious and weaselly.

Galbadrakh "Gala" Batjargal is the team's medic. Slightly overweight, he is usually dressed in rumpled coveralls.

Hsiao Xi-Wang is the StateEmpire's "Imperial Liaison". He's Yu Jing's official minder for the mission. He's charming, jovial, and currently kept at arm's length by the group.

Jupiter Perez is Analysis & Assessment. They're used to getting their way and are very much the definition of the Maya Hexas Agent.

Janos Vassileikos is the group's blunt instrument. The ALEPH Asura isn't given to subtle gestures and imparts the impression of the arrogant jock.

Your mission here's pretty basic. Make sure the team checks out Kardell Corporation and see if there's any wrongdoing. Follow any leads and try and keep these investigators safe. Given Dawn's reputation, it's unlikely to be an easy mission.

YU JING'S PUPPET?

The characters will likely suspect he has an agenda, and he does. It's to look after Yu Jingese interests. Despite his affiliation, Hsiao Xi-Wang is eager to prove his worth to the team. He can be unfailingly helpful with bureaucracy or an absolute pain in the fundament with the investigation. He can either be a useful NPC to help the characters or someone who goes out of his way to sabotage their investigation.

SCENE 1: MISSION TO MAT'

When the characters arrive in the Dawn system, they've had a chance to meet their charges on the Circulars to Dawn. While the characters oversee security, Ksenia Volkova is the mission lead investigator. She has the final say.

The team — except for Hsiao Xi-Wang — have all worked together before. As the adventure progresses, the characters may well become aware of some of the tensions.

DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS

As the characters and Volkova's investigative team are sharing the shuttle down to Mat', Hsiao Xi-Wang will attempt to engage the characters in conversation. He's talkative, and if the characters aren't feeling much like chatting, he'll speak to the NPCs, giving the characters a chance to assess them as well.

The shuttle itself isn't exactly luxurious, but it's the only way to get to the Mat' spaceport and the surface of Dawn. The characters can't just fly straight to Dalniy. There's little to see from the shuttle's viewports aside from the few lights of the cities below. Most of Dawn is in darkness.



BRACE! BRACE!

The characters' shuttlecraft is entering into low orbit when the emergency lighting suddenly comes on. The pilot has picked up on a surface missile launch. Read aloud or paraphrase:

There's a sudden wrenching motion. The craft's emergency lights suddenly activate, highlighting the exits, and crash suits drop from the ceiling.

There's a slight hint of panic in the pilot's voice.

"We're under fire! Something's locked onto us! Brace for impact!"

There's a massive bang somewhere behind you and fragments of fuselage ricochet around the cabin, knocking holes out in the freezing Dawn night. The whole shuttle vibrates, and it feels like it's shaking itself apart.

There's a moment's silence, then you feel a wrenching impact even through the gel of the crash suit. Then there's another, and a massive bang. The emergency lights dim for a moment then kick in. You're suspended upside down, but it looks like you've survived. From the groaning and swearing nearby, you're not the only ones.

SCENE 2: REDLIT CRASH

The shuttle landed badly, crashing, and flipping onto its roof. It kills both pilot and co-pilot instantly. Being upside down inside the shuttle means the characters must successfully make an **Average (D1) Athletics** or **Acrobatics** test or are stuck until freed.

The characters don't have long to recover. Whatever hit the shuttle has rendered it unusable, thanks to a substantial, smoking hole where the engines were. A few feet further forward and it would have detonated in the passenger section. A character making a successful **Average (D1) Spacecraft** or **Tech** test can unequivocally state that the shuttle is unlikely to ever fly again. A **Challenging (D2) Tech** test identifies the object taking down the shuttle was a

simple yet highly effective heat-seeking missile.

That's about to be the least of the passengers' worries, as their crash suits dissolve. The crew responsible for the attack are already on their way. The characters will hear motorcycle engines from a few miles away in the darkness. A **Challenging (D2) Observation** test success allows a character to calculate they're around ten minutes away and getting closer.

The crash site is lit by small smouldering fires, but beyond that, the Dawn night is completely black. The first sign the characters have of the raiders is their red headlights in the gloom.



CRASH-SITE BATTLE

The raiders will quickly do their level best to intimidate and otherwise terrify what they believe to be weak Galactics from off world. They're not expecting a team of O-12 agents. They will begin by circling the wreckage, whooping, and firing into the air. The following round, they begin hurling Molotov cocktails into the wreckage, attempting to force the defenders out.

CIRCLING THE WAGONS

The wreckage of the shuttle provides +4 Cover Soak for the defenders.

KRASNYE VOINY RAIDERS

The *Krasnyye Voiny* ("Red Warriors") like to think of themselves as scavengers and living the life of the free steppes. In reality they're murdering brutal scum who most Ariadnans prefer to see shot on sight.

They have made a few big scores attacking convoys before, but they've been planning to hit the shuttle lanes for a while. It's a simple ploy: shoot the shuttle down, murder any survivors, then claim salvage rights if challenged about any loot.

They have three Ariadnan Utility Vehicles (AUVs) with 3 Raiders in each, leaving space inside for the spoils. The rest of the raiders (17) are mounted on trailbikes.

ARIADNAN RAIDERS

From the Dogface desperados of the US Ariadnan frontier, to pirates harrying remote stanitsas, to the Antipode raiding groups that provide a constant source of terror to frontier folk, raiders all have one thing in common – they take what they want, using lethal force if necessary. Or sometimes, they just take if they're bored enough. Between the threats of Antipodes, wild animals, attacks by Galactics, and the planet itself, there's no shortage of opportunities for raiding in Ariadna. Unlike Submondo, who generally have an organisational structure, raiders are wildcards in the truest sense, accountable to nobody but themselves and one step ahead of what passes for law on the frontier. It is a life that few choose outright, but one that many find themselves particularly well-suited to.

TROOPER

KRASNYE VOINY RAIDERS

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
10	7	10	10	6	7	6

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+3	1	Movement	+1	–	Social	+1	1
Fortitude	+1	–	Senses	–	–	Technical	–	–

DEFENCES

Firewall	3	Resolve	3	Vigour	5
Security	–	Morale	–	Armour	1

ATTACKS

- **Chain Rifle:** Range C, 1+5 damage, Burst 1, 2H, Spread 1, Torrent, Vicious 1
- **Teseum Chopper:** Melee, 1+5 damage, 1H, Unbalanced, Non-Hackable, Piercing 4, Vicious 2

GEAR: Surge (x1)

EXPOSED (+2 COVER), GROUND, RUGGED, WHEELED

BELLEROPHON TRANSPORT POD

ATTRIBUTES

Scale	2	Speed	2	Brawn	14(+2)
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DETAILS

Max Passengers	6	Impact	3+7 (Knockdown)
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DEFENCES

Structure	24	Firewall	4	Armour	4	BTS	–
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EXPOSED, GROUND, RUGGED, SINGLE-SEAT, WHEELED

TRAIL BIKE

ATTRIBUTES

Scale	0	Speed	3	Brawn	8
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DETAILS

Max Passengers	1	Impact	1+4 (Knockdown)
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DEFENCES

Structure	1	Firewall	4	Armour	1	BTS	0
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SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Reinforced Suspension:** As a Reaction when falling, the rider can make a Pilot (D1) or Acrobatics (D2) test to halve any damage from a fall.

RIDERS ON THE STORM

As the characters are fighting, the first flakes of snow begin to fall. Massive bruise-coloured clouds are gathering both above and on the horizon. An **Average (D1) Survival test** success allows a character to recognise an imminent snowstorm.

If the battle with the raiders is going well, the roar of powerful motorcycle engines heralds the arrival of the Dynamos, the Tartary Army Corps (TAK) outriders, a few minutes later. They patrol the nearby rail link of the Transtartaric Railroad, keeping it clear of sabotage and raiders (Antipode and human).

If the characters are having an easy time taking out the raiders or have fought them off, the Dynamos turn up a few minutes later. Half of them will follow the *Krasnyye Voiny* survivors, while the other half investigate the crash site. For 1 Heat, it isn't immediately apparent the Dynamos are not raiders and may well be mistaken for raiders unless the characters succeed at an **Average (D1) Observe test**. One of their charges takes a shot at the leading bike, and the characters will need to defuse the situation with a **Challenging (D2) Persuade test**.

The Dynamos can't provide transport to the nearest town, which is several hundred miles away. It's too far, and they still have their mission. They can however take the survivors to a nearby waystation, where the characters can get the train to Dalniy. If the raider's AUVs are still intact, there's enough fuel to get the characters to the waystation.

Since fuel is at a premium in the Dawn wilds, the characters cannot help themselves to fuel at the waystation. The TAK officers will need some serious

convincing to allow access. A **Dire (D4) Persuade test** success or creative roleplaying might be needed. Even then, a full tank of fuel isn't going to get the characters all the way to Dalniy.

BOARDING NOW!

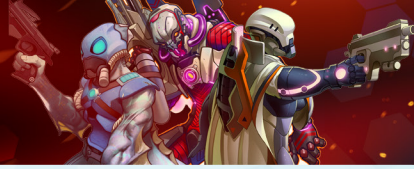
Catching the train is the fastest – and safest – way to get to Dalniy. Walking is not an option since Dalniy is several thousand miles away, and any vehicle will run out of fuel before they get there. The characters do have tickets for the train, purchased by Galina Yahontova (p. 142), their O-12 handler in Dalniy.

The waystation is also a TAK base, communications hub, and refuelling point for the Transtartaric train. As well as providing tactical support for the TAK and an operating centre, it also functions as a train station. As such, it is a fortified army base, not just a train station. The waystation is equipped with advanced communications (at least by Ariadnan standards) and defence systems including turret-mounted missile launchers and HMGs (heavy machine guns). A notice in scrawled handwriting on the side of a prefabricated unit designates the waiting room.

A long concrete platform on each side allows passengers to embark and disembark, and freight cranes also hang over the track to facilitate the loading of cargo onto the train bogies. These freight cranes are designed to be used without extensive training.

The temperature has dropped considerably by the time the train arrives in the middle of the night, but there is a space heater in the waiting room.





SCENE 3: MURDER ON THE DALNIY EXPRESS

The Transtartaric Railroad isn't a luxury journey by any means. Being heavily armed, it is the safest and most efficient way to travel across Dawn. Flying across Dawn would be an option, but not in the middle of the Tartary wilderness.

Of course, not all danger exists in the Wilds of Dawn. The characters and their charges have brought their own threat onboard with them.

THE TRANSTARTARIC RAILROAD

The Transtartaric Railroad is the greatest engineering marvel created on Ariadna. Though it lacks the flashy appeal of the spaceport or the colonial charm of Deadwood or Scone, the Transtartaric Railroad not only unites all of Ariadna by allowing for easy travel between the nations, but it is also the fastest and easiest way to send resources across Ariadna. Its armoured hull bristles with guns and the most sophisticated scanning equipment known to Ariadna; its presence is one of an unstoppable juggernaut roaring across the landscape with Kazak Railway Troops watching from sniper nests and fortified positions as civilian passengers relax in relative safety. Thanks to the railroad, ore from Caledonia can reach the manufacturing yards in Dynamo in just a matter of days.

Originally the brainchild of engineer Nicolai Korlokov, a Russian researcher whose work in the early days of colonisation on Dawn was essential for the survival of the colony, the Transtartaric Railroad's plans sat idle for years as the colonists struggled to hold off Antipode raiders and stay alive during brutally cold Ariadnan winters. When the Cossack President Nicholai Alexandrov Totemkin desired a symbol to show Ariadnans that was not just the bayonet of Kazak rifles, he revived the Transtartaric Railroad plans as a means to not only keep the country united but to grow it economically. These plans were deemed a monumental undertaking by the other nations that felt that traditional highways or the use of aircraft would be more practical than beginning such a huge endeavour, but Totemkin realised that the symbol of the Transtartaric Railroad was more important than just what it could do for the economy. It was a real, tangible thing they could construct to show their citizens that they were free to travel across Ariadna as they wished and that not all transit had to have the appearance of dishevelled and mud-covered transports travelling alone through dangerous Antipode lands.

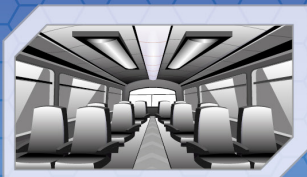
The construction of the railroad became possible when Totemkin dedicated one year of military output from Rodina's factories to building it. Considered unthinkable and almost certainly an impeachable offence to the practically minded Cossacks, Totemkin's arguments swayed his fellow politicians to the necessity of the project. Within a year, the major groundwork for the railroad had been laid and lands were set aside for building the thousands of miles of tracks necessary for it. Though the other nations were wary of its construction, they soon saw the merits of the Transtartaric Railroad when it came online, and they experienced having a fast but secure way of transporting goods across the continent. Soon auxiliary lines and trains were built that fed back into the central hub in Mat', and now it is possible for a Caledonian to ride a circuit of trains through Merovingia to Rodina and to USAriadna before returning home without ever having to leave the train system.

The railroad is not without its problems. Resources needed for the continual expansion of the railroad have been diverted towards developing Ariadna's space programme. Though the Tartary Army Corps patrols the rail system, the massive length of the tracks, Antipode raiders, bandits, and even sabotage from off-world forces makes safety a constant challenge. While it is still one of the fastest ways to move cargo and people across the planet, some are beginning to wonder if the booming space industry will forever eclipse the Transtartaric, though considering the unpredictable nature and costs of space flight it is an argument best held off for the future.

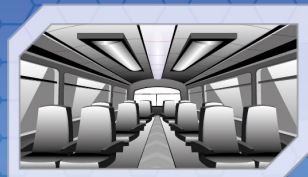
One of the ways the railroad continues to stay profitable is through the government offering discounts and simplified bureaucracy to corporations and miners who ship their goods via the Transtartaric Railroad. The subsidies offered by Ariadna are one of the major bartering points with O-12 and off-world corporations, as they look at the Transtartaric as a potential means to ship their goods to the Exclusion Zone where they can be traded with the local population.



THE TRAIN



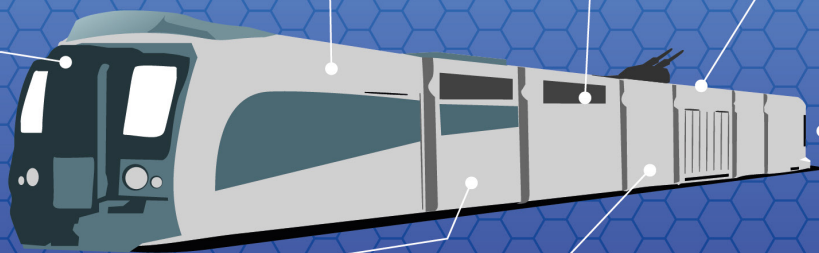
PASSENGER CARRIAGE
(COACH A-D)



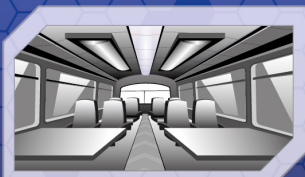
PASSENGER CARRIAGE
(COACH F-I)

FREIGHT BOGIES
(COACH K - X)

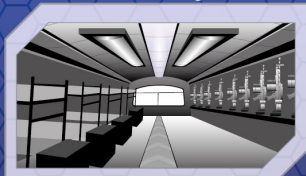
ENGINE
(FORWARD)



BACKUP ENGINE
(REAR)



DINING & LOUNGE CARRIAGE
(COACH E)



GUARD CARRIAGE
(COACH J)



THE TRAIN

The Transtartaric Railroad carries both freight and passengers in armoured carriages designed to withstand Teseum blades. Travellers are expected to help defend the train, when needed, through the armoured window shutters. The Kazak troops aboard have the final say in most matters, since the train is under their control.

MISSED THE TRAIN?

Characters who find themselves left behind for any reason have both a long walk and a lengthy wait for the next train. It will be several days before the train comes back the other way. While they may be lucky enough to encounter the Tartary Army Corps outriders, they are as likely to encounter Ariadnan Bears and Raptors (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 480), especially if any of the characters are wounded.

Moving around atop a train in motion is not easy since the Transtartaric Rail moves quickly, and the top of the train is often slick with ice. The outside of the train counts as Hazardous Terrain if characters chose to go on top. A failed **Challenging (D2) Athletics test** means a character has slipped and is prone. A complication means the character falls off the train.

DINING AND LOUNGE CARRIAGE

With a lounge bar on one side, the dining area on the other, and the galley in the middle, the Dining & Lounge car is where most of the passengers socialise. It has a far more open plan than the passenger carriages, but the seats and other furnishings count as soft Cover Soak (+2 **IN**).

ENGINE

Off-limits to passengers, the door to this part of the train is guarded by two Kazaks. As well as the train crew quarters, it is also the barracks for ten Kazaks.

FREIGHT BOGIE

These long flatbeds are designed to carry cargo containers or secured cargo such as logs. Some of them have built-in loading ramps to enable side off-loading of cargo. It requires a successful **Daunting (D3) Thievery test** to pick the locks of the cargo containers. Doing so when the train is moving increases the difficulty by two steps.

GUARD CARRIAGE

Most of the Kazaks are quartered in one of these. Eight of the Kazaks are normally sleeping here, while another eight are on duty elsewhere in the train. It also contains the Kazak armoury for the HMGs and the Kazak weapons. Each guard carriage has an HMG turret at either end, like the passenger carriages.

PASSENGER CARRIAGE

Each passenger carriage consists of 16 single-occupancy berths, 8 on either side, and the seats in each fold down to become beds. A single window allows a passenger to shoot through the armoured slats in relative safety (hard Cover Soak +4 **IN**). At the end of each carriage is a shower room and WC, although hot water is at a premium. A small kitchenette is provided, and a drop-down ladder leads to a ceiling hatch. The hatch access is usually locked since

it provides access to a turret-mounted *AKNovy Hischnik* HMG (Range L, 2+6 **IN** damage, Burst 3, Unwieldy, Spread 1, Unsubtle). The gun mantlet on the HMG turret provide hard Cover Soak (+4 **IN**). All Kazak troops have a key for the turrets, otherwise it requires a successful **Daunting (D3) Thievery test** to pick the lock. A **Dire (D4) Athletics test** success will force the hatch open. One of the Kazak troops is always on duty here, manning the HMG. The turrets are only unattended in the cities or settlements when they are locked down.

The characters and their team are assigned Passenger Carriage B for their use. Each berth has its own door lock that requires a successful **Challenging (D2) Thievery test** to pick.

STRANGERS ON THE TRAIN

As well as the characters, there are other passengers travelling on the railway who come from a variety of backgrounds. While there isn't space to list them all, they include prospectors, miners, diplomats, *Irmãos* procurers, and those just riding the rails. The Kazak troops aboard the train are responsible for the train's security without and within.

KAZAK TROOPS

ELITE

KAZAK

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
9	9	9	8	7	7	8

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+2	1	Movement	+1	–	Social	–	–
Fortitude	+1	–	Senses	+2	1	Technical	–	–

DEFENCES

Firewall	7	Resolve	8	Vigour	9
Security	–	Morale	–	Armour	2

ATTACKS

- **Molotok MG:** Range M, 1+6 **IN** damage, Burst 3, 2H, Spread 2, Unsubtle
- **Knife:** Melee, 1+4 **IN** damage, 1H, Concealed 1, Non-Hackable, Subtle 2, Thrown, Unforgiving 1

GEAR: Medium Combat Armour

INTO THE MOUNTAINS

As the characters head further west towards Dalniy, they'll notice the *stanitsa* and patchwork farmlands, stretching for miles on either side. When the train nears the shadows of the Tartary mountain range however, there's a marked change in the Kazaks.

The refuelling stops are shorter, and the Kazak troopers carefully watch the horizon. Passengers are warned to stay aboard the train, and the HMG turrets switch on searchlights that sweep across the land.

Three days out from Dalniy, the characters see the first burned-out ruins of *stanitsa*. These are the sites of old Antipode raids if the characters ask. It's unclear if "old" means decades ago or last week.

As the train climbs into the mountains, the Kazaks are far more on edge. Some can be found in the bar in their off-duty moments talking about flashing eyes and howls in the night and toasting to fallen comrades.

A ROUGH NIGHT

The following night, the train moves further into the mountains of Tartary. As night falls, a chain of events begins. The timeline below assumes the characters are either in their berths or the lounge area to observe these events.

19:00 A HEATED ARGUMENT

Volkova and Hsiao Xi-Wang have a conversation in the corridor of Carriage B. An **Average (D1) Observe** test success lets the character overhear them. Xi-Wang asks Volkova, "Are the rumours about the Taittiriya Offensive true?" Volkova angrily responds by saying it's none of his business and that it's past history. She angrily shoves past any character and heads for the dining car. Xi-Wang shrugs and heads back to his berth. He's quite happy to share the rumour that Volkova isn't the hero she was made out to be – that she was running away when the airstrike hit the Morat forces. Under no circumstances will Volkova enter into any dialogue about it. She'll become violent if questioned about it after 21:15.

19:45 A QUIET WORD

A character catches sight of Gala Batjargal and Chyll Tizon having an argument in another carriage. Tizon says something, and Batjargal physically slams him up against the wall, then walks off. Tizon picks himself up, smirks, and waves at the character. Neither say what it is about other than a difference of opinion, but Gala is warning Tizon off his extra-curricular activities.

20:00 DIRTY INFOWAR

Gala's warning goes unheeded by Tizon. He attempts to hack through a random character's firewall to gain access to their comlogs and social media. If he inflicts a Breach, he'll go through the character's information. He's looking for dirt he can use to blackmail them. This may also include Wilderness of Mirrors objectives. He'll deny all knowledge of it if he's caught – it takes ALEPH levels of forensic scrutiny to prove it, and he's aware of it.

21:00 GALA ASLEEP

A characters in Carriage B hear sounds like a stuck chainsaw coming from Gala's room. He's out cold asleep, and his snoring is loud enough to wake the whole carriage (if anyone is asleep then). If woken, he can be convinced to go to the lounge for a drink if asked. Otherwise, he apologises profusely, then goes back to sleep. Fifteen minutes later, the snoring starts again.

21:15 DRINKING GAMES

Volkova begins drinking heavily with a couple of off-duty Kazaks and a Rodina prospector. They get increasingly loud and start singing drinking songs. Volkova is spoiling for a fight and will likely pick one with a character if they ask her to be quiet, tell her to lay off the booze, mention Taittiriya, and so on.

22:00 ASSIGNATIONS

Hsiao Xi-Wang, Janos Vassileikos, and Jupiter Perez are sharing table together. Jupiter Perez makes a big deal of saying they're turning in for the night. Xi-Wang follows a couple of minutes later. Characters passing a **Daunting (D3) Psychology test** notice Vassileikos's micro-expressions are ones of jealous fury. He abruptly downs his drink then follows them out.

Character pursuing Xi-Wang finds he stops off at Gala Batjargal to ask him to quit snoring. Following Perez sees them heading straight back to their rooms. If the character knocks on Perez's door within five minutes, they'll see a lot more of the Hexas agent than they expected to; Jupiter was expecting Xi-Wang or Vassileikos for a tryst. Following Vassileikos is trickier. He keeps looking around before making his way to Perez's berth (he automatically gains +1 Momentum on the face-to-face test). At 10:20, he knocks on Perez's door.

23:20 ANTIPODE AMBUSH

If the characters are outside the train, or in Carriage F for any reason, a **Challenging (D2) Observe test** means a character hears a gurgle followed by soft thumps on the roof. An Antipode raiding party has dropped onto the roof of the train as it passed. One of the Kazak turret sentries has been killed, and

GM STAGING

EVENT TIMELINES

Running a timeline of events shouldn't give the characters an exact time unless they specifically ask for it. Everything they see happens on a perspective basis. If they're not in the room, an NPC will mention something they saw. If the characters can review things they've seen (via technology of any kind), it will be time-coded of course. The timeline is to simply give the GM an order of events if needed.

The GM can also introduce a few Wilderness of Mirrors situations to add to the scenes.

TRAILING SUSPECTS

There's a lot of tradecraft involved in making sure a target isn't aware of it. At its most basic, it's a face-to-face test (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 31) based upon the target's Senses or Observe against the follower's Stealth.

Antipode Warrior –
Infinity Corebook, p. 462



several trinaries of Antipodes are about to make their way into the train. Some make their way to the dining car and then head forward, while the others head back through the Carriage F onwards, killing everyone they find.

23:24 GUESS WHO'S COMING TO DINNER

The door to the dining car from Carriage F smashes open, and a trinary of Antipode Warriors bounds into the carriage using their Super-Jump ability. They plan to kill everyone in the carriage.

Characters opening fire with ranged weapons in this confined space suffer the equivalent of a Panicking Crowd (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 110).

23:26 VASSILEIKOS KILLS TIZON

Janos Vassileikos hears the commotion and realises he has an opportunity. He smashes his way into Chyll Tizon's room and brutally murders him with his Teseum blade. He removes Tizon's Cube, throws it out of the window, and closes the door behind him. He then tries to clean off the blade the best he can but is spotted by the Kazaks as he does so. He claims he killed an Antipode with his blade and drops the bloody rag between the carriages.

23:32 THEY THINK IT'S ALL OVER

Kazak reinforcements and a bloodied Vassileikos arrive from the front of the train. If the characters haven't already dispatched the Antipodes, they make short work of them.

THERE'S BEEN A MURDER(?)

The characters are ordered to stay in their rooms and each lock their door. Two Kazaks are guarding the entrance to Chyll Tizon's berth in Carriage B. The place is a mess, with arterial blood spray coating everything in scarlet. He has literally been torn to pieces. The window is broken, but the armour plates hold it in place. Anyone in Carriage B was woken at 11:28 when the Kazaks from the engine raced down the corridor shouting the alarm.

If the characters think to ask the Kazaks, there's no sign of any Antipode corpse in Carriage B. The Kazaks are adamant that only a handful of deaths occurred in Carriage F and the dining car. The bodies have already been moved to the cold room of the galley.

ASSESSING THE SCENE

If the characters decide to investigate Tizon's murder, there's ways they can gather evidence. If they don't offer, Hsiao Xi-Wang will volunteer them.

The Kazaks on board are happy to let someone else take the case, provided a full report is made to the Dalniy police and the characters confirm their O-12 credentials.

The following skills (a successful **Average (D1) test**) can be used to reveal a piece of evidence. Spending a point of Momentum also reveals one of the following. Antipodes got nowhere near Carriage B (Analysis).

- Vassileikos's bloody handprint inside the room (Analysis, Observation).
- Tizon's Cube is missing (Medicine, Observation).
- There's a bloody towel caught on the train undercarriage between Carriages B and C. Vassileikos cleaned himself off with this (Observation).
- The wounds are too precise to have been caused by an Antipode blade and were delivered with considerable force (Medicine).
- The door to Tizon's berth halfway down the corridor was locked but so too were the others. Tizon's room was targeted specifically (Analysis, Observation).
- Tizon didn't have time to scream or knew his attacker (Analysis, Observation).
- Vassileikos's blade has human blood on the hilt (Analysis, Observation).
- The Kazaks remember encountering Vassileikos cleaning off blood but no Antipode corpses on their way to the dining car (Persuade).

The characters may have their own list of suspects for the murder, depending on where the characters were, and some of them will have alibis as a result. The characters can also use a Psywar attempt on Vassileikos. Inflicting a Metanoia effect on Vassileikos will get him to confess he is in love with Perez and killed Tizon.

For 2 Heat, Vassileikos decides to make a break for it before the characters can take his weaponry. He'll do his best to attempt to take Perez with him. He will make his way outside, forcing pursuers to climb onto the roof while the train thunders through the mountain passes. If the GM would like to have Vassileikos and Perez as returning villains, they both leap off the train at a crossing over a raging torrent of a river.

As the characters wind up their investigation and confession, the train's intercom announces their arrival in Dalniy.

SCENE 4: LAND HO!

Dalniy is the last stop, however the characters got there. Dalniy is a curious mix of free port, frontier town, naval base, and academic centre. It's an uneasy mingling at the best of times, and the presence of the *Novyy Yuzhnyy Flot* plus the off-world factions only adds to a volatile situation.

DALNIY

Known throughout Rodina as one of the farthest Cossack settlements and considered a dangerous, almost foolhardy, place to devote resources, Dalniy is the home of the *Novyy Yuzhnyy Flot*. This "New Southern Fleet" is a combination of the military and research vessels designed to not only expand Rodina's control over the seas but also expand the knowledge that can be gained from it. It is also one of the few fleets to be staffed by scientists and researchers from the rest of the galaxy, although they are often forced to use ships and research equipment provided by their Ariadnan counterparts.

Of particular interest to the researchers at Dalniy are the southern algae blooms that occur in the region. They only happen a few times a year but when they do, the seas take on a beautiful green glow at night as solid masses of algae ascend from the bottom of the ocean. These algae blooms are not only beautiful but are able to be converted into an environmentally friendly fuel that some believe could replace the use of fusion reactors in planetary vehicles. This sense of scientific adventure is aligned with corporate desires both on Ariadna and off world who seek a way to exploit the algae for their own benefits.

The scene at the train terminal in Dalniy is a chaotic one. Not only are there passengers disembarking, but the freight cargo is also being unloaded. Each cargo factor is convinced their cargo needs to be unloaded first and checked by the customs agents. They are used to dealing with such anarchy. There's a lot of shouting and hand-waving, but somehow things seem to work.

The characters may also be slightly concerned when they see a group of six Rodinan Police Officers heading their way with a determined look on their faces. Unless the characters have something to hide, the police are more interested in the events that occurred on the train. Depending upon their actions, they may find themselves briefly guests of the Rodina. Unless the characters — or their charges — have really made a nuisance of themselves aboard the train, they aren't kept long.



They'll take Vassileikos into custody and remove Tizon's body. The characters won't face any repercussions for their actions since the Kazaks aboard the train witnessed many of the events.

Of course, if the characters have made themselves enemies among the Kazaks, they will do nothing to help, which may well mean the characters are held, pending "enquiries". Facing incarceration or a Rodinan *gulag*, the characters' best hope will lie with Yahontova, their O-12 handler in Dalniy.

HANDLING PRECIOUS CARGO: O-12 ON DAWN

O-12 has the characters' handler already present. Galina Yahontova (p. 142) is used to dealing with both the Ariadnans and Yu Jing on Dalniy for so long that she doesn't even pretend that she's

Customs Agent —
Infinity Corebook, p. 428

Police Officers —
Infinity Corebook, p. 448. 1 Heat spent upgrades the Troopers to Elites.



anything other than O-12's agent in Dalniy. As a known quantity, it is as much help as hindrance.

She'll collect the characters and the others from the station. The streets are busy outside the station, but traffic is moving despite many off-duty sailors thronging the streets. Yahontova has rooms booked at the Hotel Zastavskaya, a low-budget hotel not far from the waterfront, for the characters and their charges. The hotel is far from luxurious, but Galina will point out that it's a lot quieter than hotels in other parts of town right now.

Once inside the hotel, Yahontova does a cursory security sweep of the rooms. It's then she asks what happened on the train, and what the characters' plans are in Dalniy.

The characters need to deal with some Yu Jingese bureaucracy to get permission to visit the Snark Lands. Hsiao Xi-Wang (if he is still alive) can arrange this, but it will take a couple of days, he says. The characters are likely to be sceptical of this after their dealings with Yu Jingese bureaucracy on Satori. If Hsiao Xi-Wang is dead or missing, it takes a **Daunting (D3) Persuade test** to get permission from the StateEmpire's Foreign Office in Dalniy to visit the Snark Lands.

The characters can decide to bypass the Yu Jingese paperwork and make their way unofficially to Xin-Jinfeng. It's not without risk, since Yu Jing takes a dim view of unwanted visitors in their territorial waters, but if you know the appropriate people, there are ways. If one can find the right ship – and the right crew – it is possible to slip past the Yu Jingese patrol boats. In fact, the Teseum smugglers of Dalniy make a living out of it.

THE FLEET IS IN TOWN

As mentioned previously, the New Southern Fleet – *Novyy Yuzhnyy Flot* – is currently berthed in the town. The naval complement was granted limited shore leave, and both the Rodinan police and the Military Police (MPs) are being kept busy.

Naturally, they cannot be everywhere, and from time-to-time things get out of control. The sailors are in town to let off steam and running battles between rival crews (and the locals) spill out onto the streets. The characters arrive on a street where such a flashpoint is about to erupt.

If the characters are in a hurry, this encounter will add a sense of urgency. A crowd of brawling sailors erupts onto the street, blocking the way. If the characters want to get past, they'll have to fight their way through since everyone is fair game, and most of the sailors are too drunk to tell friend from foe.

LEADS IN DALNIY

As well as possible Wilderness of Mirrors objectives, the characters have reason to be in Dalniy:

- To investigate the facility at Xin-Jinfeng if they were able to discover the name of the facility in "Satori Sunrise" (p. 6).
- Investigate Kardell Corporation, the company responsible for shipping the weapons and ammunition to the Libertos terrorist cells on Varuna.

NEVER BRING A GUN TO A FISTFIGHT

Characters who attempt to intimidate or threaten the brawlers with a firearm will escalate matters.

The area gains the Panicking Crowd quality (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 110). A 1 Heat spend means three naval personnel are carrying their sidearms and return fire if the characters begin waving weapons around.

And the police will eventually respond en masse – two Police Officers per character (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 449) arrive three rounds after the fight starts. For 2 Heat spent, a fireteam of four SWAT Officers (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 449) turn up as well.

TROOPER

DRUNKEN SAILORS

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
9	7	9	8	7	8	8

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	–	1	Movement	–	–	Social	+1	–
Fortitude	+1	1	Senses	–	–	Technical	+1	1

DEFENCES

Firewall	7	Resolve	8	Vigour	9
Security	–	Morale	1	Armour	1

ATTACKS

- **Pistol:** Range R/C, 1+4 damage, Burst 1, 1H, Vicious 1
- **Chair, Bottle, or Other Improvised Weapon:** Melee, 1+4 damage, Unbalanced, Improvised 1, Non-Hackable, Stun.

GEAR: None

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Three Sheets to the Wind:** The sailors are so drunk they gain +1 Morale and Armour Soak.
- **I'll Take You Both!** The sailors' inebriation causes them to suffer a -1 penalty on all tests.

KARDELL CORPORATION

Kardell Corporation is one of the leads the characters need to follow up. It provided the brokerage and acted as factor for the shipping crates found in the factory in "Operation 1: Satori Sunrise".

LINKS TO OPERATION BĀOWÉI

The paperwork on site has shipping manifests to Paradiso – specifically the Aerodome T-31 on Satori for an "implement retooling" – and to export the finished product to a Kardell warehouse on Varuna.

The offices of the Kardell Corporation are in a waterfront business centre, the Excelsior. It's a slightly decrepit-looking tower block that's seen better days. The exterior walls show signs of being repaired in a slap-dash fashion. Many of the building's brass nameplates are missing, suggesting the building is largely unoccupied, or the plates have been stolen.

The offices here are basic administrative units designed to facilitate paperwork and bureaucracy. Most of the corporate offices listed are little more than holding companies for the G5, although a few are allocated to various Ariadnan business concerns, mainly shipping or fishing companies.

TROOPER

SECURITY GUARD

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
8	9	9	9	9	9	10

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+2	1	Movement	+1	–	Social	+1	–
Fortitude	+1	–	Senses	+1	–	Technical	–	–

DEFENCES

Firewall	9	Resolve	10	Vigour	9
Security	–	Morale	–	Armour	–

ATTACKS

- **Pistol:** Range R/C, 1+5 damage, Burst 1, 1H, Vicious 1
- **Stun Baton:** Melee, 1+4 damage, 1H, Knockdown, Non-Hackable, Stun, Subtle 1

GEAR: None

The building always has two security guards on duty. The job is relatively easy and it's not exactly challenging since there's so little to steal. The most the guards worry about is usually a disgruntled ex-employee kicking off, or unwanted visitors. They are former Cossack army, so they are not the rent-a-cops the characters may be expecting. They are open to "market forces" and can be bribed.

The characters arrive to find the corporation's six admin staff frantically stuffing wads of paper into shredders. The most senior executive is Erika Van Danzija who has been tipped off that the characters are on their way. The last thing she needs is O-12 poking about in her dealings with the StateEmpire.

She and her colleagues are aware things are unlikely to look good for them with a bunch of trained O-12 agent poking about in their files. They immediately start to shred the majority of the office's files. Most of their files are still paper-based, and very few items are stored on the antiquated computer systems, aside from some basic shipping invoices. These require a **Challenging (D2) Analysis test** success to decipher or restore.

Just shredding the files is one thing, but Van Danzija is taking things one step further. She plans to detonate a small incendiary device in the office and make it look like an accident. She doesn't care about who she endangers in the process. The characters or security guards will likely get the blame, but a charred corpse or two will make it look like an accident.

Van Danzija or her staff are unlikely to engage the characters in physical combat, but they gain a +2 Morale Soak on attempts to interrogate or

intimidate them. Their first call will be to security, then the police, if the characters turn up waving weapons about.

An **Average (D1) Analysis test** allows a character to recognise the vast amount of paperwork will take several days to decipher and uncover any trail back to the events on Sartori, something the investigators might be better off handling (if any survived).

The characters don't have several days, however. Van Danzija has planted two incendiary devices: one inside the air conditioning and another close to the main filing room. She has hidden them well, and it takes a **Daunting (D3) Observation test** success to find one of the devices. The characters can only make this test if they specifically state they are looking for a device. A **Dire (D4) Psychology test** notices Van Danzija keeps glancing nervously at two parts of the office.

The devices are timed to go off that night at 10:55. If the characters are still in the building, they will get caught in the blast.

Incendiary Charge: Charge 2+6 , 1H Comms, Disposable, Incendiary 3, Indiscriminate (Close), Terrifying 1, Unsubtle.

Of the most interest to the characters are the shipping records in the main filing room. A day spent looking through these reveal large shipments of something from the town of Xin-Jinfeng in the Snark Lands. An **Average (D1) Analysis test** success reveals the daily shipments abruptly end two days after the events of the first operation.

Several transports in Yujingyu are listed carrying the same cargo: Zá jiàn –Miscellaneous parts. The quantronic IDs from the Aerodome cases on Sartori are an exact match.

THE SHIPS

Three transports regularly appear in the manifests; the bulk carriers are the *Chitose*, the *Niowjima*, and the *Hashima*. Characters making a successful **Average (D1) Analysis test** shows them registered to the StateEmpire-owned Katori Shipping company in Yāshān City.

The transports used in the shipping of materials were used again, a few days ago, along with two larger vessels. Unlike previous shipments, these included two other vessels. These are not container ships; they are both salvage vessels, the *Lai Chi Yun* and *Veng Lok*. No destination is listed for these.

THE DOCKS

Asking questions around the docks is a sure way to end up floating face-down in the waters around

Corporate Executive –
Infinity Corebook, p. 427

KARDELL BY NIGHT

Characters attempting a night raid on Kardell are likely to run afoul of the Security guards, but there are a few additional complications. For 1 Heat, Van Danzija is still there, shredding the last of the files. For 2 Heat, the characters raid the office the night of the incendiary device's detonation.

A LACK OF INFORMATION

Infowarriors will find the office network hard to breach since there's nothing to access and is basically non-existent. No quantronic IDs or access points other than those of the Corporate Executives exist. The computing hardware is very much old-school with no network communication.



Ariadnan Utility Vehicle,
Trail Bike — p. 54

Dalniy. The sailors of Dalniy are a clannish lot, and don't like Galactics sticking their noses into what is euphemistically called the family business.

The G5 (and O-12) are only peripherally acknowledged here. Any enquiries on the waterfront — usually the bars — are likely to be met with suspicion and hostility. All social tests have their difficulty increased by one step. If the characters do put in the time (and money!), they will become aware that the waterfront has its own rules. The Irmandhinos Brotherhood, Merovingian trade guilds, and Submondo control much of it, including some parts of the military docks.

The following information can be discovered with a successful **Daunting (D3) Persuade** or **Lifestyle test** (including the +1 to the difficulty). An Obtain Information Momentum spend will also allow characters to discover the same facts (or rumours).

- The *Lai Chi Yun* and *Veng Lok* are usually used to recover ships or salvage shipwrecked cargo vessels. They aren't cargo ships.
- The *Chitose*, *Niowjima*, and *Hashima* cargos ship only stayed long enough to unload their cargo, outing straight back out to sea.
- There's a lucrative trade in smuggling Teseum ore to and from the Snark Lands.
- Yu Jingese naval forces now have submarines operating in the seas around the Snark Lands. This is a false rumour, planted by the StateEmpire's Yanjing.
- The Snark have been hunted to extinction by Yu Jingese science teams (false).
- Xin-Jinfeng is abandoned. Yu Jing evacuated the town because of a plague.
- There were rumours of insurrection among the workers of Xin-Jinfeng, mainly indentured Japanese.

MAKING THE CROSSING

At some point the characters are likely to want to pay a visit to the factory at Xin-Jinfeng. The characters would normally need permission from Yu Jingese bureaucracy to even make the crossing to the Snark Lands.

If the characters choose that method, they will have to wait several days. It doesn't affect the progress of the adventure but allows the characters to heal any wounds or indulge in Wilderness of Mirrors plots. Some of the characters will no doubt be impatient to be off to Xin-Jinfeng regardless.

Yahontova knows a few ships who will literally cross the line. She's got a few Submondo contacts who owe her some favours. Captain Laure Desjardin of *La Belle Époque* is one such individual. She is the captain of a rugged *Zubr*-Class 2 hovercraft.

LA BELLE ÉPOQUE

Despite the shabby appearance of the craft and crew, *La Belle Époque* is a sturdy craft and fast with it. Whether they are smuggling Teseum or people, the crew are professional and hardy enough to take care of themselves and potential threats.

Zubr ("Bison") vessels are large hovercraft. The hovercraft is both a weapons platform and troop carrier and holds two Ariadnan Utility Vehicles and four Trail Bikes. The bow drops down to allow a rapid deployment of vehicles.

Characters succeeding at a **Daunting (D3) Observe test** (+1 bonus if the character has a nautical background) will note the hovercraft's triple fan engines are far more powerful than normal. The craft sits higher above the water than is normal, and the interior is somewhat smaller. It's cleverly hidden though.

EXPOSED (+4 COVER), GROUND,
HOVER, WATERCRAFT

LA BELLE ÉPOQUE (HOVERCRAFT)

ATTRIBUTES

Scale	3	Speed	3	Brawn	14 (+3)
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DETAILS

Max Passengers	14	Impact	4+6 (E/M, Knockdown)
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HARD POINTS

Chassis	3	Comms	2	External	1
Internal	2	Motive	1	Weapons	4

DEFENCES

Structure	20	Firewall	8	Armour	4	BTS	1
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MOUNTED WEAPONS

- **Combi-Rifles (x2):** Range C/M, 1+5 damage, Burst 2, 2H, Expert 1, MULTI Light Mod, Vicious 1
- **MULTI HMG (x2):** Range L, 2+5 damage, Burst 3, Unwieldy, Medium MULTI, MULTI Heavy Mod, Spread 1, Unsubtle

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Lower Deck:** The lower deck of *La Belle Époque* is Enclosed and considered to be a separate zone from the upper deck. The Pilot and any Gunners must be on the Exposed upper deck, but other passengers can remain on the lower deck.
- **Rapid Deployment:** Vehicles deploying from the Hovercraft can so as free action.

XIN-JINFENG: GHOST TOWN

It is entirely possible the characters try to contact the town. There's no answer of course since it is abandoned. Unless the characters specifically ask if the town is abandoned, they'll be surprised to discover the town empty.

CAPTAIN LAURE DESJARDIN

Appearance: She's spent so long on the waves, Desjardin's skin has a weathered appearance, contrasting sharply with silver hair. She has a broken nose from a boating accident in her teens. She is usually swathed in a heavy greatcoat, perfect for keeping the chill of the sea air out.

Roleplaying:

- Tough as old boots, and she knows it. Always finds a way to show up those younger than her.
- Rolls her eyes a lot when dealing with those she considers fools.
- Get the job done, stick to the plan, get out, get paid.

Background: Desjardin has sailed the Dawn seas for thirty years, but she was born in Le Douar. After spending a working vacation on a Cousteau ocean yacht, she found her calling. She fell in with the Irmandinhos easily, and it's there she met Yahontova.

Key Info:

- Believes that *something* caused Yu Jing to pull out of Xin-Jinfeng. Not ghosts, though. She'll only volunteer this information if asked.
- Does the crossing so often she can do it in the dark.
- She won't risk her boat or her crew for the characters.

SETTING SAIL!

The characters leave in the false dawn, a grey time when the fog on the water merges with the sky, and the crew are talking in hushed voices. The hovercraft slips out into the Sea of Snark, and the journey of several days to Xin-Jinfeng begins. Yahontova will accompany the O-12 team, although she won't escort the characters into Xin-Jinfeng. Neither Desjardin nor her crew will join the characters on an expedition into Xin-Jinfeng either.

The crew work around the characters, mostly in silence although they will answer questions if asked. The quiet is a necessary evil as the characters find out. Desjardin has no problem with the characters being present on the bridge unless they make a nuisance of themselves. The crew will also show the characters how to drive the AUVs and trail bikes, although it's a cursory lesson.

PINGING YU JING

A thick sea fog lasts several days as the characters make their way across. There's little to see apart from an unrelenting wall of grey. The characters are called to the bridge, where Desjardin is hunched over a screen.

"We've been getting a ping on the limits of the radar. It's broadcasting a StateEmpire frequency."

There's a tense 20 minutes while both the crew and characters watch the radar screen. Unless the characters have some idea for hiding the ship's presence, they'll be forced to watch a blip on the screen.

There's a collective sigh of relief from both the crew and Desjardin when the blip moves off the screen, heading north.

NEMESIS**CAPTAIN LAURE DESJARDIN****ATTRIBUTES**

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
11	9	11	11	7	10	9

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+3	2	Movement	+3	2	Social	+2	1
Fortitude	+2	1	Senses	+1	1	Technical	+2	—

DEFENCES

Firewall	9	Resolve	11	Vigour	15
Security	—	Morale	—	Armour	—

ATTACKS

- **Boarding Shotgun:** Range C, 1+6 damage, Burst 1, 2H, Knockdown, Medium MULTI
- **Sword:** Melee, 1+6 damage, Unbalanced, Non-Hackable, Parry 2, Vicious 1

GEAR: None

TROOPER**LA BELLE ÉPOQUE CREW****ATTRIBUTES**

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
9	7	12	9	6	6	7

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+2	—	Movement	+1	—	Social	—	—
Fortitude	+1	—	Senses	+1	—	Technical	+1	—

DEFENCES

Firewall	3	Resolve	4	Vigour	6
Security	—	Morale	—	Armour	—

ATTACKS

- **Boarding Shotgun:** Range C, 1+5 damage, Burst 1, 2H, Knockdown, Medium MULTI
- **Sword:** Melee, 1+5 damage, Unbalanced, Non-Hackable, Parry 2, Vicious 1

GEAR: None

THERE'S SOMETHING DOWN THERE

The characters are on deck when the *La Belle Époque* suddenly rocks from side to side. There's a large bow wave passing beneath the hovercraft from port to starboard.

None of the crew have an idea what's causing it until a massive fluke breaks the surface a short distance away. Abruptly it disappears back beneath the waves, with barely a ripple.

The crew (and probably the characters) have no idea what they have just seen. It's a reminder that Dawn still has secrets and mysteries of its own.



SCENE 5: REFINERY REFINEMENT

THE SNARK LANDS

The Snark Lands are under Yu Jing control, and it is here they do most of their biological research on Ariadna. Home to one of Ariadna's more curious animals, the Snark Lands have been left alone by much of Ariadna due to the need to focus resources elsewhere. Most of the land mass is dotted with Yu Jingese outposts that are typically dedicated to researching the strange atmospheric and biological phenomena that are common to the continent. The main city on the continent, Yáshān City, is named after the mountain from Chinese mythology and offers shelter from the numerous flood plains that fill with water during the rainy seasons. The Ariadnan Snark, a short bipedal ape capable of blurring light around its skin naturally, is of particular value to off-world researchers as well as Ariadnan scientists hoping to reproduce their own versions of the advanced forms of camouflage employed by ALEPH or PanOceania.

La Belle Époque arrives to the Snark Lands on a dismal day; torrential rain is sheeting down as the hovercraft pulls into a river delta. The crew works quickly and quietly, dropping the bow ramp to allow the AUVs and trail bikes to splash into the shallow water.

It is up to the characters if they choose to split up, take a trail bike, or the AUV. Xin-Jinfeng is ten miles inland and walking it is not an option. Desjardin also warns the characters that they have 24 hours to go in, get their evidence, and get back. The heavy rain means flooding is a very real risk. This will begin to pose problems for the characters later since the river levels are rising, and Xin-Jinfeng is on a flood plain.

The refinery is located on a hill above the town because the installation did have a significant monetary value to the StateEmpire. The town itself consists of prefabricated buildings, and although it isn't a community as such, there is still a small school and general store.

The place is also deserted. There is no sign of life within the town, and the data network quiescent. The characters may well be expecting to see someone or something. In this case, the somethings are well hidden.

The town population was relocated a few days ago, and the heavy equipment relocated using the two transports, the *Lai Chi Yun* and *Veng Lok*. If the characters weren't expecting an empty town, they will be expecting the power to be on and at least someone on the streets.

The town isn't completely uninhabited or offline. The town's communication relay, power supply, and security network are still live. As for the inhabitants, there's only three, the *Lánggrén*, a trinary of Antipodes enhanced and controlled by Yu Jing biotechnology, or four if you count their LAI handler. These *Lánggrén* are an experiment, deployed specifically for research or to deal with the characters.

It's likely the characters and their charges split up to examine different areas. If so Mèiguǐ, the LAI

controlling the *Lánggrén*, targets individuals first, then the smaller groups (see "Rising Tensions").

XIN-JINFENG

The town below the mine consists of prefabricated units designed to withstand the damp and winds of Dawn. It is effective 95% of the time but does nothing to hide the sound of the wind and rain.

COMMS ARRAY

The communications array is only active for a few hours daily when a Yu Jingese satellite is overhead. It provides a data uplink to public Yu Jing networks and also links into the local school network.

It has been repurposed recently to record events in Xin-Jinfeng. It's also home to a recently introduced LAI called Mèiguǐ, the *Lánggrén* pack handler.

If the characters attempt to repurpose it with a successful **Challenging (D2) Hacking test** or **Daunting (D3) Tech test**, Mèiguǐ will immediately attack.

LIVING QUARTERS

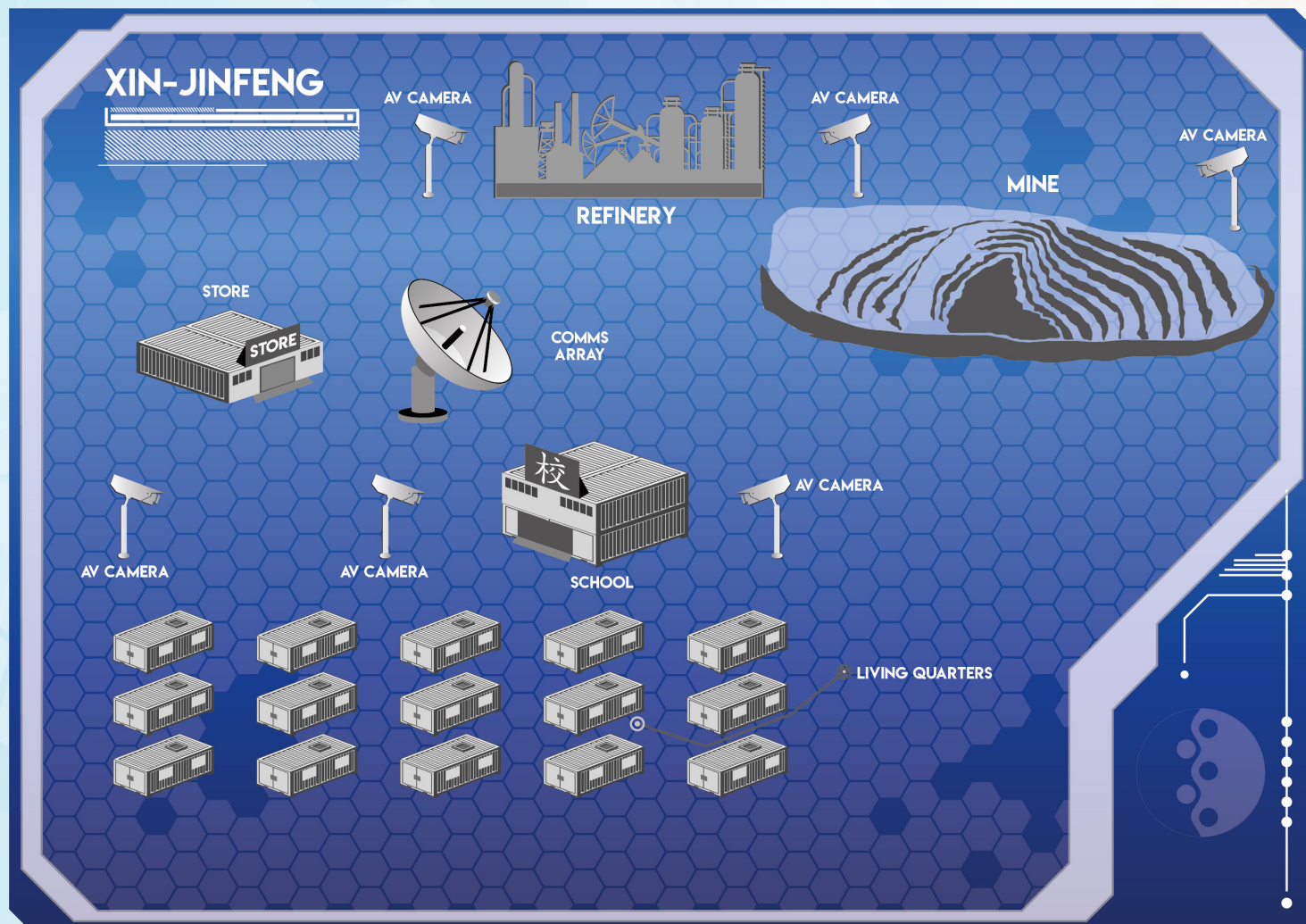
Designed to be a simple abode for a small family or for two people, these prefab units consist of an eating/living area and a sleeping/bathroom area. All are unlocked, and aside from a few items of foam furniture, there is nothing other than a smell of damp dog. For 1 Heat, a *Lánggrén* is here, waiting in ambush.

MINE

An open-cast mine, the exposed earth is a muddy mess, counting as difficult terrain. The track around the outside shows some recent scenes of heavy vehicle use, although it takes a **Daunting (D3) Observation test** success to notice this.

SCHOOL

The school is split across two levels with three classrooms in each. The walls are decorated with smiling happy children and cartoon animals, all reciting some part of the StateEmpire party line.




The pictures are pocked by cracks and graffiti in Japanese. One of the *Lánggrén* is usually on the roof, trying to remain hidden, watching for travellers (an opposed Stealth roll). If it is spotted, the characters only catch a glimpse of a large humanoid figure disappearing out of sight below the roofline.

STORE

Once a StateEmpire-subsidised outlet, the store's goods have since been moved off site. There is still one item left. A toy cat, spotted and discoloured by the rain, waves cheerily at the characters when they enter. A sensor on the door also triggers a popular Yu Jingese pop song in Yujingyu. For 1 Heat, a *Lánggrén* is here, waiting in ambush.

REFINERY

The refinery exists on several levels, the equivalent of several zones with vertical terrain. The walls and interior count as +4  hard Cover Soak. The interior and exterior doors aren't locked, but closing the massive entrance doors requires a **Dire (D4) Athletics test** success.

The refinery is an empty shell, the machinery recently stripped out. A **Daunting (D3) Observation test** allows a character to notice fresh scrapes on the floor and metal filings where the heavy equipment was recently cut up for salvage. Heavy machinery was removed, very recently.

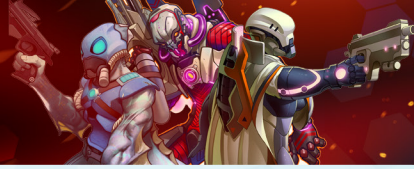
Some of the O-12 team will identify what looks like concrete storage vaults, ones that look suspiciously like ammunition storage magazines. Spending a few hours searching these allows a character to make a **Challenging (D2) Observation test**. A success allows then to find a discarded box of Teseum shotgun shells.

An **Average (D1) Analysis test** identifies that this box of shells is brand-new from a company called Riojas Tecnos, a Varuna-based ammunition manufacturer. Spending a point of Momentum, or an **Average (D1) Tech test** success, allows a character to infer that finding ammunition from a PanOceanic company in a Yu Jingese facility on Dawn is unlikely.

GM TIP

STAGING

If the characters don't find the box of shells, one of the O-12 team does. Right after that a *Lánggrén* attacks!



XIN-JINFENG DATASPHERE ACCESS

○○○

AV CAMERAS
SECURED ZONE, FIREWALL 4

SECURITY SERVER
IC-2 COUNTERMEASURES
SECURED ZONE, FIREWALL 10

COMM ARRAY
IC-1 COUNTERMEASURES
SECURED ZONE, FIREWALL 10

ACCESS
POINT

SCHOOL MODE
SECURED ZONE, FIREWALL 10

ACCESS
POINT

DATASPHERE ACCESS

The data network on Xin-Jinfeng has largely been stripped out by the evacuating Yu Jingese staff. The network is basic but still functional. It uses two-factor authentication.

AV CAMERAS

Various video camera and audio pickups exist throughout the site, originally to encourage security and productivity (and to prevent worker sedition). A Breach here allows a character to take control of a camera. These include the feeds attached to the *Lánggrén*.

COMM ARRAY

Mèiguǐ can be found here most of the time while the satellites are overhead. A 1 Heat spend means the LAI is elsewhere in the network. It also functions as an access point.

SCHOOL NODE

Previously a restricted access server, Mèiguǐ has converted it to a gateway to the rest of the datasphere.

SECURITY SERVER

The AV cameras dump data to this server. Mèiguǐ is also using it to store the experiment's data.

THE LÁNGRÉN OF XIN-JINFENG

The *Lánggrén* are an attempt by Yu Jingese bioscientists to create their own version of an Antipode attack pack and handler. Named after the Shaolin Werewolf legend, the *Lánggrén* are Yu Jing's first attempt at producing an assault pack of their own.

Unfortunately, human pack handlers have been unable to control these prototypes and they are controlled by an LAI, Mèiguǐ. They have been surgically altered and enhanced.

MÈIGUI

This LAI acts as both the experimental pack handler of the *Lánggrén* and caretaker of Xin-Jinfeng. What the *Lánggrén* see, the LAI sees via the datasphere.

ELITE

LÁNGRÉN

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
11 (+2)	7	10 (+1)	9	6	5	8

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+2	1	Movement	+1	1	Social	–	–
Fortitude	+1	1	Senses	+1	1	Technical	–	–

DEFENCES

Firewall	6	Resolve	8	Vigour	11
Security	–	Morale	2	Armour	1

ATTACKS

- **Claws:** Melee, 2+6 damage, Piercing 2, Subtle 1, Non-hackable, Vicious 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Common Special Abilities:** Fear 1, Keen Senses (Smell), Night Vision.
- **Clever Hunters:** The Lángrén can spend 1 Heat for +2 difficulty to tests to detect them. This is due to adaptive camouflage bioengineering.
- **Feral Roar (2 Heat):** As a Minor Action, a Lángrén's Feral Roar is a mental attack that targets all enemies within Close range and inflicts 1+2 (Stun, Unsubtle) mental damage.
- **Super-Jump:** Lángrén treat any distance fallen as one zone shorter when calculating damage. Additionally, they can also vault over obstacles up to their own height without penalty and reduce the difficulty of skill tests to move through difficult terrain by one step.
- **Trinary:** The three Lángrén forming a trinary individually can each roll 2d20 when assisting each other (instead of the normal 1d20).

GEAR: Antipode Control Cranial Implant, Recorder (Camera only, displays real time, built into implant), Subdermal Grafts

Appearance: The LAI has no physical form, but in the quantronic realm it takes the form of a large silver-furred Antipode, with teeth and claws of lightning.

Roleplaying:

- **Pack Alpha:** Considers itself the leader of the *Lángren* pack.
- **Ferocious and Predatory:** Targets individuals and stragglers, then small groups with the *Lángren*.
- **Territorial:** Considers Xin-Jinfeng its own territory and protects as an Antipode.

Background: Originally created as a Yu Jingese science experiment monitor and handler, the *Lángren* trinary has had an unforeseen effect. The LAI has bonded with its charges, even imprinted on them.

Key Info:

- Sends hourly data dumps to the school node of all video feeds and data.
- Communicates with the Yu Jingese data network hourly via a satellite feed.
- The characters are enemies that must be destroyed, and all evidence of their visit removed.

ELITE

MÈIGUǐ

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
6	10	6	6	12	11	12

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+1	1	Movement	+1	–	Social	+1	–
Fortitude	–	–	Senses	+1	1	Technical	+3	3

DEFENCES

Firewall	12	Resolve	12	Vigour	6
Security	–	Morale	2	Armour	–

ATTACKS

- **Hacking Device:** CLAW-1, SWORD-1, SHIELD-1, GADGET-3, IC-1 +3 bonus damage

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Assault Pack:** With their control device, the LAI can coordinate their Lángren pack with a single thought. Unlike other fireteams, the pack can perform Reactions and pays one Heat less than the normal cost for doing so.
- **Hacker:** When making an Infowar attack, the LAI can reroll up to 5 but must accept the new results.
- **Pack Leader:** Leaders and pack members draw strength from their packs. They and their pack members benefit from a +2 Morale Soak when leading a pack (included in their profile above).
- **Quantronic Native:** Trying to find a concealed LAI in the datasphere is like searching for a needle in a needle-stack. LAIs benefit from 1 bonus Momentum on face-to-face tests made to detect them.
- **Remote Master:** LAIs gain 1 bonus Momentum on movement-based tests when operating or ghosting a remote.

GEAR: Antipode Control Device

RISING TENSIONS

While the characters are looking around, Mèiguǐ is watching via the video cameras. If the characters aren't aware of the LAI's presence, they notice one of the security cameras moving under its own power on a successful **Challenging (D2) Observation test**. Of course, anyone accessing the datasphere is likely to encounter the LAI there.

The LAI is quite capable of defending itself against infowarriors, but in the physical world, it will defend itself (and the installation) using the *Lángren*. Mèiguǐ is tasked with defending and keeping Xin-Jinfeng secure from invaders – which includes the characters. It also is transmitting huge amounts of data, occasionally overloading the local datasphere.

AUV ATTACK

Unless the characters have posted a guard, two of the *Lángren* target the AUVs and trail bikes. They wreck them, then target the characters and their charges, using the buildings for cover.

OVERLOAD!

1 Heat: The datasphere becomes saturated with data, causing the network to slow down. It increases the difficulty of all Hacking tests by one step.



HEAT SPENDS

The darkness and driving rain are a huge problem regarding visibility. (See "Visibility Zones", *Infinity Corebook*, p. 109).

- **1 Heat:** Low Visibility Zone. Increase all vision-based test difficulties by one step.
- **2 Heat:** Poor Visibility Zone. Increase all vision-based test difficulties by two steps.
- **3 Heat:** Zero Visibility. *Lángren* count as hidden unless they fail a stealth state test.
- **3 Heat:** Trinary 2.0. There are three more *Lángren* out there, another trinary sent ahead by Mèiguǐ to cut off the characters.

The characters are likely to start to feel hunted, and with good reason. The *Lángren* are predators, and they are controlled by an LAI that understands the concepts of tactics, cover, and ambushes.

Mèiguǐ and the *Lángren* first target any sentries around the vehicles, then attempt to disable the vehicles through an infowar hack by Mèiguǐ, and finally a physical assault by the *Lángren*.

DELTA WATERS

The flood waters of the delta are rising in the rain, and the environment quickly becomes Aquatic terrain (see *Infinity Corebook*, p.109). Moving through the rising flood waters in a vehicle requires a terrain test using the Pilot skill. A failed test means that any wheeled vehicles has become stuck, and the vehicle fills with water or sinks.

Once the characters vanquish (or escape) the *Lángren* and Xin-Jinfeng, they are likely wondering how to escape the flood waters. Heading to the coast is one way to flee, or they can attempt to call for help using the comms array. Being chased through the rain and rising floodwaters is a terrifying experience when pursued by the night-seeing *Lángren*.

HIGH & DRY

Contacting the *La Belle Époque* would be easy unless the characters are under attack from Mèiguǐ

and the *Lángren*. The characters will have to fight off the *Lángren* for several rounds until the hovercraft arrives. The hovercraft's searchlights will sweep the area around the village first, then Desjardin orders the light uphill. It arrives in the nick of time to save the characters if they are struggling to fight off the *Lángren*.

Also, if the characters have had an easy time, the flood waters are so high that the characters must swim for it.

For 1 Heat, the remaining *Lángren* suddenly burst from the water onto the ramp just as the characters climb into the hovercraft.

WHAT NOW?

After discovering the evidence of Yu Jing's Operation Bāowéi, there's now the link to Riojas Tecnos on Varuna. There's not much else left for the characters to do on Dawn apart from tidying up their loose ends or any other leads the characters wish to follow up. Wilderness of Mirrors objectives can also be fulfilled.

Yu Jing quietly shutdown the *Lángren* project on Dawn since the experiment was too costly in time and resources. At least for now.

The characters can leave Dawn at their leisure unless they have made a nuisance of themselves and must ask Yahontova (and O-12) to get them off world.



OPERATION 5

PRAXIS RUN

OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

The characters arrive on the *Bakunin* to steal the Pyxis device, the so-called Shasvastii detector. The Aldini have no idea that the Shasvastii themselves now have an interest in the device for the exact same reason – to hide their presence under the guise of a working Shasvastii detector.

When the characters find the Black Lab, they are to break in and steal the data and the prototype. They arrive just a little too late. Tokloshii arrived first and altered the data. He also defrosts the Shasvastii in cryogenic suspension, along with the genetic monstrosities stored there when he cuts the power. The characters will need to steal the Pyxis device and data, then escape the authorities – plus Pupniks, Genetic Abominations, and the Moderators of course.

BACKGROUND

The Aldini Group have been busy developing the Shasvastii detector, under the direct leadership of Black Hand agent Chloe Barnes (see p. 141). She plans to purpose it to detect ALEPH infiltrators, not just Shasvastii. She's convinced ALEPH has sold out humanity to the EI, and the Shasvastii are the first step toward this.

The Pyxis device doesn't work – the data is flawed, but now O-12 agents want it so there must be reason why. Barnes is sure O-12 has been suborned to the Shasvastii cause.

The device, however, doesn't work for a clear reason – the Shasvastii DNA is chimeric. The protein chains and amino acids involved are already



vastly different to those Speculo Killers such as Massamachos and Tokloshii who have rewritten their DNA repeatedly.

MISSION BRIEFING

You've obviously arrived at party central. Since you reached the Varuna system, there's been a whole street party in space vibe on social media. The system is full of yachts and leisure crafts, but your destination is ahead.

The Space Mushroom. The Bakunin. The Nomad Mothership's bulk briefly eclipses the sun as your shuttle dodges out of the way of a "Damn Jollyboat Krew" according to the pilot – Varunan party goes on a booze cruise to Bakunin.

Within the Bakunin is the Aldini Groups lab, one of the notorious Black Labs of Praxis. You can build your own monster there apparently.

And within is the Pyxis device, the so-called Shasvastii detector. You're here to steal the prototype and the data since O-12 doesn't trust the Nomads with it. They said it was for the Nomads' own good, but something like the Pyxis device is a game-changer, provided you actually survive to board the Bakunin that is, as your craft banks sharply to avoid another fancy yacht.



SCENE 1: BOARDING THE BAKUNIN

The characters board the *Bakunin* Mothership, which is currently in the Varuna system. If the GM wishes to do a little work, it can be set in one of the other PanOceanian systems. Not only do they have to sneak aboard unnoticed, but they also deal with Nomad paranoia regarding ALEPH.

The PanOceanian authorities in whichever system the GM ends up choosing are less than happy about a spacecraft full of techno-anarchists in their backyard. The Mothership is surrounded by a discreet blockade of PanOceanian spacecraft and remotes, noticed by a successful **Average (D1) Observation test** success.

FLY CASUAL!

While the PanOceanian picket isn't preventing Nomad traffic to and from the *Bakunin*, the ships forming the blockade are actively scanning the ships that pass through. It takes a **Challenging (D2) Spacecraft test** success to evade the security sweeps. While it has no effect on the events, it might aid the peace of mind of the characters.

For 1 Heat, the characters' ship is boarded by customs agents – either from the *Bakunin* or Varuna. Unless the characters are carrying illegal contraband such as contagions or items contravening the Concilium Convention, they can pass freely.

JOLLYBOATS

The presence of the *Bakunin* in the system has attracted a lot of attention from the general population. Many are eager to experience the forbidden fruits on offer by the Nomad Mothership. The children of rich Varunan families are always looking for the next thrill or fad, and scores of them embark on shuttles – nicknamed Jollyboat Krews – to try the pleasures on board the *Bakunin*.

These tourists don't come alone though. They bring their jumpy bodyguards and the social media influencers and other party people, all eager to give their hot take via Maya. The characters are likely to encounter such groups through the Mothership, mostly drunk or high on some Nomad narcotic. They will likely have an entourage of Nomad hangers-on and some very trigger-happy bodyguards.

#DRIVEBY

Setting foot on the *Bakunin* is something of an assault on the visual cortexes of the characters. If the characters visited the Commercial Mission in Neiting (p. 41) they will have some idea of what to expect. The streets are busy and narrow.

There is also the added danger of so many Wardrivers aboard the *Bakunin*. Characters drawing attention to themselves will likely attract a Wardriver's curiosity. They'll try an infowar attack simply for the "Lulz" or personal amusement.

Characters with clear ALEPH connections (implants, armour, NeoVatican vestments, and so on) will

be the subject of an infowar attack designed to humiliate or actively endanger them (1 Heat). It is as simple as an attempt to freeze up a character's armour or discharge a weapon. Other characters may feel a ping on their firewall. While the target may not be ALEPH, on a successful Breach, the Wardriver will attempt Data Manipulation (theft of files) or do their own equivalent of digital graffiti by tagging the character. The latter can be both inconvenient and dangerous (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 121).

The characters may never know who attacked them. *Bakunin* is so crowded and busy the ebb and flow motion of the street crowds takes them out of range.

A FACE IN THE CROWD

As the characters move through the crowds, they notice a familiar face on the other side of the street. It's one of the refugees from the column on Paradiso, or another NPC from the Paradiso or Dawn operations – perhaps Jia Song or Jupiter Perez.

Unfortunately, it's the other Shasvastii Speculo Killer, Tokloshii. Massamachos, its twin, is currently inhabiting the form of Jhaerix Anderson. Tokloshii is arranging to accompany one of the Jollyboat parties back to Varuna, where it plans to steal the Teseum transmitter it needs to neutralise the turbulence platforms of the Acheron wormhole.

Its current objective is to follow up the Aldini Group's expedition to Paradiso. Anderson/Massamachos has confirmed whether the shipment made it from Paradiso or not. Tokloshii's primary mission is to destroy the Shasvastii detector on *Bakunin*; the second is to free any captives.

The Shasvastii will play it cordially, Tokloshii has already been warned of the characters' arrival by Massamachos. It is no chance meeting.

The Shasvastii plan to use the characters to run interference for Tokloshii on *Bakunin*, and then reinforce Anderson's/Massamachos's position on Paradiso with the attempted attack on Anderson's family (see p. 99).

Custom Agents –
Infinity Corebook, p. 428

Bodyguards –
Infinity Corebook, p. 422

Maya Star –
Infinity Corebook, p. 445

Wardriver –
Infinity Corebook, p. 461

SCENE 2: COLD CONUNBRUM

After dealing with some of the local colour, the characters need to find the Black Lab module responsible for the detector device. They may need to source some gear for their heist. Fortunately, there's Eddi Arcane, the owner of Detonation Boulevard and their handler on the *Bakunin*.

DETONATION BOULEVARD

Detonation Boulevard is a club fusing the *Dayirman*-Disco with Baku-Pop music scene, along with a Cubist art deco – at least currently. It is popular among both the Nomads and Varunan tourists as “the” place to be seen and streamed. As Arcane puts it, “You’re here for the ambience, energy, and the atmosphere. Not the beer.” In this respect, he’s correct.

The interior is all sharp edges and geometric visual stimuli giving the visitor the impression that the club is far larger than it appears. People abruptly appear from nowhere, and jutting edges and sharp angles plunge parts of the club into pools of shadow.

Of course, this also impacts the Social Energy of *Bakunin* to some extent and is a great place for those of rival Communes – both diplomatic and romantic (or both!) – to meet up without SRSLY-compromising their Social Energy.

Clandestine assignations take place all the time, and compromising situations have a habit of making their way onto Maya, via Arachne of course. And there are those who go there to put the focus completely on themselves and shine a light into the dark places all while perfectly attired and coiffured of course.

The characters could encounter anyone in the geometric maze of the club, which is a great chance for characters to meet various NPCs from other factions or Wilderness of Mirrors encounters. There are many suitably named NPCs scattered throughout the *Infinity Corebook*, all who make the Detonation Boulevard an interesting place to visit.

The night club is busy when the characters arrive, the music a pounding beat the characters can feel in the decks and tunnels outside. It takes a **Challenging (D2) Persuade test** success to cut the line and get in. Otherwise, the characters wait a few hours to get in.

EDDI ARCANE

Eddi Arcane wears an old-fashioned, white three-piece suit and a Multispectral Visor (Rating 2) stylised to look like mirror shades that he never seems to remove. He’s whip-thin and tall, and always wears crocodile-skin boots.

Eddi is the kind of individual that knows everyone in *Bakunin*. He’s careful to keep off the radar of the bigger *Bakunin* players including the DSE and Moderators. Eddi’s made a significant amount of Social Energy with Detonation Boulevard over the years and isn’t pleased to see the characters. He’s aware that his possible affiliation with O-12 is going to be common knowledge on *Bakunin* and wants the characters gone as soon as possible, since their presence does nothing for his club business. So, he has a plan. He palms the characters off onto one of his associates and occasional lover, Trinity Trillian.

TRINITY TRILLIAN

Arcane delegates responsibility for the characters to Trillian, his on/off paramour. Not only does it keep the characters from disrupting his business, but it also keeps Trillian off his back.

Of course, all the planning in the world can be undone with the right person in the right place at the wrong time. In this case, it’s Trinity Trillian. An up-and-coming challenger to Candy Double’s glittery throne, as she views it, she decides to make the characters the subject of her latest venture. She’s keen to do her own “as it happens” docu-cast onto Arachne.

She and her remotes are everywhere and will likely get underfoot as the characters conduct their enquiries. For 1 Heat, she turns up at the most inconvenient time – when the characters are scouting, setting up an ambush, and so on.

She can be useful in certain aspects. Everyone wants to be seen on *Bakunin*, especially helping with intricacies of Social Energy. Social and acquisition tests gain a +1 bonus, provided Trillian is around.

Both Arcane and Trillian know the location of the Aldini Group’s Black Lab in Praxis. In Arcane’s opinion, the quicker he can get the characters out of his club, the sooner he can get back to business and fulfil his obligation to O-12.

Club Owner –
Infinity Corebook, p. 425

Maya Star –
Infinity Corebook, p. 425



SCENE 3: BOOSTING THE BLACK LAB

The characters now face the task of breaking in and stealing the device prototype plus the research data from the lab. It is a heist with Pupniks, genetically engineered horrors, and regular security, plus some very nasty Black Ice IC. They also find remains of *Shaviss* and Seed Soldiers shipped from Paradiso.

While the characters are raiding the network, they find a backdoor made by an EI hacking device.

The Praxis Labs have a reputation to maintain, and of course, they coast on the whole mysterious and sinister reputation. Terms like psychowarlocks, technomants, and neo-alchemists are all used to sell the mystique of the area. The local bars and cafes are treated as intellectual salons by the local cognoscenti.

Some are little more than back-alley labs cooking up rudimentary pharmaceuticals or shadowy docs offering hack-jobs. Other are far more organised and have advanced resources including access to their own docking bays and Black Ships.

The quantronic displays of Praxis blast out various bargain basement advertisements for surgery and twofer enhancements, but for the higher-end ones like the Aldini Group, there's nothing. If you need to find these places, you're given the address and a quantronic ID.

The characters will not be able to just walk in. The Aldini lab is invitation only, so any attempts to persuade the guards at the entrance to the module requires a plausible cover story and a **Dire (D4) Persuade test** success. The GM can modify this test further depending on whatever cover story the characters come up with.

If the characters decide to ask Arcane or Trillian, they can arrange a cover story. It won't stand up to continued scrutiny, but it's enough to get them in the door at least. The characters are representatives of LoneStar, an up-and-coming Dawn-based mercenary company looking to use some of Aldini's Pupnik forces to counter Antipode raids in USAriadna.

Of course, getting into the lab is only one of the characters' objectives. Stealing the Shasvastii detector and the data from the lab requires them to find the items first.

THE ALDINI LABORATORY

The Aldini Group's laboratory on *Bakunin* is well-funded and well-defended in terms of physical and quantronic security. Infowar and physical assaults will face determined resistance.

THE ALDINI GROUP: BUILDING BETTER

The Aldini Group has been associated on and off with a variety of crimes against the Concilium Convention, especially regarding the use of bio-weapons. They have been fined several times over the creation of the Pupniks and other genetically created monsters. So far, they've always managed to ascribe such activity to a "rogue" science element who overstepped their bounds. Such labs are usually closed, only to reopen elsewhere.

The Aldini personnel will react violently to the characters' incursion into their module. Their location in Praxis is a prime one, and the scientists believe that they are doing good work.

STAFF

The lab has a varied staff complement, although not all are effective combatants. Most have some experience of being at other Black Labs, not just the Aldini sites. The numbers in Adversary Rosters can be varied by the GM, depending on the characters' actions.

- **Corporate Security:** Both Trooper and Elite (normally leaders of a fireteam), the Corporate Security Unit are the mainstay security staff in the module, although they will quickly call for backup if faced by an infowar assault.
- **Reception & Admin Staff:** These staff are non-combatant and will not fight unless necessary. They can be considered Troopers with Attributes of 8.
- **Research Scientists:** Most of the science carried out by the Aldini Group is a mixture of science and engineering disciplines, although this laboratory focuses on the biosciences, especially xenobiology.
- **Tech Support:** The Technical Support of the Black Lab has a variety of roles. As well as engineering the technologies needed to create devices such as the Shasvastii detector, they also back up the security personnel and Wardrivers as auxiliary infowar support.
- **Wardrivers:** Seen as "overpaid kooks" by the Corporate Security Personnel, these freelancers are tasked with policing the datasphere as data bloodhounds, tracking down invaders or potential threats.
- **Wildcats:** Only a few of the Wildcats from Paradiso are likely to be in attendance, possibly delivering Shasvastii samples to the docking bay.

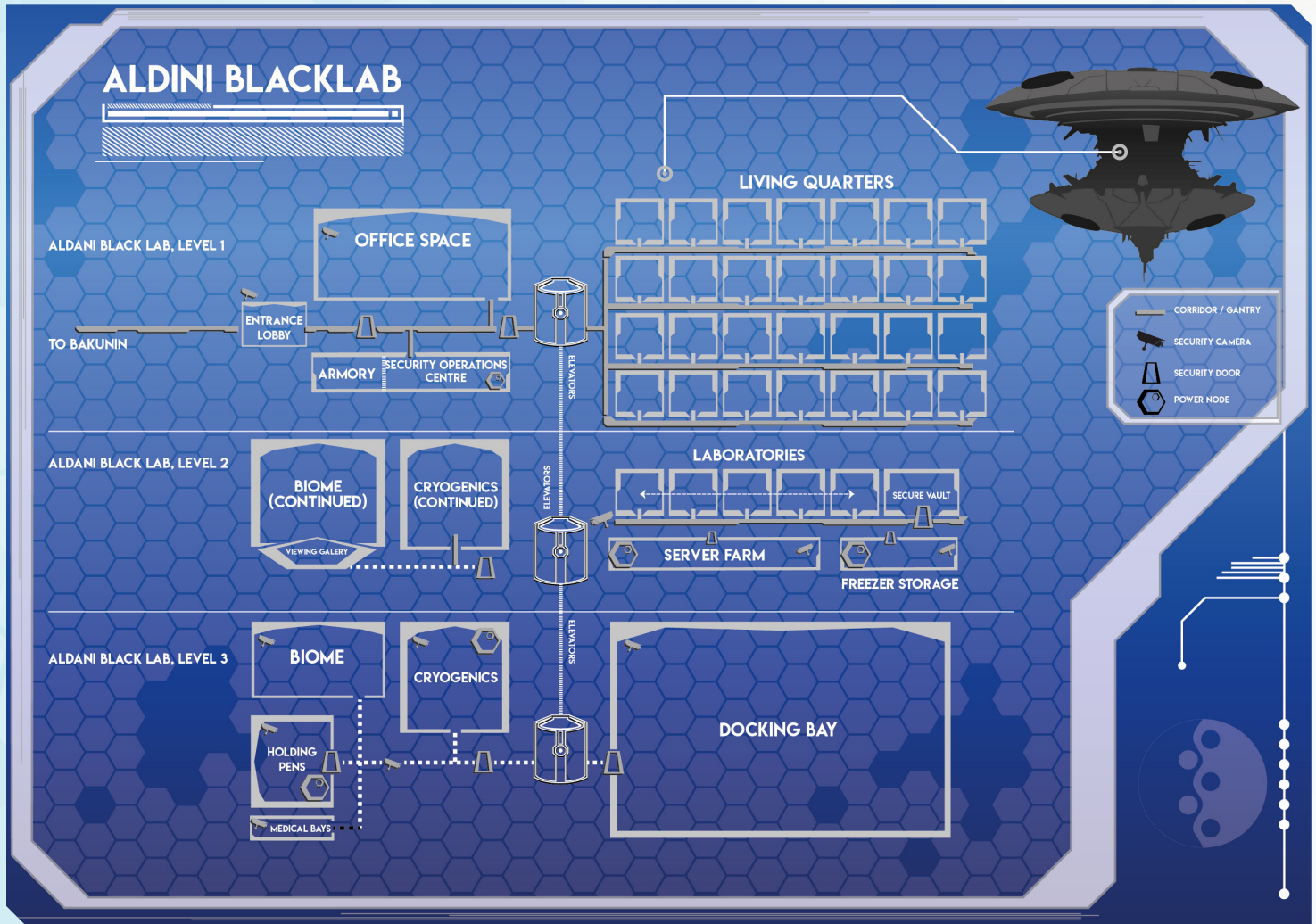
Corporate Security Unit —
Infinity Corebook, p. 428

Research Scientists —
Infinity Corebook, p. 452

Tech Support —
Infinity Corebook, p. 457

Wardrivers —
Infinity Corebook, p. 461

Wildcats — p. 146



LOCATIONS

The Aldini laboratory has several locations, all secured according to the quantronic security clearance of the individual accessing the location. Most are controlled by the access groups; security teams have access to the science areas, but not the other way around. Each location has a panic button, triggering an alarm in the Security Operations Centre. If activated, it adds 3 Heat to the GM's pool.


Armoury: Accessed from the Security Ops Centre, it takes a **Daunting (D3) Hacking** or **Thievery test** success to open the door without the access codes or security clearance. The security staff all have access. SysAdmins and regular users do not have access to this area. Inside are racks of Combi Rifles and cases of ammunition, along with a single case of stun batons and another of Agony Assagai. The latter are used to control and condition the Pupniks and Abominations. There are also four D-Charges.

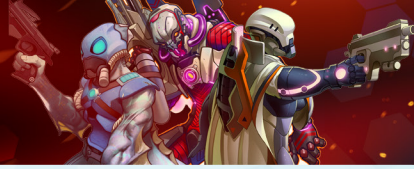
Biome: Designed to show off the Aldini creations in a specific environment, it is currently set to a

Paradiso jungle scene. Two Genetic Abominations (Elite, p. 80) are hidden in the jungle. Their holding pens are attached to the side of the biome, and a viewing gallery of toughened glass overlooks the biome. It takes 10 points of physical damage (or two Reloads of sustained fire) to shatter the glass. Anyone attempting to cross the biome will be attacked by the two Abominations working in concert. Two research scientists are here, monitoring the biome.

Cryogenics Chamber: The Shasvastii are held in cryogenic suspension here. Circular tiers of cryogenic cannisters rise through the levels. Not all are occupied, but it takes a **Challenging (D2) Observation test** success to notice this. Clearing the frost from one of the tubes allows a character to see the frozen Shasvastii inside. Unless the characters have the exact ID of the canister (from the system files held on the network), they will not be able to find the cannisters holding the Seed Soldiers or SpawnEmbryo. For 2 Heat, another creature such as a Shrike Tardigrade or Kragodon

AGONY ASSAGAI

Sometimes referred to as painsticks, these devices are a nastier version of the stun baton. Although nonlethal, repeated use on a victim often causes the victim to pass out. (Melee, 1+4 , 2H, Extended Reach, Knockdown, Stun, Vicious 1)



(see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 491 and p. 487) is also frozen and is released when Tokloshii begins the revivification cycle.

Docking Bay: The Aldini Group has their own docking bay. Like many of the Praxis Black Laboratories, the Aldini make use of Black Ships. A Groza Modship currently sits in the docking bay (see p. 84).

Entrance Lobby: The only way into the Aldini lab, aside from the docking bay, here there are two Corporate Security guards on duty, along with a non-combatant receptionist. If using their LoneStar cover story, they are given Aldini Visitor name badges. These name badges constantly check-in with the Security Operations Centre, so the bearer's location is always known.

Freezer Units: These industrial-strength freezer units are used to store samples, including Shasvastii organs, bones, and other genetic material as well as horrors kept "on ice" for further study. The floor is slick with ice and counts as difficult terrain. Moving faster than a slow walk requires an **Average (D1) Athletics test**, or the character slips and counts as Prone.

Holding Pens: These modular units are designed to be easily transported and secure. They hold the Pupniks and Genetic Abominations individually in stacked cubes. Using the loaders in the holding pens, a unit can be moved from here to the medical bays or biome. At least one Corporate Security is always here (1 Heat adds another guard). An **Average (D1) Tech test** is required to operate a loader.

A Breach in the security server allows a character to release the Pupniks or Abominations, but not both. Pupniks attack anyone not wearing a Aldini logo or name badge. A **Challenging (D2) Analysis** or **Average (D1) Animal Handling test** success reveals this. The Genetic Abominations will attack anything.

Laboratories: The littlest shops of horror, as the security team call these areas, are where the Aldini scientists do the biological and chemical research. It's also where they do their DNA/RNA sequencing research. There are normally four research scientists working here, day or night.

Living Quarters: Spacious by *Bakunin* standards, the living quarters have full leisure facilities and hot showers. Few of the Aldini staff live outside the Black Lab, since Aldini takes care of most of their creature comforts and keeps them busy at work. It's a symbiotic relationship benefitting both parties.

Medical Bays: Each of the medical bays contains a Surgical Waldo 3 (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 382). These bays are medical in name only since they are used to vivisect and study the anatomy of the

Aldini creations – including the Shasvastii. For 1 Heat, a research scientist is working on a Shasvastii corpse, removing organs and cataloguing data. For 2 Heat, the scientist is cutting up the Shasvastii while it is still alive and conscious. Seeing such a scene requires a **Challenging (D2) Discipline test** success. Failure causes 3 mental damage with the Stun quality.

Office Space: This is little more than a place to organise the necessary bureaucracy and other paperwork such as requisitions and invoicing. There's little physical paperwork involved since it is held online, but the office space does provide an access point to the Aldini lab's datasphere. One Corporate Security checks this room every hour.

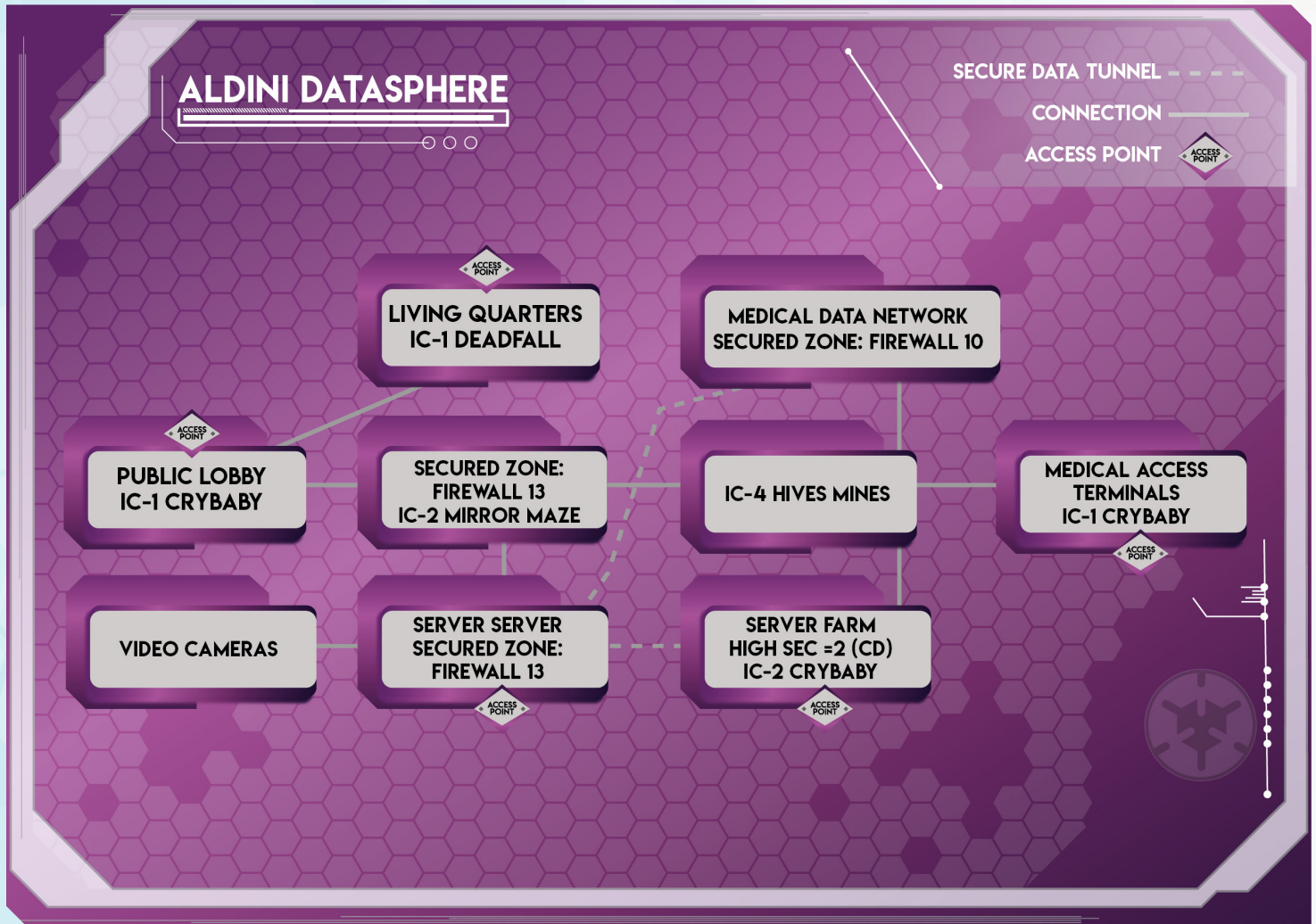
Power Node: Scattered throughout the lab are power nodes, designed to provide redundancy. If damaged, power is lost to a certain part of the Aldini lab module. It takes a Reload of sustained fire or a D-Charge to destroy a module.

Secure Vault: This is where the Shasvastii detector is stored. Other technology can be found here, some secured by the Wildcats on Paradiso. At the GM's discretion, there may be VoodooTech items here. To enter the vault itself requires security, or Black Hand, clearance such as that of Chloe Barnes or the security team. Physical security always consists of two Corporate Security guards, although this increases to four if the alarm is raised. It takes a **Dire (D4) Hacking** or **Security test** success to breach the vault door. A D-Charge will also take care of the door.

Security Cameras: The security cameras are video only and record straight to the security server. They can be switched off with an **Average (D1) Hacking** or **Security test** success. Setting the cameras to replay the same scene repeatedly requires a **Daunting (D3) Hacking** or **Security test** success.

Security Doors: These airlock doors are heavily reinforced and designed to withstand substantial impacts, as well as forming a hermetic seal. While the Aldini lab doesn't currently deal in toxins or contagions, their creations are still a danger if they get out. A **Challenging (D2) Thievery test** success allows a character to bypass the door lock controls. The doors open or close completely in three minutes, although each success reduces the time by 30 seconds. The doors can be destroyed with a D-Charge, which creates a human-sized hole in the doors.

Security Ops Centre: There are always three Corporate Security here. The Security Operations Centre (or SOC) allows the security teams to monitor the security camera feeds and acts as a command centre for the security teams. The security doors and environmental controls (including the self-destruct protocol) are also accessed from



here. Activating or shutting down the self-destruct requires a **Dire (D4) Security or Hacking test** success.

Server Farm: The computer network stores the science data here, but also provides the raw computing power needed to sequence genes, DNA, and RNA. Two tech support staff are on duty here, with another two off-duty in the living quarters. They summon corporate security immediately if they find any intruders.

THE DATASPHERE

AUTHENTICATION

Access to the Aldini datasphere is strictly governed by a series of user groups granting specific levels of access to the Aldini data sphere. SysAdmin access can be used to grant access to other user groups.

Levels of Access

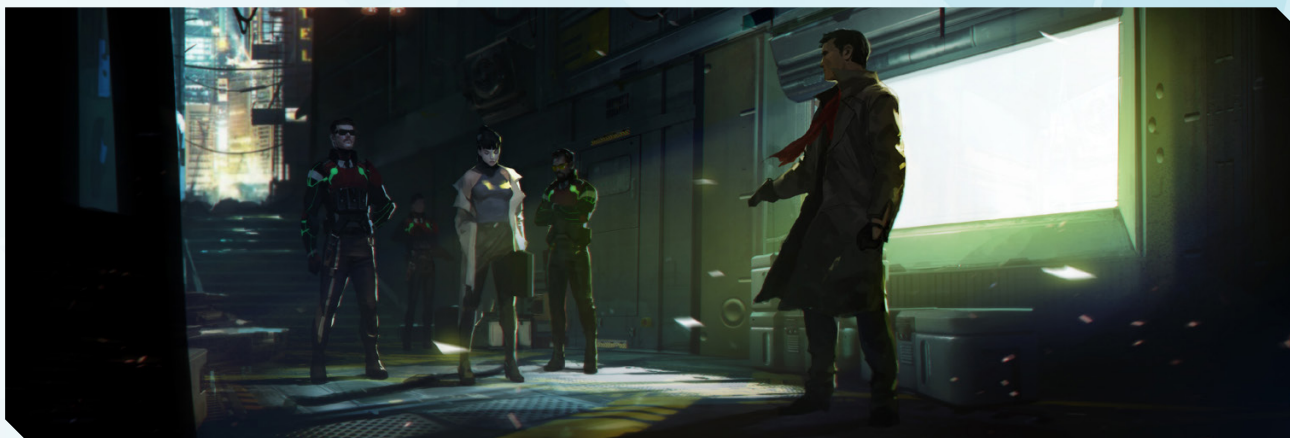
- **User:** Gives access to the staff directory and the basic business information needed to keep the place running such as finance and requisitions.

The office staff and reception have this level of access.

- **Science:** Access to science lab kit and genome sequencing, plus commercially sensitive and proprietary data. Lisa Padfoot, Colin Davis, and the other research scientists all have this level of access. It can also be used to grant access to specific lab functions and equipment, a single medical waldo, and so on.
- **Security:** Corporate security, Wardrivers, and any Wildcats present are assigned this level of access. It gives full access to the security cameras and server and the controls over the doors and elevators.
- **SysAdmin (Systems Administrator):** Chloe Barnes and the tech support staff have this level of access, giving unfettered permissions to everything in the Aldini datasphere.

ARACHNE

For characters unused to negotiating Arachne, or not from a Nomad background, the experience of entering the *Bakunin* datasphere is a sudden jolt. The difference is as distinct a difference between a



still pond of water (ALEPH) and white-water rapids (Arachne). Such characters have the complication range on all infowar tests increased by one.

FOOTPRINTS OF MONSTERS

If the characters are roaming around the Aldini datasphere, there are traces of Tokloshii's incursion. It takes a **Challenging (D2) Observation test** to notice the traces – literal CLAW marks in some cases – of an EI hacking device. A character passing a **Daunting (D3) Analysis** or **Challenging (D2) Tech test** success recognises the tech. A **Daunting (D3) Observe test** success allows a character to attempt to follow the trail in the datasphere.

FINDING THE SHASVASTII DEVICE PROTOTYPE

Tracking down the device requires a Breach of the server farm or SysAdmin level access. Doing so allows a character to look up the location of the secure vault.

DOWNLOADING THE RESEARCH DATA

Accessing the data requires user access or higher. To compress it and download it takes ten minutes, although a **Daunting (D3) Tech** or **Hacking test** halves this time. It takes a further 10 minutes to purge the data from the system and any backups, requiring a **Challenging (D2) Hacking test**.

PERSONNEL COMPLICATIONS

The characters face a few challenges once they get inside the Aldini lab module. Fortunately, Vickery and the Wildcats have been reassigned elsewhere, although the defences are still formidable.

Tokloshii, the Shasvastii Speculo Killer, is active inside the Black Lab's datasphere, accessing the data on the Shasvastii detector and altering the device's functional data. The Shasvastii's plan alters slightly once aware of the characters' presence and advances their plan. They activate the revivification cycle on the cryogenics and set a controlled

shutdown of the power. Doing so releases not only the Shasvastii but the Aldini Pupniks and the Genetic Abominations.

If they survived the events on Paradiso, both Lisa Padfoot and Colin Davis are in the module. If they encounter the characters, they easily blow the characters' cover story. For 2 Heat, they arrive in the module a few minutes after the characters begin their operation.

Chloe Barnes is still actively pursuing the Shasvastii detector research. She is present when the characters arrive and won't give up the prototype without a fight. She is downloading the medical database in the server farm when the characters arrive.

THE HEIST

It is perfectly likely the characters have no idea of Tokloshii's or Chloe's agenda and will come up with various ways to infiltrate the facility, either physically or quantronically. Allow the characters to make judicious use of Momentum, Heat, or even Infinity Points to get into the facility.

The Black Lab network is particularly unforgiving to intruders and any infowarriors are likely to be challenged by the IC defences and personnel they face. If the characters are having a hard time, then they suddenly find damaged ICs or wounded Aldini infowarriors. It's a trail of devastation left by Tokloshii as the EI hacking device cuts through the defences.

More information on specific events can be found on p. 71, although the characters possibly expedite matters. It's important that the characters feel like they are in control of the situation, up until Tokloshii's plans begin to take shape.

The Shasvastii is hidden close to the Black Lab and unlikely to wait for the characters to find them. If encountered in the datasphere (see "Footprints of Monsters" on p. 78), the alien does their best to escape.

SCENE 4: THEY MOSTLY COME AT NIGHT

While the characters are likely to make their own progress into the Aldini module, they're not the only ones. Chloe Barnes is there, as is the Speculo Killer Tokloshii.

If the characters have a Teseum-clad plan and everything works accordingly, the following encounters can be used to make events interesting thanks to Tokloshii's activities. If the Aldini lab becomes aware of the characters' presence through aggression or their LoneStar cover is blown, these events still happen, although in most cases, they are driven by the characters' actions directly.

YO, LET'S GO!

Barnes is physically in the server farm downloading the data to a secure, hidden quantronic zone outside of the Black Lab. She will either just finish as the characters arrive or becomes aware of the datasphere intrusion (by either Tokloshii or the characters). She will make her way to Security Operations Centre and begin coordinating the corporate security into fireteams. She is quite capable of engaging the characters as well, although Tokloshii is a different challenge entirely. The characters are literally running interference for the Shasvastii who is also messing about with the Shasvastii detector data.

Unless the characters hinder the Shasvastii somehow or delay them significantly, they'll complete their second objective, reviving and releasing the Shasvastii.

SOMEONE LET THE DOGS OUT?

In response to any armed incursion, the security team release the Pupniks from their cages. Mostly controllable by the Aldini staff, unless suffering the Crimson Rage, they will not attack anyone wearing Aldini logos or nametags. If the characters are still following their LoneStar cover story, their visitor nametags are no protection.

A small pack of canine Pupniks is in one of the corridors as a result. They may easily be mistaken for Dogfaces at first, and there are three Troopers and one Elite. For 2 Heat, the Elite is suffering the Crimson Rage (see below).

THE PUPNIKS

Hypoallergenic ferrets. Crazy-smart birds of paradise that alight on your shoulder and serenade you. Dogs that don't mess on the carpet. The Black Labs of Praxis have created some amazing and wonderful creatures, much to the delight of the wider Human Sphere.

They've also produced the Pupniks.

Borrowing their name from a moment of levity in Earth's Cold War, the Pupnik is a highly aggressive, violently unstable, sub-sapient amalgamation of canid and humanoid features. About as intelligent as a clever chimpanzee, these creatures combine predatory instincts, vat-grown muscles, and a singular design aesthetic. Popular as "show muscle" for Submondo crime bosses, they've also seen increasing popularity as pit fighters, where their primal instincts drive them to fight, kill, mate, and eat – sometimes all at once. Their torturous creation ensures an always-violent killing machine, ready to explode at a moment's notice. Like a dog that was beaten in the womb, Pupniks are born with a mean streak though they can always be made meaner and often are.

TROOPER OR ELITE

PUPNIK

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
10	10	12	6	7	8	4

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+2	2	Movement	+1	–	Social	+1	–
Fortitude	+1	–	Senses	+1	1	Technical	–	–

DEFENCES

Firewall	7	Resolve	4	Vigour	12
Security	–	Morale	2	Armour	1

ATTACKS

- **Claws:** Melee, 1+5 **IN** damage, Piercing 1 (Elites add the Grievous weapon quality)

GEAR: Eye Implants

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Common Special Abilities:** Fear 1, Keen Senses (Smell)
- **Crimson Rage (Elite Only):** No matter how well-behaved they may seem, Pupniks are never far from the edge. Whenever a Pupnik suffers a Wound or Metanoia effect, it flies into a violent rage, attacking the nearest source of agitation with terrifying abandon, usually the source of the Harm, but any living being will do. While in its rage, it gains +4 Morale and deals +4 **IN** to melee attacks, though it suffers +2 difficulty to all tests that don't involve dealing something bodily harm. Talking a Pupnik out of a Crimson Rage requires succeeding at a **Dire (D4) Animal Handling test**, with the difficulty reducing by 1 each round, to a minimum of **Simple (D0)**.



THEY CUT THE POWER?

Tokloshii's secondary objective is to free the Shasvastii. It shuts down the primary and backup power, plunging the Aldini module into darkness. The characters may also choose to do this themselves. The emergency lighting comes on a minute later, colouring everything red. All visual-based tests have their difficulty increased by one step unless the characters can somehow normally see in the dark.

A klaxon immediately begins to go off warning of multiple containment breaches and cryogenic units offline. A few minutes later there are screams – not all human – as the Shasvastii and Genetic Abominations encounter each other, the Pupniks, and the Aldini security teams.

PRISON BREAK

After the Shasvastii are released, they all suffer the Dazed condition and are unarmed. The players are likely to begin encountering them on their way to the armoury, having been advised of the location by Tokloshii. From there, they plan to fight their way free to the docking bay or entrance.

- **1 Heat:** The characters encounter a team of four Shasvastii, a fireteam of three Troopers and an Elite leader carrying purloined pistols and Combi Rifles they've taken off the bodies of dead security troops.
- **2 Heat:** Upgrade the Troopers to Elites, and they are looking for the SpawnEmbryo as well (+1 Morale Soak).

It is possible the characters may wish to team up with Shasvastii to escape. The aliens aren't willing to listen to reason from humans right now, so a **Dire (D4) Persuade test** success is required to even get them to stop shooting. If the Shasvastii get to the armoury they will be better equipped to deal with the characters and *Bakunin* forces.

HUNT/TERRIFY/KILL

The characters come across the bodies of several research scientists, the corridor floor wet with blood. A single research scientist is still alive. Covered in blood, they begin crawling toward the characters. They are suddenly snatched out of sight down a side corridor, where their screams abruptly cut off.

The characters are being hunted by four Genetic Abominations with neurotoxic bites. Two are ahead in the side corridor, two are sneaking up behind the characters. They count as Hidden for purposes of a Stealth test. They will attempt to bite the characters and wait for the toxin to take effect. They then drag off their victim into the darkness to feast on

the still-living victim, using a Psywar Intimidation attempt to cause a Fear Metanoia emotional effect.

These Genetic Abominations resemble grey-black monitor lizards with insectile chitin armour-plating. For 2 Heat, they have the additional attack modes as well.

GENETIC ABOMINATION

Through a combination of genesplicing, radical augmentation, and biografted xenotissue, the Black Labs of Praxis can create any creature that their customers can dream up. Of course, not all dreams are pleasant, and their Genetic Abominations cover the entire spectrum, from statuesque gryphons and regal unicorns, to twisted chimerical horrors best left unmentioned. Like Pupniks, these sub-sapient creatures are often employed as security. Despite lacking killer instincts, they're easier to control, are unsettlingly weird, and possess a near-human vocal range that has proven more than enough to frighten off many would-be trespassers. And what of those who decided to test their luck against these manifest nightmares? In most cases, they need to identify the remains by DNA sample. While a given Abomination might possess any number of different lethal augmentations, they are known to be remarkably thorough.

TROOPER/ELITE

GENETIC ABOMINATION

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
10	10	10	5	8	8	9

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+1	1	Movement	+1	1	Social	+1	1
Fortitude	+1	–	Senses	+2	1	Technical	–	–

DEFENCES

Firewall	4	Resolve	5	Vigour	5
Security	–	Morale	1	Armour	1

ATTACKS

- Troopers have access to one of the following attack types; Elites choose two:

- *Acidic Spit:* Range C, 1+5 damage, Biotech, Breaker, Toxic 1
- *Neurotoxic Bite:* Melee, 1+5 damage, Biotech, Immobilising, Toxic 2
- *Xenotissue Spines:* Melee, 1+5 damage, Grievous, Piercing 1

GEAR: Stealth Repeater


SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Abandon All Hope Ye Who Enter Here:** From remote-fed personal data to uncanny body horror, Genetic Abominations are well-equipped to unsettle their targets. They generate an additional +1 Momentum on successful Psywar attacks.
- **Unexpected MetaChemistry (1 Heat):** A Genetic Abomination's capabilities aren't always immediately obvious. By spending 1 Heat, the Abomination gains access to an additional attack type (see above) for one action.

Shasvastii –

Infinity Corebook, p. 471

A GRAND MELEE

The entrance lobby becomes a four-part battle between the Aldini survivors and the Pupniks, the Shasvastii seeking escape, the hungry Abominations, and then the characters. The Aldini and Shasvastii have set up barricades (soft Cover Soak, +2 ) and are trading shots with each other – and the Abominations. Periodically there's a scream (human or alien) as an Abomination takes down a victim and drags them away. If the characters decide to head to the docking bay, this may occur there instead.

LOCKDOWN

Once Barnes realises that something is amiss, her first move is to head to the secure data vault and retrieve the prototype detector, possibly already stolen by the characters.


If missing, she activates the lockdown protocol. All secured zones in the datasphere gain the IC-2 Deadfall quality, and the security doors begin to seal shut (see p. 76 for how to open the security doors). She links up with any surviving corporate security units and makes plans to escape the lab either through the lobby or the docking bay.

IT ENDS IN FIRE: SELF-DESTRUCT

Triggered by the characters or by Barnes, the internal security system begins a self-destruct sequence. It's an event with a timed countdown and audio alert so the characters will know exactly how long to deactivate it or get out of the Aldini lab.

This may well happen sooner than later if the characters have dealt with Barnes, stolen the prototype from the vault, or triggered it themselves. In the case of the latter, they are not expecting to deal with the various other complications such as the lockdown and the release of the various Aldini lab creatures.

In essence, the self-destruct sequence boils down into a narrative time frame. Each encounter slows the characters down as the countdown diminishes, helpfully reminding the characters every minute. There's a handful of seconds left on the clock when the characters finally shut the last security door behind themselves or stop the self-destruct sequence.

A series of incendiary charges are built into the Aldini lab. The super-structure remains intact when the self-destruct incendiary charges go off. Anyone in the following locations takes 10  physical damage with the Area (Long), Incendiary 3, Spread 2, Unsubtle, and Vicious 2 Qualities.



- Biome
- Cryogenics Chamber
- Freezer Units
- Holding Pens
- Living Quarters
- Medical Bays
- Office Space
- Secure Vault
- Security Ops Centre
- Server Farm

This is more than enough to destroy living tissue and reduce any possible physical evidence to ashes. The blowback is likely to damage both the entrance lobby and docking bay, possibly blowing a hole in the wall of the lab as well. If it does happen, the characters do have a way out.



SCENE 5: BREAKING BAKUNIN

Depending on how (and what!) the characters did in the Black Lab module, they find themselves leaving *Bakunin* in some haste. The monsters in the lab are running riot, causing the characters to deal with them, the Moderators, or Morlocks – or all three!


RUNNING WITH THE DEVIL: ESCAPING THROUGH BAKUNIN ON FOOT

Characters can use the chaos caused by the battling Shasvastii and Aldini creations to attempt to escape the Praxis module. Any combat that follows takes place in crowded thoroughfares with screaming citizens alternately trying to get a better look or running for cover. Combat zones gain the Panicking Crowd quality.


The characters will encounter Shasvastii with weapons from the looted armoury, frenzied Pupniks, and Genetic Abominations. Then, there's also the Nomad forces who are mobilising to counter the threat in Praxis.

ENCOUNTER: IN MODERATION

It won't take long for the Nomad Military Force (NMF) to get involved, but the characters' first contact will be a disparate group of three *Bakunin* Moderators, who have holed up in a café. There are the bodies of several Abominations strewn around outside. Initially mistaking the character for civilians, the Mods beckon them into cover. They'll ask the characters if they've any idea what's happened.

There are a dozen non-combatant civilians already sheltering in the café. Four Abominations (Troopers) attack the café as soon as the characters enter. For 1 Heat, a couple of Elite Abominations (p. 80) crash out of the kitchen area at the same time. The tables and chairs count as soft (+2 ) Cover Soak.

ENCOUNTER: SHASVASTII SURPRISE

A fireteam of four Shasvastii troopers lead by an Elite are concealed in hard Cover Soak (+4 ) ahead of the characters in an access tunnel. They're slowly making their way out of Praxis, hoping to steal a ship to get off the *Bakunin* or stow away with a crew.

The Shasvastii will stay hidden if the characters look dangerous enough, instead following them to their ship. Otherwise, they decide to open fire on the characters. They count as Hidden for purposes of a Stealth state test.

ENCOUNTER: WHO LET THESE DOGS OUT?

In the thoroughfare ahead, an Elite Pupnik is deep in a Crimson Rage, tearing at a hatch with its claws. From behind the hatch are the screams of a group of children trapped inside. If the characters approach, it turns on them. The children will then follow the characters, thinking it's safer with them. It takes a **Daunting (D3) Persuade test** success to convince the kids to go with another adult (such as the Moderators).

ENCOUNTER: A MOB OF MORLOCKS

As the characters make their way into one of the larger areas, they hear the first signs of a rapid-fire HMG along with whoops and yells. A large power-armoured form – a SWAST Taskmaster – is unloading an HMG into a tunnel filled with Abominations. The ones that do escape the hail of gunfire are cut down by the blades of a line of drug-fuelled Morlocks.

This encounter can have several possible outcomes. For 1 Heat, the Taskmaster's HMG runs out of ammo, and the Morlocks go hand-to-hand with the Abominations. For an additional 1 Heat, the Morlocks fail to stem the tide, and some Abominations escape the cordon (3 Troopers and 1 Elite). They make straight for the characters. For 2 Heat, the Morlocks are so caught up in a drug-fuelled bloodlust they attack the characters, thinking them threats.

The SWAST Taskmaster is an especially useful ally in the melee that ensues.

DIE MORLOCK GRUPPE

Life on *Bakunin* is a riot of colour, vibrance, and indulgence. For some, resorting to extreme violence is the only means of coping with the constant assault on the senses with the result that a few of these unhinged individuals become very good at it. Rather than lock them away and waste their talent, the Bakunians hook the worst of these vicious psychopaths on MetaChemistry compounds and assign them to one of the Morlock groups. The MetaChemistry barely refrains their fury, however, so maintaining a safe distance at all times is highly recommended. Once they taste combat, the inhibitive control of the drugs in their systems releases and flips, working to further enhance the potency and violent natures of these inhuman beasts.

Panicking Crowds –
Infinity Corebook, p. 110

Bakunin Moderators –
Infinity Corebook, p. 422

Shasvastii –
Infinity Corebook, p. 471

Pupnik – p. 79

ELITE

DIE MORLOCK GRUPPE

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
10	9	10	10	7	6	7

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+3	2	Movement	+2	1	Social	+2	+1
Fortitude	+2	1	Senses	—	—	Technical	—	—

DEFENCES

Firewall	8	Resolve	9	Vigour	10
Security	—	Morale	1	Armour	—

ATTACKS

- **Combi Rifle:** Range C/M, 1+6 damage, Burst 2, 2H, Expert 2, MULTI Light Mod, Vicious 1
- **Pistol:** Range C, 1+5 damage, Burst 1, 1H, Vicious 1
- **Morlock Blade:** Melee, 1+7 damage, Unbalanced, Non-Hackable, Parry 1, Piercing 1, Vicious 1
- **Smoke Grenades:** 1H, Disposable, Indiscriminate (Close), Nonlethal, Speculative Fire, Smoke 2, Thrown

GEAR: Ballistic Vest

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **MetaChemistry Boost (1-2 Heat):** Thanks to their MetaChemistry, combat triggers physical changes that are unique to each Morlock. Once per combat scene, the GM can spend 1 or 2 Heat to boost one of the Morlock's physical attributes by a corresponding 1 or 2 points.
- **Red Mist:** When their MetaChemistry unleashes their psychotic tendencies, Morlocks think of little else. They gain a Morale Soak of 3 and an Intransigence of 4 during combat scenes. Additionally, they can reroll up to 2 when making a melee attack but must accept the new results.

ELITE

SWAST TASKMASTER

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
9	9	10	10	8	9	8

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+3	2	Movement	+1	—	Social	+1	—
Fortitude	+2	1	Senses	+1	—	Technical	+1	—

DEFENCES

Firewall	8	Resolve	8	Vigour	10
Security	2	Morale	—	Armour	5

ATTACKS

- **Heavy Machine Gun (HMG):** Range L, 2+7 damage, Burst 3, Unwieldy, Spread 1, Unsubtle
- **Pistol:** Range R/C, 1+5 damage, Burst 2, 1H, Vicious 1
- **Modified Stun Baton:** Melee 1+8 damage, Unbalanced, Non-Hackable, Knockdown, Subtle 1, Stun, Vicious 2

GEAR: Powered Combat Armour (gain up to +3d20 on Brawn tests with +3 complication range, Kinematika), CrazyKoala.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

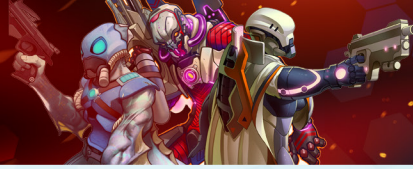
- **Big Buddy:** Whether it's the Moderator Corps, Die Morlock Gruppe, or some other unit, Taskmasters are used to coordinating with other forces. When leading a fireteam, they can reroll up to 2 when making a ranged attack but must accept the new results.
- **Seen It All:** Some of it twice. When making an Observation test, the Taskmaster can reroll one d20 but must accept the new result.
- **Little Buddy (1-3 Heat):** Taskmasters are protective of their "little buddies," any smaller, less armoured forces they deploy with, so virtually all of them. By spending X Heat, they can reduce the difficulty of the Guard Reaction, and if they succeed in intercepting the attack, they also deal X Morale damage to their opponent.

CRAZYKOALA

CrazyKoala: Mine, 2+5 Damage, 2H, Comms, Disposable, Indiscriminate (Close Unsubtle, Vicious 1). Made by Yu Jing's Aizuri-sho and purchased in large quantities by the NMF, these adorable mine chassis can be controlled directly or given one of a few simple orders for a round. The remote mechanism's complexity prevents payloads beyond simple explosives, but they more than make up for it with the element of surprise. Sold in pairs, they have 1 Armour and 3 Structure, and detonate if they receive a Fault. As a Minor Action, anyone with network permissions to a CrazyKoala can give it one of the following commands:

- Move from its current zone to an adjacent zone.
- Follow an ally in its current zone and move with them when they move.
- Leap at and detonate on anyone without permission who moves into its zone.
- Rush a target in its current or an adjacent zone and detonate for +1 damage.





SURFACE IMPACT

Characters heading for the Aldini docking bay as a possible way out (see p. 76) can still have the same encounters with the Pupniks, Shasvastii, and Abominations, but they will not have the same Nomad allies.

Deciding to make their way across the surface of the *Bakunin* from the docking bay is a challenge for the characters. Unless they have spacesuits or some way of breathing in an airless vacuum, their trip outside is likely to be a short – and fatal – one.

If the GM is feeling charitable, there is a Groza Modship in the docking bay. It is already being prepped by Aldini personnel (see p. 74) or a group of Shasvastii escapees (3 Elites, or 3 Troopers lead by an Elite).

Neither group willingly lets the characters board the ship, so a firefight breaks out in the docking bay – and of course the self-destruct countdown continues (see p. 81). There are enough packing crates and fallen wreckage as well as the ship's hull that count as hard +4 Cover Soak.

Of course, it wouldn't be that easy – the characters will have to fly their ship out from the docking bay as beams and girders fall and gouts of flame burst out of the airlocks and ducts. A failed **Daunting (D3) Spacecraft test** causes 5 damage to the ship.

It's also possible they have picked up a stowaway – an Elite Shasvastii or Abomination who remains hidden away until it strikes when the characters least expect it.

There's still the matter of the PanOceanian “blockade” of course, and the characters are attacked by the stowaway as soon as they are challenged by a customs vessel.


GROZA MODSHIP

The Groza (*Гроза*: literally “thunderstorm”) is the heir to a long line of modular weapon designs. Intended to provide a sturdy, flexible platform that could adapt to whatever situations the Nomads find themselves in, the Groza is quick as a wish, stubborn as a mule, and... not much else out of the box, honestly. Like a Teseum-plated shipping container with an engine strapped to it – which isn't too far from the truth – the Groza truly comes into its own once modifications, modular extensions, and modal weaponry are bolted on to its durable core.

It is a favourite among mercenaries, pirates, and freelancers of all sorts, not just the Nomads. The Groza is affordable and easy to repair, making it a popular design for enterprising crews looking to make their mark on the Human Sphere. Of course, it'd be better to not need the repairs in the first place, but with the Groza's clunky handling – it is, essentially, a deluxe version of the Nomad flying brick – some dings and dents along the way are part of the deal.

GROZA MODSHIP

ATTRIBUTES

Class		1	Type	Cargo ship, Passenger Ship, Remora, T-Clad	
Thrust	7	Impact	3+4 	Endurance	15

SYSTEMS

Construction	13	Engines	11	Network	11	Sensors	11
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PERSONNEL

Combat	2	Navigation		2	Technical		4
Armour	7	Hull integrity	12	Security	4	Firewall	15

ARMAMENT

- **2x Defensive Battery:** Point Defence, Class 1, Range 1, Burst 3, Damage 2+5 , Salvo 1 (Area 0), Piercing 2; 6 Reloads
- **Bootleg Torpedoes:** Missile, Class 0, Damage 1+8 , Piercing 2, Vicious 1; 4 Reloads

NOTES

- **Cargo Ship:** The vessel is designed to haul massive amounts of cargo, either loose or in huge interlocking containers. Such vessels do not need to be manoeuvrable, but they do need to be sturdy. The vessel's total Hull Integrity is increased by half, but it counts its Class as one higher when resolving a manoeuvre or the difficulty of an enemy attack.
- **Passenger Ship:** The vessel is designed to carry passengers in a reasonable degree of comfort, but this means that it often cannot handle as much heat as other craft of the same size. The vessel's Endurance is two lower than normal.
- **Remora:** The vessel is designed to lock onto the hull of a Circular, riding along to its destination.
- **T-Clad:** The vessel's hull is armoured with Teseum plating, making it extremely resilient. The vessel's Armour is increased by an amount equal to its Class.

ENDGAME

The characters finally escape with the data they came to get along with the prototype. Depending on their state of health, they may need Eddi to get them off the *Bakunin* quickly onto another ship headed back to Paradiso or Varuna. Eddi can also fix them up with any medical help. Any Resurrections can take place on Varuna as well.

Life on *Bakunin* is chaotic and wild and never quiet, and the day after the incident in Praxis, everything appears to return to normal. Suspiciously quiet. Some of the Aldini Group survived, and the characters will have made a dangerous enemy. The Aldini Group will not leave matters as they are and can be used in future adventures as a Wilderness of Mirrors or as adventure seeds.

Tokloshii, the Shasvastii Speculo Killer, has already made their own arrangements and is one step ahead of the characters. The Shasvastii is now heading toward Varuna where the Combined Army plans to inflame the Helots with a “Libertos-backed” uprising, co-opting Operation Bāowéi.

Shasvastii –
Infinity Corebook, p. 471

OPERATION 6

VARUNA RISING



OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

After their rollercoaster ride of a heist on the *Bakunin*, the characters head to Varuna. Wade's liaison, Senator Anderson, knows a journalist there, Reyna Morales. She's been doing some digging on the weapons shipments the characters have been tracking. There's also the link to Rioja Tecnos, the warehouse company from Xin-Jinfeng in Dawn's Snark Lands.

While the characters are away, Massamachos kills and replaces Anderson on Paradiso. They have one problem — Anderson's family are likely to blow their cover. The Speculo Killer plans to have the Bright Island Shasvastii kill Anderson's family and blame it on Libertos.

Libertos are also involved; they are not directly smuggling the weapons but have certainly been taking deliveries. The characters also learn that Jia Song is again involved.

The characters discover the Shasvastii base on Bright Island, but nothing further happens — until the Bright Island Shasvastii attack Anderson's remote home with the intent of killing everyone (and put the blame on Libertos).

BACKGROUND

Reyna Morales uncovered the weapons shipments from off world but vanished, fearing for her life. She tracked the shipments to Bright Island, a failed resort secured by Yu Jing's Jia Song via a local shell company. The weapons were sent there from the Riojas Tecnos warehouse, beneath the surface of the Deepwater settlement.

She has good reason to be worried. Bright Island is now home to a Shasvastii encampment, an *asharii*, designed to function as a base on Varuna. They wiped out the Yu Jingese squatters and also have a hidden ghost ship nearby.

Massamachos and Tokloshii are also keen to remove Anderson's family. They are a threat to Massamachos's cover. They plan to use the *asharii* base to mount an attack on Anderson's family home and defect blame onto Libertos.



MISSION BRIEFING

LANKACAST

A small independent news syndicate, LankaCast has made a name for itself on Maya with several hard-hitting stories involving corruption. They don't focus on specific factions and are vociferous in criticism of all the G5 nations, although their slogan is "Letting the facts speak for themselves."

Anderson's sent you to Varuna to find a journalist who's gone AWOL. Reyna Morales was looking into illegal weapons shipments to the alien Helot terror group, Libertos. He reckons it links to the whole Dawn-Satori line of weapons supply. She's likely to have a few leads, plus there's also the Riojas Tecnos link you found on Dawn to investigate.

That orbital elevator to Deepwater looks like an experience. It should be a fine light show if those storm clouds are anything to go by.

SCENE 1: EXECUTIVE ORDER

Anderson orders the PCs to investigate the munitions being shipped to Libertos and asks them to track down a journalist he believes is either a Yanjing agent seeking to scuttle his career to protect the Libertos weapon supplies or someone with evidence on Operation Bāowéi. Either way, the information they have is likely to be useful.

Wade accompanies the characters on this mission as their handler. Varuna was his home for many years, so he's well-qualified for this. He's less than enthusiastic about being back, though.

Deepwater is the first port of call for the characters — the orbital elevator delivers them there first, but it is relatively easy to charter an aeroplane trip to any of the other cities on Varuna. Their arrival in Deepwater couldn't be more different from their trip to Dawn. There's a sense of busy order arriving at the travel hub, with vizier geists directing visitors to Varuna to the correct customs or immigration channels and customised routes tailored to the characters' itinerary.

Wade disappears quickly after making sure the characters are booked into their accommodation, a plain but functional suite with views of the clouds obscuring the orbital elevator. The pervasive domotics — and the link to ALEPH — in the suite can be switched off easily, although it takes an **Average (D1) Observation test** success to find the necessary manual switches for the lights and other tech.

Once the characters have made themselves comfortable, they can review their mission objectives. The first is to locate Reyna Morales, the missing journalist; the second is to investigate the Riojas Tecnos ammunition manufacturer lead they found on Dawn. Fortunately, Morales's editor is happy to help the characters.

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE EDITOR

Sandun Jayasinghe is the boss of Reyna Morales, the missing journalist. As her editor at LankaCast, Jayasinghe has some insight into the story she was working on. He's happy to meet with the characters at the news syndicate offices in Akuna Bay or virtually via Maya. He is extremely busy, so he constantly checks the time giving him a shifty and nervous look. A successful **Average (D1) Psychology test** allows a character to arrive at the conclusion that Sandun isn't guilty about anything, but he does have little time. His concern is genuine.

He's cagey about the story Morales is — or was — working on, so the characters need to coax the information out of him. An **Average (D1) Persuade test** success reveals one of the following for every success (or point of Momentum spent):

- Morales has missed check-ins before, but never more than two in succession.
- One of the sources in her current story also disappeared, Chakrii Narok, a lawyer at Yuanlin Partners in Akuna Bay.
- Her current story involved one of the G5 nations.
- Her parents are both Ateks and move around a lot. He suspects she's hiding out with them. He will only reveal this if a point of Momentum is spent, or the character got 4 successes on the Persuade test.

He's worried enough to suggest the characters pay a visit to her apartment in the Bay, although he isn't on the ALEPH access list.

RIOJAS TECNOS

The characters are likely eager to visit Riojas Tecnos, the manufacturer of the ammunition they found on Dawn. It's easy to find the corporate registration in ALEPH, since it's matter of public knowledge. There is a complicated chain of holding companies that apparently own the company, and a character succeeding at a **Daunting (D3) Analysis test** will be able to ascertain that each holding

DEEPWATER

Deepwater occupies the island of Hesperia and is immediately recognisable from afar for the immense tower of clouds that rises above it. Deepwater and its orbital elevator handle most of the interplanetary shipping and cargo, despite two planetary spaceports. Immense loads of raw materials are passed up and down the elevator each day to be unloaded onto waiting cargo ships and ferried across the Sphere.

Unlike Highwater Spaceport and Syurga however, Deepwater is relatively untouched by rain. There is a wide berth of entry lanes for orbital transport, and the only disturbance to Varuna's atmosphere is the length of the orbital elevator. The gentle drift of the tower isn't enough to cause a full-blown storm to develop, but enough to stir up the atmospheric layers and cause storm clouds and gentle rain to form. This phenomenon has been named the *retettunkii* by the Helots and referred to as the storm tower by the locals. This pillar of clouds has served to make Deepwater famous in the tourism industry and is one of the many stops offered to visitors on their way to Akuna Bay's central travel hub. Riding the elevator down to the surface has become a popular attraction, tourists enjoying the thrill of descending through the small active storms and rain. Safety is never an issue, as the tower was modified to harness the lightning that develops in the clouds it created to reduce costs and funnel electricity into Deepwater.

Due to the unexpected popularity of Deepwater, the town is undergoing a bustling expansion project to introduce more activities and sights for tourists. Every day more companies try their hand at creating attractions, but the task is becoming progressively harder. Deepwater was built with stability for the elevator in mind rather than any natural wonders. The waters surrounding Deepwater lack reefs or interesting underwater attractions. The species that normally amaze foreigners are absent due to lack of food and places to nest. Mud toads are the most common animal around the town, leading to a mercifully sizeable suncrest population. However, the battle to turn Deepwater into a tourist trap is a failing one. There is simply too little material for any lasting attractions to be viable beyond the elevator. The small burst of corporate attention has been appreciated by the residents however, giving the local economy a minor boost. The last remnant of this effort is a small red-light district in the deeper sections of the ports, which is still frequented enough to remain operational.

The shipping industry has always been strong in Deepwater. The starport is a maze of warehouses and storage centres with a vast selection of uses. Row upon row of freezer storage keeps food from Anahena and fish from across the globe fresh, whilst storage yards receive trucks stuffed to the brim with minerals from the efforts of the mining towns of the Gurindam archipelago.

Carefully guarded yards contain the incredible creations of the Varunan military complex, ready to be shipped across the Sphere for combat use. Deep vaults contain samples taken from across Varuna, incredible species being sold to other worlds to expand the scientific knowledge of the Sphere. All this and more await in the shipping yards of Deepwater, demanding a strong security presence. Unlike Akuna Bay's focus on immigration police, Deepwater's guards are more militant.

The companies who store their goods on site hire private security firms, leading many to joke that the true military force of Varuna is found in the shipping industry. Although they are carefully covered up, it isn't uncommon for small skirmishes to break out between these contracted soldiers in the dead of night as one company seeks to liberate cargo from another. The law enforcement agencies of Varuna have been known to respond carefully to these skirmishes, announcing their presence loudly to pressure the skirmishers to scatter so long as casualties and structural damage are at a minimum. Fatalities and full-blown fire fights are fortunately rare, leaving the peace of Deepwater intact.





UNDER PRESSURE

There's quite a lot going on in this operation and the characters can drive the narrative accordingly. Here's a summary of the NPC agendas.

Anderson/Massamachos: Things are falling into place, and the first parts of the plan for the Acheron Gate fall have been resolved. Massamachos is keen to remove the Anderson family so there is less chance of his cover being blown.

Jia Song: Covering up Operation Bāowéi means killing the lawyer responsible and burning Riojas Tecnos to the ground.

Libertos: They are less than happy the weapon shipments halted, and a pitched gunfight is likely.

Reyna Morales: She believes Bright Island is a front for Yu Jingese weapons smuggling. She's planning on getting more evidence. Unfortunately, she has no idea the truth is far more sinister.

Shasvastii: As well as their other operations, they plan to attack the mansion on Anderson Isle, simply kill everyone, and blame it on Libertadores Helot terrorists.

Tokloshii (Speculo Killer): Acting in concert with Massamachos, he's delivered the Teseum transmitter to Wade.

Wade: Wade has been sneaking around Varuna. His history with Jia Song means he's keen to get payback and has tracked her down to a warehouse in Deepwater.

Yuanlin Partners: The law firm registered Riojas Tecnos firm but has no further stake in the company.

company is registered by Yuanlin Partners, a law firm based in Akuna Bay.

What they find at the address is a gutted warehouse, still smouldering from a fire. According to the local fire department, it was empty – derelict, even – and no one was injured. If the characters take a good look around, a **Challenging (D2)**

Observe test allow them to realise the fire was started deliberately and in several locations. Once again, Jia Song has been busy on the StateEmpire's behalf.

YUANLIN PARTNERS

Representatives of the Yu Jingese community and interests on Varuna, the Yuanlin Partners law firm deal with several high-end clients. They also act as a front for the Yanjing and other Yu Jingese security services, setting up shell companies and the like.

The office is mourning the loss of one Chakrii Narok, a pillar of both the company and the community. Ironically, he was Morales's source regarding the Libertadores shipments and was murdered by Jia Song as a part of Operation Bāowéi's damage control.

SCENE 2: DEEP DIVING

Reyna Morales is planning on hiding out – with good reason – in Deepwater and is looking to get off world. She has uncovered an island belonging to Anderson has recently been fortified and has flights in and out of a private airstrip. It could be Libertadores, but it is anything but. A group of Shasvastii are using it as a base for deep cover strikes and sabotage.

Massamachos wants the journalist tracked down because the journalist, while investigating Jhaerix Anderson, discovered the secret *asharii* base the Shasvastii are using as a base of operations on Varuna.

Finding Reyna isn't easy. She's taken herself off the grid and is initially hiding with her parents in one of Akuna Bay's slum areas. As these areas have little or no ALEPH presence, there is little in the way of help for the characters there. She plans to make a trip to Bright Island to get the evidence she needs then head to Deepwater, hopefully to get off world.

THE APARTMENT

Entering Reyna's apartment requires a **Challenging (D2) Thievery** or **Hacking test** success to bypass the facial recognition or pick the locking mechanism. The place has been thoroughly tossed in a professional manner. Drawers and cupboards have been emptied and the place torn apart. There's what



looks like a collection of hard-copy paper documents in the sink, almost totally burnt to ashes, but there's enough to show they are written in Yujingyu. A **Daunting (D3) Observation test** success spots the old school printer in the living room still has power, but something is jammed in it. Pulling the sheet of paper out reveals a low-resolution photograph of a familiar face, Jia Song.

It takes a **Daunting (D3) Analysis test** success to study the digital footprint of Reyna Morales social media. Her parents don't exist as far as Maya is concerned. Since there's no statement of their death in Maya, and Morales was born in Akuna City, it means they are Ateks (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 177). The characters can attempt to track them down from pictures in Reyna's apartment, but it will take several days, if not weeks.

Meanwhile, Reyna has gone to the waters around Bright Island to gather further information and to avoid what she believes are Yu Jingese agents (she's partially correct).

A 1-point Momentum spend or **Challenging (D2) Hacking test** allows characters access to her financials. Her accounts show a recent payment to the Náutica Hydro company, a boat and submersible hire company.

NÁUTICA HYDRO

Characters asking about Morales at Náutica Hydro get a guarded response. A **Daunting (D3) Persuade**

test success gets staff there to confirm Morales hired a long-range submersible. A **Challenging Pilot** or **Tech test** success allows a character to figure out that they could be anywhere within 100 km of their location.

LOCATING THE SUB

All subs are fitted with a rescue buoy. The characters can try to activate it using a remote Hacking test using the rules for Infowar in the *Infinity Corebook*. The sub is identical to the one on p. 94. If successful, they find the sub is stationary near a small sea mount summit called Bright Island.

CONTACTING REYNA

The easiest way to locate Reyna is to contact her through Maya. She is perfectly capable of receiving and sending messages but is unlikely to just give away her location without some form of surety, verifying the characters' credentials with O-12 for example. It still requires a successful **Challenging (D2) Persuade test** to convince her to go into the characters' protective custody.

LAST SHUTTLE TO CONCILIUM PRIMA!

If she successfully evades Jia Song and the characters at Bright Island, Reyna will try to make her escape to Concilium Prima where she plans to file her story and hand over the evidence to O-12. If it comes to that, the characters will need to stake out the orbital elevator.



SCENE 3: LIBERTOS NOW

Unless the characters have their own sources for dealing with Libertos, Wade knows Jia Song has arranged a meet to tell Libertos that Yu Jing will no longer supply weapon shipments. It takes place deep underwater, and the Helots quickly turn violent when they realise the shipments are stopping.

LOCATING SONG

Jia Song is in something of a predicament. She has lost contact with her team on Bright Island since she went to Paradiso to cover up the events at Aerodome T-56. She approaches the characters with information on Morales, without explicitly stating her motivations – offering her help in tracking down Morales, for example.

If the characters are prompted to find her by Wade, the characters know she is nearby. They may be surprised to find her on Varuna. Otherwise, they can attempt a Persuasion psyop using the modifiers found on the tables on p. 124 of the *Infinity Corebook*.

If the characters are unaware of Wade's previous history with Song, the presence of the two of them in the same room generates a significant tension, noticed on an **Average (D1) Psychology** or a **Challenging (D2) Observation test** success.

DEALING WITH LIBERTOS

If the characters have a way of contacting Libertos directly, or ask Wade to arrange something, he can do so. He still has some pull in that respect. What he will likely do is have Song arrange something on his behalf. He suspects she has some involvement with Libertos but is unaware of her connection to Bright Island.

Contacting Libertos directly requires either a sustained investigation or the expenditure of an Infinity Point. Doing so allows them to contact a Libertos "representative" or sympathiser with links to the Helot terror group. They'll be told the location, but nothing about whether the Libertos terror cell is there or not.

If the characters still have no other connection with Libertos, or fail to find Song, Wade is their best bet. At the very least, they get a location – Warehouse Unit #32, Pier 60.

Wade (or Song) will warn the characters they'll need to bring something to the table such as a promise of a weapons delivery or actual weaponry. Libertos terrorists may also be convinced to meet if the characters are looking to join their cause.

OPERATION BĀOWÉI

Yu Jing's attempts to supply weapons to the Libertos terrorists on Varuna has been extraordinarily successful. The weapons are built on Ariadna and shipped to Satori in the Paradiso system. From there, they are shipped with a false shipping manifest to the Riojas Tecnos warehouse. From there they are – or were – flown to Bright Island. It is close enough to a deep ocean abyss to allow the Helot terrorists access to the island without being spotted.

The plan was successful until their activities attracted the attention of Reyna Morales, an investigative journalist. More by luck than skill, she stumbled across the Bright Island operation. Before Song could take care of matters, the Satori incident required her attention. A bungled attempt by one of Song's agents to assassinate Morales forced the journalist into hiding.

To further complicate matters, Jia Song has been unable to contact her team on Bright Island since she journeyed to Paradiso. She initially fears they have been captured by the Varunan authorities, but a lack of any repercussions has added to the mystery.

She suspects the characters are somehow responsible. In fact, a team of Shasvastii secured Bright Island as an *asharii* base of operations on Varuna, and the corpses of Song's team now lie at the bottom of the oceanic abyss. The remote location serves the Shasvastii well, and they are unlikely to be disturbed.

That was until a few days ago, when a group of Libertos Helots turned up expecting the latest shipment of weapons. The Helots were not expecting the aliens or their defences. Morales was lucky to avoid being noticed when she observed the island being fortified. The Helots were wiped out.

Of course, the Shasvastii are not expecting a visit from the characters.

A WAREHOUSE MEETING

Whether Jia Song is involved or not, the characters are required to meet the Libertos group in a warehouse in the submerged areas of the Deepwater warehouse district, Pier 60. Getting there requires a submersible of some kind (see p. 94), although the characters can hire one, since the pressured depths are not easily accessible to humans without some form of vehicle or breathing enhancements.

Characters who don't take the cargo lift train or a submersible may find themselves suffering from pressure-induced psychosis.

DEEPWATER WAREHOUSE DISTRICT PIER 60

Access to the warehouse district is heavily monitored by PanOceanian Security teams and the Varunan police. It is not overt, but a character succeeding at a **Challenging (D2) Observation test** notices the various security remotes stationed at the access elevators or docking rings. They are there to watch for potential Libertos terror attacks and large-scale criminal activity and are unlikely to notice the characters unless they deliberately draw attention to themselves.

Each of the warehouse district's piers consists of a vertical cargo lift train. These trains carry both freight transports and passengers, like surface ferries, to and from the surface every 15 minutes. There is little cargo traffic to and from Pier 60 when the characters arrive, and only a handful of night-duty workers. There are even a handful of Helots wearing pressure suits.

Of course, this far down it's always night. The pressure of water here is immense, and the temperature is cold enough to cause the characters' breath to steam in the air. The lighting is basic, casting a green hue over everything.

The meet is due to happen at 10 p.m., inside the NeoCanberra Biologicals warehouse, Unit #32. It is located right beside the pier's wall. A **Challenging (D2) Observation** or **Tech test** success allows a character to notice that the rear part of the warehouse is designed to be open to the sea.

THE WAREHOUSE

Airlock: The entrance to the warehouse is an airlock delivering a burst of sterile disinfectant on anyone entering. The airlock is big enough to allow a standard-size freight container transport if needed while the valve cycles around. It is unlocked when the characters arrive if they are expected. It can be locked from the office or at the door itself with the correct access code (which the two Libertos sympathisers both have). Otherwise, a successful

Challenging (D2) Hacking or **Thievery test** allows the airlock to be locked or opened.

Gantries: At a similar level to the airlock, these rickety scaffolds will not hold up to a sustained fire. For 1 Heat, a gantry gives way if hit by sustained fire. Anyone standing on a gantry must succeed at a **Challenging (D2) Athletics test** to hold on or be plunged into one of the tanks. The gantries remain above the strike reach of the Varunan Water-Snakes, but for 2 Heat, a snake from the holding tanks propels itself onto the gantry.

Holding Tank: Effectively a sublevel below ground level, the tanks are heavy-duty metal grilles submerged in the water. They are murky with kelp, so it takes a **Challenging (D2) Observe test** success to spot the coiled inhabitants inside. Each tank holds a single Varunan Water-Snake. For 2 Heat, a tank contains two snakes, a mated pair. All the snakes are coiled and ready to strike at anyone adjacent to the tanks or in the water. They are normally fed from the gantries but the lure of live prey — human or helot — is too much to resist.

Ocean Access: Open to the sea, the pressure in the warehouse keeps both the holding tanks and access out to the open water under control and level. This is how the Libertos Helots arrive and how they have snuck into Varuna before.

Office: There are two human Libertos sympathisers in the office all the time. If the characters are expected, they watch the characters when they arrive and only take aggressive action if they or the Helots are attacked. They wear grey silk masks to cover their faces.

If the characters are unexpected, they are unhooded, masquerading as normal workers.

Storm Shutter: Designed to prevent large swells or tidal surges, the storm shutter is controlled from the office. It is a huge set of double doors and designed to resist colossal pressures once sealed. Eight of the Helot Libertos members wait just outside in the ocean, out of sight.

ARRIVAL OF THE LIBERTOS

Four of the Libertos Helots will enter from the ocean once their human allies give them the all-clear. They have no quarrel with the characters individually, only with PanOceania's enslavement of their people.

This doesn't mean they aren't dangerous though. Any aggressive moves by the characters — drawing weapons, yelling demands, or other surprises (such as a Sea Snake attack) — will immediately make them go on the defensive.

PRESSURE-INDUCED PSYCHOSIS (HPNS)

Pressure-induced psychosis, also called High Pressure Nervous Syndrome (HPNS), can affect anyone, no matter their dive experience. It causes headaches, dizziness, and decreased mental acuity.

High Pressure Nervous Syndrome: Spontaneous, Instant 2 (4 Momentum), Day, 2+4 **IN** mental damage

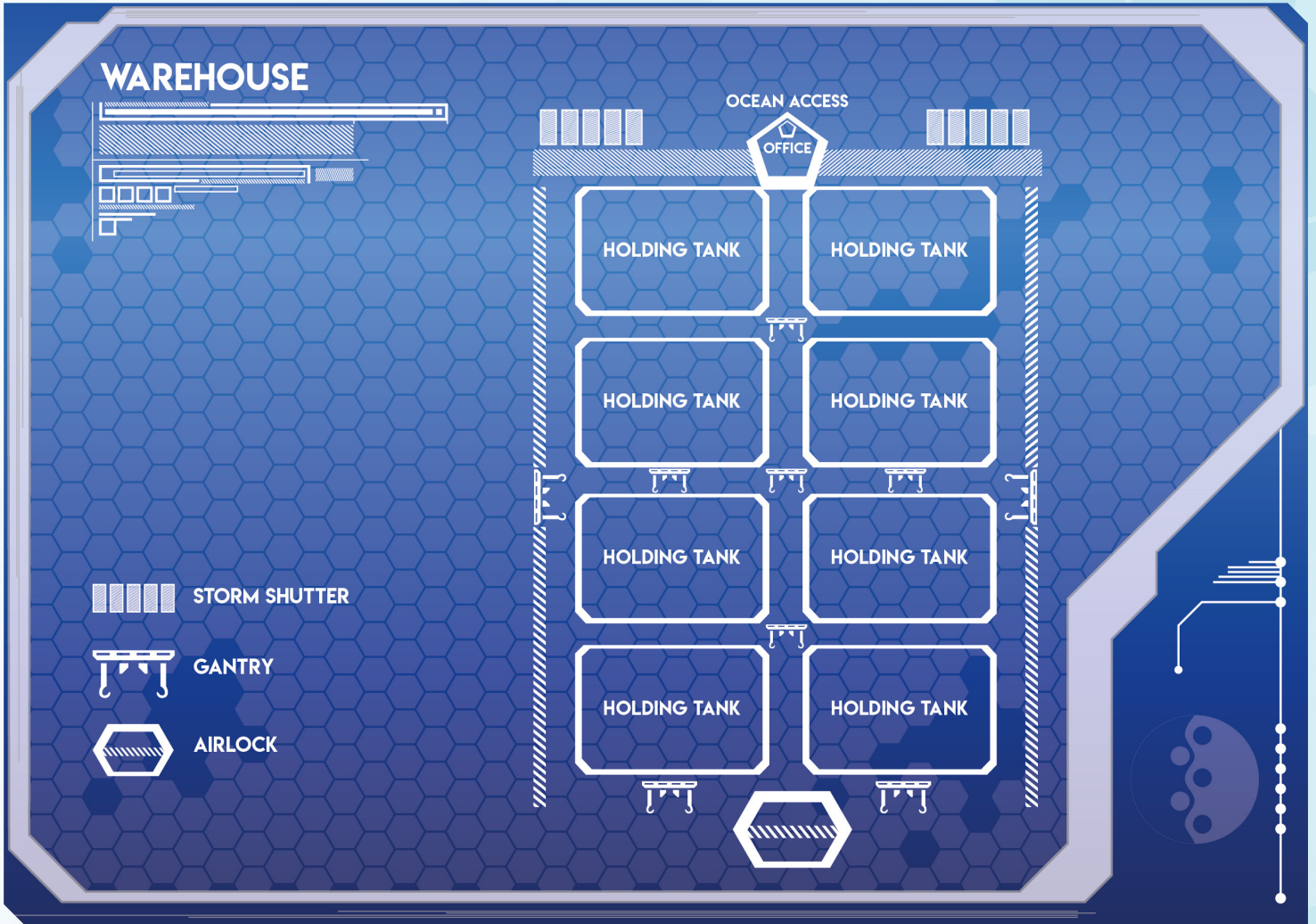
Metanoia Effect: HPNS inflicts a +2 complication range on most tests and requires either an Observation or Psychology test with a difficulty equal to the number of HPNS-derived Metanoia Effects to carry out complex tasks.

NEOCANBERRA BIOLOGICALS

NeoCanberra Biologicals specialises in the export of exotic creatures for off-world collectors. Their Maya presence boasts of their ability to source some of Varuna's finest sea life.

Varunan Water-Snake — *Infinity Corebook*, p. 495

Terrorist — *Infinity Corebook*, p. 459



They can be persuaded to answer questions with a **Challenging (D2) Persuade test** success, which can be improved if the characters offer to intercede with the PanOceania government as O-12 agents or other offers such as the restoration of arms shipments — or even as a debt owed. Otherwise, they will leave if the characters offer nothing for their help.

They do ask why the characters have stopped their weapon shipments to the Bright Island.

If Jia Song accompanies the group, she will offer to resume the shipments. It is overplaying her hand, and cements Yu Jing's involvement with Operation Bāowéi. Without proof, the characters will have a hard time explaining it though, and Song is far more concerned with her team's fate. She will appear from the shadows if she doesn't accompany the party already (counting as being in a Hidden stealth state).

The Helots know nothing about what killed Song's team, only that they didn't. "Off-worlders" did (the term includes Shasvastii and Tohaa, not just humans). Song doesn't mention the name of the island, but the Helots do when asked. They are also adamant that the off-worlders have killed the members of their pod, or unit.

For 2 Heat, Song doesn't believe them and pulls out her gun, and at that point, things go crazy. The Libertos respond in kind, and unless the characters defuse the situation with a successful **Daunting (D3) Persuade test**, a firefight will ensue.

The characters will emerge from the firefight knowing one thing at least: Yu Jing — or other off-worlders — are involved in something to do with Bright Island.

HELOT LIBERTOS

Libertos view themselves as change. To make change requires blood, violence, and confrontation. Faced with unacceptable conditions and convinced that there can be no change without violent upheaval, Libertos members take their destiny into their heavily armed hands. Viewed as anti-human terrorists, they have little issue with individual humans. Their insurgency rails against the intolerable treatment of their fellow Omn and the conquest of their planet. Sympathetic humans support the cause, but the heart and soul of Libertos will always be Omn. Trained in guerrilla tactics and sabotage, Libertos members forego pressure suits unless used for infiltration purposes, preferring instead to bask in their natural agitation at being on land and using it to fuel the fires of revolution.

ELITE

LIBERTOS HELOT

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
10	10	11	9	8	8	8

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+3	2	Movement	+1	1	Social	—	—
Fortitude	+1	1	Senses	+1	—	Technical	+2	—

DEFENCES

Firewall	8	Resolve	8	Vigour	11
Security	—	Morale	—	Armour	—

ATTACKS

- **Knife:** Melee, 1+5 damage, 1H, Concealed 1, Non-Hackable, Subtle 2, Thrown, Unforgiving 1
- **Heavy Pistol:** Range R/C, 2+6 damage, Burst 1, 1H, Vicious 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Amphibious:** Helots can breathe underwater and possess the Common Special Ability Inured to Cold.
- **Strong Swimmer:** Born underwater, Helots are naturally proficient swimmers; they begin with one rank of the Strong Swimmer talent.
- **Pressure Sensitive:** A Helot's mood is strongly influenced by their environmental pressure. See **Pressure Personality Traits** below.
- **Pressure Personality Traits:** The intense biochemical reactions that Helots experience in response to pressure variations also influence their behaviour. This can manifest in several different fashions, but is roughly classifiable as deep, medium (or *sissolu*), and light pressure. Each level has its own associated modifiers that persists if the Helot is in the respective pressure level.
 - **Deep Pressure:** The deeper into the ocean a Helot goes, the more mellow, calm, and thoughtful they become. They generate 1 additional point of Momentum on Psychology tests and Resolve Recovery tests but increase complication range by +1 on all other actions.
 - **Sissolu (Medium) Pressure:** Like the temperate waters of their youth, medium-pressure waters split the difference between light and deep. The primary venue for cross pod cultural exchange, Helots in *sissolu* pressure find it easy to socialise. And while they're neither as lazy as in the depths, nor as unfocused as on land, they still suffer from both tendencies. Helots in *sissolu* pressure generate 1 additional point of Momentum on Lifestyle tests but increase complication range by +1 on all other actions.
 - **Light Pressure:** On dry land, the Helot is hot-tempered, twitchy, and expecting trouble around every corner. They generate 1 additional point of Momentum on face-to-face tests but increase complication range by +1 on all other actions.





SCENE 4: ISLAND LIFE

The characters make a trip to Bright Island, following up on a lead from Song, Morales, or the Libertos. Once on the island they find a Shasvastii *asharii* base, along with plans to assassinate Anderson and his family. Yu Jing had been using the island to distribute weapons to the Libertos group, the Helot terrorists, but the Shasvastii have since taken it over.

There are several ways the characters can get to Bright Island, by aeropter, power boat or hovercraft (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 136), or DSV submersible. The latter is the most covert, and Morales already has one if the characters have made contact successfully.

GM TIP

WHY ARE WE HERE AGAIN?

The characters may need reminding they are looking into Operation Bāowéi and are looking for proof of these weapons shipments tying into both the Dawn operation and Satori explosion.

The GM is advised to ask what the characters plan to do on the island. This can be prompted by Wade (who needs to know what they need as their handler) or even Jia Song if they still have her around.

AEROPTER

Lightweight civilian VTOL frames, aeropters see extensive use as communal vehicles on the frontier, archipelagos, CFZs, and as cheap aircabs for the ever-changing skyline of Neoterra's Newton City.

AIRCRAFT, EXPOSED (+2 COVER), FRAGILE

AEROPTER

DETAILS

Max Passengers	4	Impact	2+3 (Knockdown)
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HARD POINTS

0

DEFENCES

Structure	9	Firewall	6	Armour	2	BTS	0
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DSV SUBMERSIBLE

Deep Sea Vehicles (DSV) vary in size from one-person mini subs to military submarines. This small submersible is designed for a crew of six, intended to operate in the deeper pressures of the ocean. They are equipped with two grasping arms used for fine manipulation or carrying loads.

ENCLOSED, HANDS, RUGGED, SUBMERSIBLE, WATERCRAFT

DSV SUBMERSIBLE

DETAILS

Max Passengers	8	Impact	5+5 (Knockdown)
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HARD POINTS

—

DEFENCES

Structure	20	Firewall	8	Armour	4	BTS	1
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BRIGHT ISLAND: WHEN RESORTS GO WRONG

Bright Island is part of a huge volcanic caldera, most of which is underwater. While the interior is largely a rocky wasteland, it was never the island's selling point. Instead, it's the breath-taking natural scenery and almost zero access to ALEPH that was the interior's draw for many. Bright Island is also close to a deep undersea rift. It is from here that the Helots were able to enter the marina and remain unseen by PanOceanian satellites.

The resort was plagued by bad luck and ill-fortune from the outset. Development was tied up for years with litigation and red tape, along with allegations of Submondo money laundering used in its construction. Even then, construction costs spiralled amidst allegations of further corruption.

When an industrial chemical spill during the build killed the reefs and polluted the local biosphere, the Varunan government slapped the development with a cease-and-desist notice. The consortium building the resort collapsed in bankruptcy, and the liquidated assets were purchased by Yuanlin Partners (see p. 88).

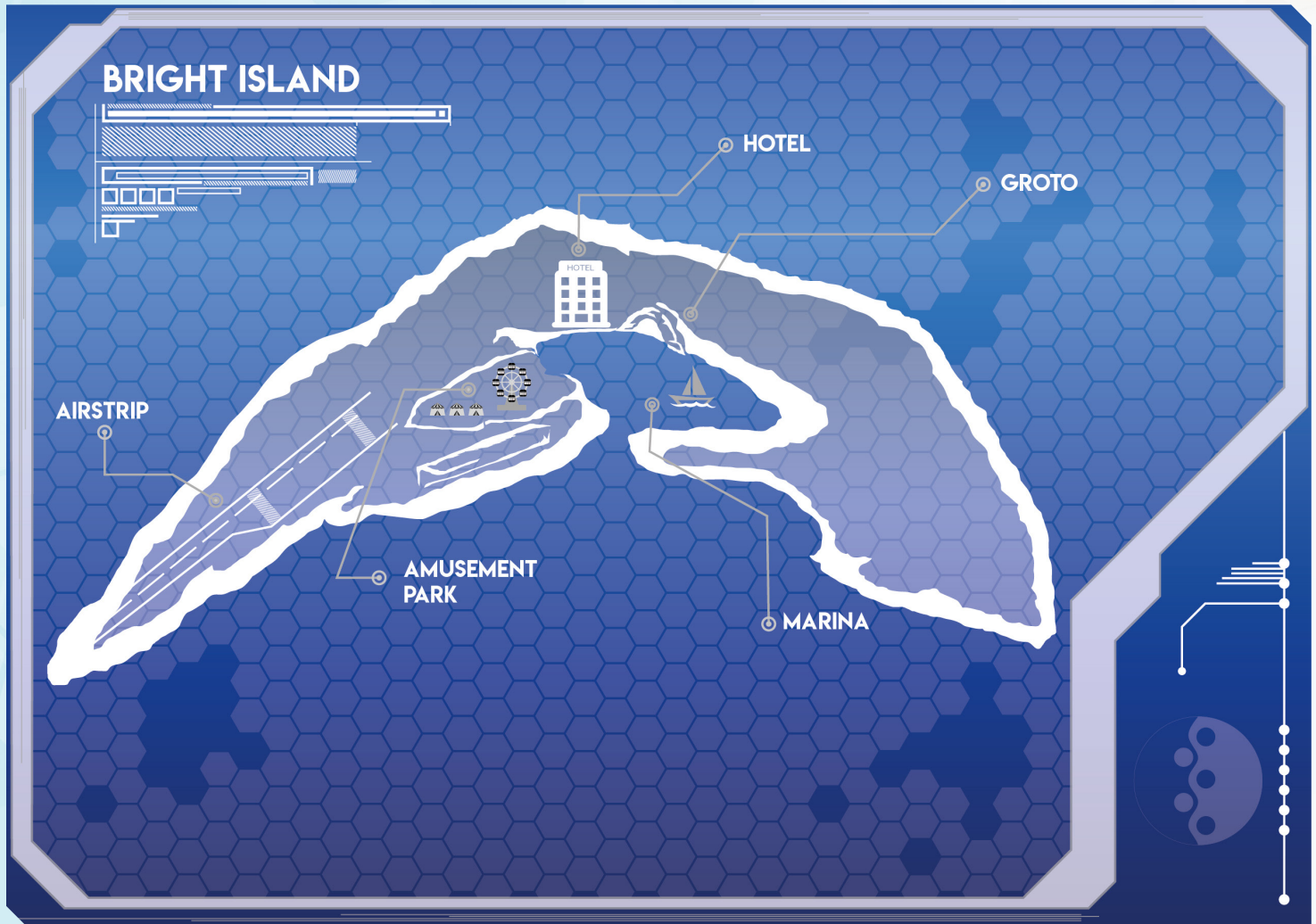
The fortifications Morales spoke of were four Yaókòng remotes being setup by the Yu Jingese troops on the island. She saw them being deployed along the waterfront chalets.

The characters will know most of Bright Island's history should they look it up. It is publicly available, although the ownership of the island is not. It isn't known that the island was briefly used by Yu Jing's Operation Bāowéi. Neither is the fact Bright Island is now nominally under Combined Army (Shasvastii) control.

UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT: THE SHASVASTII

It will come as an unpleasant surprise to the characters that the Shasvastii have taken over the island. The characters have no idea of their presence or numbers when they arrive. Their sentries will always remain hidden, reporting the characters arrival via the *asharii* comm relay.

The Shasvastii make plans to take their leave once the characters are spotted or encountered, and they begin disassembling the base. Their transport is the two DSVs hidden in the grotto. They have no wish to become involved in what could be a major PanOceanian military strike. It takes them three hours to pack everything away.



If the characters dither, they may never even encounter the Shasvastii. Finding evidence of the gunfight in the chalet but no bodies will only add to Bright Island's ill reputation.

AIRSTRIP

Although it never had capacity for larger passenger transports to fly in, smaller private aircraft and aeroplanes can land easily. A modest control tower and waiting room provide some shelter from the dust and heat. Both have broken windows and rubble covers the floor. At one point, small electric carts would have transported visitors to the hotel and resort, but they were long ago sold off. A Shasvastii sentry keeps watch in the control tower.

Carefully hidden a short distance from the airstrip is a Shasvastii stealth vessel (a similar one to Massamachos's ship, p. 25). It will only be found if the characters specifically search the area and succeed at a **Challenging (D2) Observation test**. It is Tokloshii's craft, hidden there when both Speculo Killers began their mission.

The roads from the airstrip lead directly to the hotel and resort chalets.

AMUSEMENT PARK

The various amusement rides and water flumes have long since closed and are the home of suncrests and mud toads. The structures are in a bad state, and they have never been repaired. Rickety and highly dangerous to climb (+2 to the complication range), they could collapse at any time. Anyone caught on or underneath such a collapse (a 1-Heat spend)) must make a **Challenging (D2) Athletics test** or suffer 4^W+1 physical damage with the Knockdown quality. Here and there are ghostly forms of children's cartoon characters, working from residual power, and vizier geists whose quantronic matrixes are breaking down. There are statues and figurines, pocked and marked with corrosion. They are easily mistaken for a hunched figure or shadowed threat. It could also be a Shasvastii, of course.

GROTTO

A natural cave that overlooked the marina, the grotto reaches right down to the water. The Yu



Jingese troops kept two DSVs (p. 94) hidden here. The Shasvastii plan to use them to assault Anderson's island mansion. It takes a **Dire (D4) Observation test** success to notice them from the marina. The Shasvastii have a single sentry on guard here, watching the water.

This is also where the Yu Jingese troops and Libertos terrorists met. An **Average Observation (D1) test** success reveals scratches on the rook floor made by the metal cases leading down and into the water.

There are several old lava tube openings beneath the surface, leading down deep beneath the island. All are flooded, and the characters may waste some time swimming down them or piloting a DSV down there. A failed **Challenging (D2) Pilot test** causes the DSV's impact damage to the craft. A complication on the same roll means the craft is stuck.

HOTEL - HOTEL O PALÁCIO

"The Palace Hotel" is built into the cliffside and designed to link the top and bottom of the cliff. The lowest level allowed the guests access to a sequestered cove and beach. The beach, long since lost its sand, is little more than bare rocks and seaweed, and the remains of the breakwater and protective barrier lie washed up on the shore.

The hotel rises nine levels before reaching the top of the cliff, then a further three levels above that. One Shasvastii sentry watches from the roof, while two others watch the reception and cove, respectively.

The reception area is where the road ends, looping back upon itself. The glass frontage has long been shattered, and the faux-marble frontage is chipped and tattered, both within and without, giving the whole hotel an unwholesome, diseased look. Inside the structure, various Varunan Jollyboats (p. 72) have held parties and otherwise defaced the interior with graffiti, drug paraphernalia, and worse.

MARINA

Only derelict hulks sit in the marina, abandoned by Submondo insurance scams. It makes piloting a DSV or boat dangerous through the wrecks. A failed **Challenging (D2) Pilot test** means the craft is stuck if moving at more than cautious speed.

Characters swimming here will find on an **Average (D1) Observe test** success the bodies of Yu Jingese troops weighted down in their armour and Helots (without pressure suits). Large bites have been taken out of many of the bodies. Most have been stuffed into cracks of wrecks by jerung predators who will be nearby...

SHORELINE

Aside from the marina and hotel, there are few areas craft can land successfully; the coastline is one of steep cliffs and sharp rocks. Anyone able to moor a ship faces a long hard climb up almost a mile of jagged cliff with razor-sharp volcanic glass outcrops.

The water around the island is choppy, and while much of the local biosphere was destroyed, there are still a few suncrests and mud toads found on the island. Prowling the coastal waters are also Varuna's apex predators, the jerung. While there is little prey to be found normally, the jerung swim many miles in their search for food.

If the characters find a reason to swim in the waters around Bright Island, they will quickly attract the attention of a jerung (each 1-Heat spend adds an additional jerung).

THE JERUNG

The jerung, a creature vaguely like Earth's stingray, is the apex predator of the *sisso* (the Omn names for the medium depths). Dark grey with razor-sharp teeth, these predators can grow to surprisingly large sizes with some larger than three metres in width. The jerung, deceptively fast and voracious, hunts its prey silently and relentlessly. It is rightly feared not only by the wildlife, but Helots and humans alike.

ELITE

JERUNG

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
14	12	13	8	3	5	12

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+2	+2	Movement	+3	+1	Social	—	—
Fortitude	+2	+2	Senses	—	—	Technical	—	—

DEFENCES

Firewall	N/A	Resolve	12	Vigour	13
Security	N/A	Morale	—	Armour	—

ATTACKS

- **Bite:** Melee, 1+7 damage, Vicious 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Common Special Abilities:** Grasping, Fear 1, Inured to Cold, Monstrous, Night Vision
- **Alpha Predator:** When making a melee attack, the jerung can reroll up to 2 .
- **Beneath this placid surface:** Until a jerung attacks, it counts as being in a Hidden stealth state.

WATERFRONT CHALETs

Once designed to be luxury waterfront suites, these have long been looted and defaced, the insides stripped of any value. The paving stones outside

are cracked with weeds and the marble balustrades chipped and pitted.

One of these chalets was a makeshift bivouac for the Yu Jing troops, and shows signs of recent use. Various ration packs, makeshift bunks, and party literature of the StateEmpire are scattered about. Bullet-holes riddle the walls and there are signs of a firefight, although it takes a **Challenging (D2) Ballistics test** success to ascertain the defenders got few shots off and were effectively mown down.

Characters searching the waterfront will find the wreckage of the four Yaókòngs, each destroyed by sustained gunfire.

THE ASHARI BASE







Hidden on the tenth floor of the hotel, the Shasvastii have knocked through several walls to create a larger area. The base is deliberately low-tech and is rarely powered up for more than a few hours' window when PanOceania's satellites aren't overhead. The base gear is designed to be easily stored and portable, allowing Shasvastii to set up a base in a few hours.

- **Communications Array:** This VoodooTech item looks like a Human Sphere repeater, but inside the tech is completely alien. There are no visible ports or wires, and it can only be accessed by someone with an EI Cube (like the Shasvastii). It's surmised these use subspace technologies in some way to allow Shasvastii units to communicate with the EI across the Human Sphere. Unless regularly recharged, they dissolve into a fine silicate powder.
- **Gene Samples:** These sealed containers appear to hold blood and tissue samples kept in cold storage, along with quantronic identifiers showing the picture of the donor. Neither Tokloshii or Massamachos miss an opportunity to harvest such material, usually when their subject – or victim – is still alive. As a result, the pictures are usually of an individual in agony.
- **Living Space:** Shasvastii have basic physical needs. What looks like a puddle of gel-like mats are an algal biotech. It is designed to nourish and encourage healing of Shasvastii tissues and allow vital nutrients to be replenished. If the characters (or players) think to ask, there are seventeen mats.
- **Nano-Forge (Combined Army):** A sophisticated, personal-scale fabricator and nanite re-programmer like those used extensively by ALEPH Sophotects (only better), VoodooTech nano-forges count as kits and provide 3 bonus Momentum for Medicine and Tech tests. They can collapse into a backpack on command, expand into a roughly C-shaped toroid about

a half-metre across, or even re-assemble into a hovering remote to accompany their user.

As some of the most coveted technology in the Human Sphere, they are also carefully booby-trapped unless removed properly with a

Daunting (D4) Tech test. On failure, automatic protocols quickly disable and then comprehensively destroy the nano-forged from within.

- **Power Source:** A portable power cell provides the Shasvastii with the power they need, recharged from a collapsible solar collector setup on the roof.
- **Sepsitor Chair:** Not all Shasvastii raids are designed to destroy. Some are to acquire information and intelligence, by any means – including sepsitorization. It's brutal in simplicity, a reinforced chair with straps and a sepsitor pointed at the same. The victim is strapped to the reinforced chair, and the sepsitor is turned on them. If removed from the chair, the sepsitor circuitry degrades within hours.
- **Supply Cache:** One of the hotel rooms is filled with Shasvastii gear. Each case can be carried by a single Shasvastii or human. There is one case of Combi Rifles bearing Yu Jing markings, while a case of boarding shotguns show them as coming from Riojas Tecnos.
 - 2 cases of 6 D-Charges (2+6  damage, 1H, Anti-Materiel 2, Comms, Disposable, Piercing 3, Spread 1, Unsubtle, Vicious 2)
 - 1 case of 10 Needle Mines (2+5  damage, 1H, Comms, Disposable, Indiscriminate (Close), Piercing 2, Spread 1, Unsubtle, Vicious 2)
 - 2 cases of 5 Assault Pistols (Range R/C, 1+4  damage, Burst 2, Unbalanced, Vicious 1), 1 Reload for each
 - 2 cases of 3 Combi Rifles (Range C/M, 1+5  damage, Burst 2, 2H, Expert 1, MULTI Light Mod, Vicious 1), 2 Reloads for each
 - 1 case of 20 Knives (Melee, 1+3  damage, 1H, Concealed 1, Non-Hackable, Subtle 2, Thrown, Unforgiving 1)
 - 1 case of 5 Combat Shotguns (Boarding Shotgun: Range C, 1+5  damage, Burst 1, 2H, Knockdown, Medium MULTI. Normal Shells Mode (Primary): Area (Close), Spread 1, AP Slugs Mode (Secondary): Piercing

If the characters have managed to silence all the Shasvastii sentries they encountered without them raising the alarm, they have the luxury of dealing with the Shasvastii at their own game. They have an hour's grace before the sentry fails to check in.

There are 17 Shasvastii on the island (minus the sentries), but unless the characters are keeping count, they'll not see all of them. The Shasvastii split into fireteams of 3 or 4. Most are Troopers, but a 1-Heat spend turns a Shasvastii into an Elite.

*Shasvastii –
Infinity Corebook, p. 471*



NO BACKUP

Characters calling for help quickly find Bright Island's geology has an unpleasant tendency to block or scatter the signal. They're on their own. A character will have to climb to one of the highest points of the island to access ALEPH or communications satellites.

The Shasvastii do not have the same issue since their communications operate differently. There is a communications array on the roof of the hotel and at the airstrip (an **Average D1 Tech test** success to know this), but the Shasvastii disabled them when they took over the island.

Even if the characters do get through, it will be a couple of hours before backup arrives.

They coordinate with each other, using Covering Fire actions to cover any retreat.

Several of the missing Shasvastii have been dispatched on a mission to Anderson Isle to kill the Senator's family.

MAKING NEW FRIENDS

If the characters manage to access the island without alerting the Shasvastii, it will be an unpleasant surprise for both groups when the characters discover them. They will fall back to the hotel first, then retreat to the grotto.

Deconstructing the *asharii* base is the Shasvastii priority once discovered since the site is compromised. They also booby-trap the reception and

cove access areas with D-Charges as they leave (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 349) and make their way to the grotto where their DSVs are hidden. If those are unavailable, they'll attempt to steal the one belonging to the characters. Finally, if there's no other option left, they'll use Tokloshii's ship hidden near the airstrip to escape, although doing so will alert the Varunan authorities.

Given that the closest backup is two hours away, it will arrive after the Shasvastii have left. Units of the PanOceanian Quick Reaction Army 'Blue Sea' project are dispatched to Bright Island supported by two Cutter TAGs. If there are no Shasvastii corpses or other proof (such as the Yu Jing evidence in the chalets), the characters are likely to be in trouble...

SCENE 5: FAMILY BUSINESS

The characters have a mission to save Anderson's family. Massamachos has them removed to protective custody or killed as they are both a loose end and a risk to the Speculo Killer's cover. If it can, it wants to make it look as if the characters are responsible indirectly for the deaths.

ALL'S WELL?

For the characters, the uncovering of the Bright Island operation sees the end of their investigation into Operation Bāowéi. Jia Song is likely to face charges of terrorism at the very least, and

questions are being asked at the highest level of the Öberhaus about the StateEmpire's involvement in very much an internal matter for the Varunan authorities.

Jia Song will likely disappear into a PanOceanian prison or into the bureaucracy as the StateEmpire removes her from the board. She is unlikely to forget the characters and can crop up in future adventures if the GM wishes it.

Anderson extends his personal invitation to the characters to stay at the guest quarters in the grounds of his mansion on Anderson Isle. He




expects nothing less from the characters, although the possibility of the Hexahedron's enquiries into their activities on Varuna will encourage the characters to accept his offer. Wade will be keen to point this out. Any injured characters are also treated and released from hospital into Wade's care. He's keen to get off Varuna as soon as possible.

It's a matter of time waiting for the authorities to finish, so the characters (and the players) will likely think it's all over on Varuna. The night before they're due to catch the shuttle back, things suddenly kick off.

Anderson Isle is an artificial island built by one of the earliest families to settle on Varuna. It is nonetheless still a PanOceania-modern island home as befits a Senator. It is far enough from the city to be considered remote, and the Andersons' nearest neighbours are a mile away over open water.

THE MANSION

Aside from the guest quarters on Anderson Isle, there's only the mansion and a boathouse. There is an ornamental garden and small stand of transplanted trees. Anderson's security team are well-trained but are no match for what's coming. There are two assigned outside the house entrance all the time plus one on the jetty and a small launch with two more bodyguards circling the island's waters.

Security cameras cover the outside of the house and grounds along with the jetty, and backup to the panic room as well as the security centre in the boathouse. The stone sculptures, fountains, and balustrades provide +4  hard Cover Soak.

All the doors to the mansion can be locked from the panic room, requiring a **Challenging (D2) Hacking** or **Thievery test** success to open. Alternatively, 4 points of physical damage can breach a door.

A separate set of security cameras covers the inside of the house and must be manually switched on from the panic room. The security centre has no access to these.

THE BOATHOUSE

The boathouse doubles as the security station, with another bodyguard coordinating the teams from here. A powerboat and yacht named the *Rapido* and the *Beagle* are also stored here. It takes 3 minutes to lower one of them into the water.

PANIC ROOM

The cellar of the mansion contains a panic room that doubles as a storm shelter if needed. Unlike the other doors, the one to the panic room is

heavily reinforced, requiring a **Dire (D4) Hacking** or **Thievery test** success to open. D-charges causing 8 points of physical damage can breach the door.

The panic room has a faraday cage with hard-line communication link to both the security centre and a hidden comms relay out in the bay. For 2 Heat, the Shasvastii have already disabled it.

THE GUEST LODGE

The guest lodge is well-appointed and overlooks the jetty and Akuna Bay. The rooms are spacious, with full pervasive domotics and access to Maya. It is set far enough back from the house to allow a clear view yet preserve privacy at the mansion.

THE FAMILY

The characters are likely to have encountered Anderson's wife, Beatrice and their two children Eduard and Stephenie, aged 7 and 9. Both are precociously intelligent and are quite keen to talk to the characters, exhaustively as it turns out. It is highly likely the characters are hiding from them as a result.

REVENGE OF LIBERTOS

The characters are on their last night before taking the shuttle off Varuna to the Circular out of the system. Unfortunately, they are not about to have a quiet night in. Wade has been hearing some worrying news from his sources in the Varuna. He tries to warn the characters, but just then the Shasvastii begin their assault. Read or paraphrase the following:

There's a chime on your comlog. In fact, on all your comlogs. It's Wade. It looks like he hasn't had much sleep – if any. He looks exhausted.

"There's been a lot of chatter coming in on the dark nets. Looks like Bright Island stirred up Libertos. They're seriously pissed. Word is they're hitting families, not just soft targets. Watch-"

Whatever he's about to say is lost as the comm cuts out. Not just the comms, but the power. It's affected the mansion, too.

One of the guards is coming towards the guest quarters when he suddenly stumbles and falls. He doesn't get up.

The window suddenly shatters as something high-powered and lethal destroys it. You didn't hear the shot...

Give the characters a moment to react. If they don't immediately take cover, add 2 Heat to the GM pool.

THE TESEUM TRANSMITTER

It's unclear where Wade got this from, but it seems to be a sealed unit. Wade keeps it in the case at all times and getting him to part with it takes a **Dire (D4) Persuade** or **Thievery test** success. Inside is an octagonal device of unknown make and metal, seamlessly constructed. If prompted, Wade has no idea what it is – Anderson told him to pick it up from Varuna. It's a sealed unit, rigged to self-destruct if someone tries to scan it or open it up. If destroyed, a replacement is installed on the ship during the final operation of this campaign.

In reality, the Teseum transmitter uses VoodooTech processors to not only control the turbulence platform signals in the Acheron Cascade but with it, the EI can use the platform to stabilise the wormhole.

DIRTY LITTLE SECRETS

Beatrice Anderson is an Atek. Jhaerix has been able to cover up this fact for years but the house is nowhere near as advanced as ones on the mainland.

Bodyguard –
Infinity Corebook, p. 422



ASSAULT

The first shots were fired from the shore. The remaining Shasvastii are making their way from the shore, accompanied by two additional Noctifers. They have already taken out the bodyguards on the boat and will begin taking out the bodyguards they can see, then the characters.

Some form of jamming is affecting the area, possibly by a Shasvastii device or repeater designed to enact a denial-of-service attack by swamping the local quantronic network. It takes a **Dire (D4) Hacking test** success to locate the device, but it takes time...

The other Shasvastii move in towards the mansion from their DSVs on the waterfront. They make sure any fallen humans are dead. Their plan is to wipe out everyone on the island, adults and children. The panic room in the mansion will not hold out against the D-Charges Shasvastii carry.

There are two Shasvastii for every character, and they form into fireteams, plus the two Noctifers. Half of the Shasvastii will concentrate on reaching the mansion, and the others tie up the characters in a stalemated firefight. If they manage to kill Anderson's family, they will retreat using covering fire, taking their dead with them.

The characters can use the powerboat in the boat-house to escape if they wish or use it to evacuate

the family. It is entirely up to the characters if they choose to flee or rescue Anderson's family. Whether they emerge from this as heroes is entirely up to them.

SHASVASTII - NOCTIFER

Noctifers — otherwise known as the Tactical Domain Special Wing — possess all the essential traits of a Shasvastii operative. They can remain hidden for prolonged periods of time thanks to their advanced cloaking technology. They can resist all adverse weather and environmental conditions with their training and redundancies built into their protective suits, and they are equipped with the most lethal ranged weapons the Shasvastii Continuum can get its hands (or claws) on. The mission of a Noctifer is that of a patient hunter. They stalk the prey, striking from an unexpected angle and at an unexpected time — you truly do not know the time, nor the hour. During the initial contact between the Human Sphere and the Shasvastii, the Noctifers were usually sent in at dusk to exploit their stealth capabilities to the fullest, hence the nickname they received. To a Shasvastii, service in the Special Wing is a great honour, second in importance only to the task of providing for the young ones and preserving the legacy of the Shasvastii race. The Noctifers concentrate on removing the threats to Shasvastii existence.

Shasvastii —
Infinity Corebook, p. 471

HEAT SPENDS

- **1 Heat:** Upgrade a Shasvastii Trooper to an Elite.
- **2 Heat:** One of the Shasvastii is an infowarrior (see p. 110).

THE SHASVASTII PLAN

The plan isn't one of retribution or revenge but one of necessity and opportunity. Massamachos has assumed Anderson's form, but the situation on Varuna is such that O-12 agents were planning to move the family to be with them, then onto a safe location. A family would instantly be able to penetrate the Speculo Killer's disguise. The attack is designed to not only "remove the problem" but potentially implicate the characters or affects their morale. They need the characters slightly off-guard if the Combined Army assault is to succeed. It also keeps PanOceania focused on Libertos. They have even brought a Helot corpse to leave behind (on the boat) to implicate the terror group. The Shasvastii are responsible for Wade's intelligence on the attack.

Once everyone on the island is dead, the Shasvastii retreat, taking any of their dead with them to cover their tracks.





ELITE

NOCTIFER

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
8	11	7	10	10	8	7

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+2	1	Movement	+2	—	Social	—	—
Fortitude	+1	1	Senses	+2	1	Technical	+1	1

DEFENCES

Firewall	10	Resolve	9	Vigour	10
Security	1	Morale	—	Armour	2

ATTACKS

- **Sniper Rifle:** Range L, 1+8 damage, Unwieldy, Medium MULTI, Heavy MULTI, Unforgiving 2
- **Pistol:** R/C, 1+6 , Burst 2, 1H, Vicious 1

GEAR: Light Combat Armour (with Chameleonwear)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Common Special Abilities:** Menacing 1
- **Patient hunter:** The Noctifers are used to stalking their prey for hours, even days. By spending a Heat point in any scene, the GM can reveal the presence of a Noctifer (if it makes narrative sense!). The Noctifer is considered to have the Initiative and will immediately act out its turn.

FALLOUT

If the Shasvastii are defeated and the Anderson's survive, O-12's PR machine goes into action, although certain PanOceanian news agencies still spin the story as a Libertos attack. The fame is short-lived as the true details emerge. A Shasvastii base, even a small one, on one of the most secure planets on the Human Sphere is a massive dent to morale.

Over time the media will find new stories after the characters leave. If the characters failed to save the family, the events will be hushed up for much of the same reasons.

The characters will be able to return to Paradiso, where Anderson is keen to speak to them. It also means Massamachos and Tokloshii can enact the next stage of their plan. Wade has collected the Teseum transmitter, and things are now moving into their final phase. He asks the characters to help him protect this vital technology together with the Shasvastii detector if they acquired it.



OPERATION 7

PARADISO DUSK



OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

Arriving back on Paradiso, the characters are asked to hand over the Pyxis device. Wade also brings the Teseum transmitter. When both are nearly stolen during a raid, Anderson decides to move the devices off Paradiso to the Acheron Blockade.

The characters are Anderson's requested bodyguards, and they accompany him to Zhi Shan prison on Satori, where the Shasvastii stage an attack designed to make use of the communications array on Satori. In doing so, they release the prisoners.

BACKGROUND

Anderson has been replaced with Massamachos. The plan is now reaching its final stages. The Speculo Killer has arranged an attack to establish his credentials further and to add weight to the installation of the Pyxis Shasvastii detector.

MISSION BRIEFING

Back on Paradiso. It's been a frenetic few weeks since you got back with the Pyxis device and whatever the hell that case Wade was carrying about. It never left his side on the Circular trip back.

The humidity hit as soon as you stepped out of the Valkenswijk Orbital Elevator, the faint smell of the jungle still present, despite the press of humanity. Wade said Anderson's keen to see you at the PJC.

SCENE 1: TAKING CHARGE

Returning to Paradiso from the Varuna or *Bakunin* missions means the characters think they have a few days grace, perhaps to heal their wounds, spend some money, or indulge in some faction intrigue.

Anderson is keen to speak to the characters. As soon as he hears of the characters return through the O-12 grapevine, he's requesting information. It's not what it appears. Anderson has been replaced by Massamachos, one of the twinned Speculo Killers. "Anderson" is covering its tracks and setting up the scheme destined to breach the Acheron Gate. Events unfold according to the events of the characters' previous mission.

AFTER THE BAKUNIN CAPER

If the characters have returned directly from the Praxis Black Labs mission on the *Bakunin*, they are in possession of the Shasvastii detector prototype. The characters do not have much time to relax upon their return.

Anderson requests their presence – and the Pyxis device – at his office in Valkenswijk as soon as the characters are suitably rested. According to Wade, that would be yesterday.

RETURNING FROM THE VARUNA JOB

The characters' arrival from Varuna also brings first-hand news of Anderson's family. Now they are in protective O-12 custody, Massamachos/Anderson is free to act. The characters' actions on Varuna have removed the possible threat of detection – and established Massamachos/Anderson's political credibility to some extent.

MR ANDERSON'S BIG ANNOUNCEMENT

Wade informs the characters that Anderson has personally requested their presence at his office, beginning with transport to the PJC.

Nihal Batiste, Anderson's aide, will meet the characters (and Wade) in the lobby. Batiste will politely but firmly insist the characters leave their weapons in secure lockers at reception, a common security precaution given the various G5 factions present on the building.

Jhaerix Anderson's office in the PJC (Paradiso Joint Command) complex is very much done in a traditional old-world style. Paintings – digital patinas as well as actual oils and watercolours – adorn the walls. Comfortable faux-leather seats and sofas afford a level of old-fashioned sophistication, while the latest in PanOceanian technology is subtly hidden away.

Batiste will show the characters into the office, politely asking if the characters would like some refreshments, although nothing stronger than tea or coffee is on offer, much to Wade's disappointment.

Anderson signs off his comlogs and, with a gesture, darkens the windows. He stands up, greeting each character warmly by name and shaking their hands. If the characters have an aversion to handshakes or physical touch, Anderson is aware of it already – perhaps briefed by Batiste or from O-12 dossiers. A **Challenging (D2) Insight test** success allows a character to realise Anderson is already well-informed. He waits for Batiste to leave before speaking. Read or paraphrase the following after the characters have saved the Anderson family in "Varuna Rising".

It's a great honour to meet you, my friends. I call you friends, if I may? My family and I owe you a debt that I cannot easily repay. Please be seated and tell me exactly what happened regarding things on Varuna! I've found that normal channels have been less than forthcoming!

My sources on Varuna have alluded to a terrorist attack by Libertos terrorists, upset by my stance against their organisation. However, I'm led to believe there's more to it than meets the eye. I'd be grateful for any information you might be able to provide.



WHAT'S THEIR GAME?

Massamachos is aware that the Pyxis Shasvastii detector exists and could pose a credible threat to the Shasvastii's activities. The research from the Pyxis project is flawed beyond measure, and the device has no effective way of reading the complicated chimeric DNA of a Speculo Killer. Massamachos has made sure of this.

Anderson – or Massamachos – isn't fishing for information but is instead manipulating the characters into a situation to its advantage. A character spending 2 Momentum or succeeding on a **Daunting (D3) Insight test** will have the impression Anderson is possibly aware of more than he lets on or that there's something he's hiding. The characters have a chance to speak. As O-12 agents, they will likely not wish to elaborate on the Varuna mission. On the other hand, their cover is as StarCo mercenaries under contract to protect Anderson. Anderson seems to be remarkably well-informed about the Varuna attack, Wade coughs pointedly if the characters refuse to answer any questions. Anderson will smile at this.

Ah, of course. I should have been more direct. I've been in contact with your bosses at StarCo. As of two hours ago, you are now my new security detail. Paradiso politics, while not as dangerous as the jungle out there, you must still tread carefully so to speak. If Libertos – or anyone else – are still after me, I can think of no one better qualified to keep me safe.

The characters are likely to ask what this will entail, since Anderson has previously shown himself quite willing to put the characters in harm's way.

Acting as a protective security detail is all in a day's work for mercenaries, though.

If the characters have the Pyxis device with them, Anderson asks if he can have a look at it. If the characters balk at this, he backs off but volunteers to be one of the first to test it and publicly if need be.

The characters will likely wonder if Anderson knows their StarCo cover is bogus. If asked directly, he'll admit to knowing their identity as O-12 agents.

A STREETCAR NAMED... FIRE?

Bureau Lakshmi is the bureau assigned to evaluate the Pyxis device, as biological research and assessment falls under their purview. Wade asks the characters to take the Pyxis prototype to a secure location, a Lakshmi facility hidden in plain sight in Al-Hadiye.

The facility is a biomedical research laboratory located on one of the university campuses, and Wade reckons it should be a "milk run" delivery. The characters may have a slightly different take on this, given Wade's gift for understatement and their previous experiences.

Unless the characters have taken steps to conceal their return from the *Bakunin* or were able to conceal their part in the raid on the Praxis Black Lab owned by the Aldini Group, their arrival on Paradiso was noted.

The Aldini Group has their own agents in Al-Hadiye, a group of former *Bakunin* Zeros. They are there to keep an eye out for any "research opportunities", legal or otherwise. Since the Nomads have a Commercial Mission in Al-Hadiye, the former Zeros have been using it as a smokescreen and cover, as well as doing the odd dirty job for the Black Hand's Tactical Section.

Every army needs clandestine operation specialists, and the Nomads are no different. Each ship has a cell of trained agents, able to operate in hostile conditions and behind enemy lines. Those agents focus on harassing supply lines, destroying infrastructure, and assassinating key targets. On *Bakunin* such operators are nicknamed Zeros, after their low count of failed missions and reported casualties. They achieve that through rigorous training provided by the different environmental hubs of *Bakunin*. The Mothership is a dangerous

Al-Hadiye –
Infinity Corebook, p. 271

Black Hand –
Infinity Corebook, p. 173–174

environment even for a well-trained operative, and the Zeros have earned a reputation as ruthless, dangerous individuals who don't shy away from violence. On a ship where anything is possible, these operators learn to expect the unexpected.

ELITE

BAKUNIN ZERO

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
10	9	9	9	10	8	8

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	2	1	Movement	+2	–	Social	+1	–
Fortitude	1	–	Senses	+2	1	Technical	+2	–

DEFENCES

Firewall	10	Resolve	8	Vigour	9
Security	1	Morale	–	Armour	1

ATTACKS

- **Assault Hacking Device:** CLAW-3, SWORD-0, SHIELD-0, GADGET-0, IC-1, +3 bonus damage
 - **Combi Rifle:** Range C/M, 1+6 damage, Burst 2, 2H, Expert 1, MULTI Light Mod, Vicious 1
 - **Linkspike:** Melee, 1+5 damage, 1H, Piercing 1, Subtle 3
- GEAR:** Light Combat Armour (with Chameleonwear)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Multi-Environmental Training:** Zeros undergo extensive training in *Bakunin's* multi-environmental modules, giving them an adaptive edge across terrain types. When making an Acrobatics or Athletics test to move through difficult terrain, they reduce the difficulty by two steps, to a minimum of Simple (D0).
- **Predator:** Zeros prefer to strike first, giving their enemies no time to respond. When a Zero attacks from the Hidden or Detected stealth states, their target pays an additional +1 Heat to use the Defence Reaction against them. This lasts until the end of the scene.

Their plan is to attack the characters' transport on their way to the facility. It's the last chance for the Aldini Group to salvage their Pyxis research prototype – and their reputation. Their Social Energy on *Bakunin* (see either the *Nomad Sourcebook* or *Infinity Corebook*, p. 166-167) has taken a significant amount of damage from the raid by the characters.

The characters' arrival at Al-Hadiye (most likely by air) is witnessed by one of their agents. If the characters actively state they are watching for surveillance, they notice their watcher on a **Daunting (D3) Observation test** success. While it does not provide any initial benefit, in the events that follow, it does give the characters +1 on the resultant test to spot their pursuers.

ZERO MAXIMUM EFFORT

The Zero assault is a relatively straightforward assault on the characters' transport. A group of mounted motorcycle outriders target the wheels and driver. A truck follows, with additional armour

plating specifically designed to help run the characters' transport off the road.

There is one motorcycle rider for every two characters, and an equivalent number of Zeros aboard the truck. The truck has been specially armoured and reinforced. The truck has 6 points of Armour Soak as a result, not 4 as listed in the *Infinity Corebook*.

THE CHASE

The characters are unlikely to notice the Zeros' presence until they make their move. The first the characters will know of the attack is when the truck rams their transport. A character making a successful **Daunting (D3) Observation test** spots the truck accelerating quickly towards them through the traffic (remember the +1 bonus to the test if they spotted the watcher at the airport). A successful test allows the driver to take Evasive Action.

The Zeros' objective is to Disable or otherwise incapacitate the characters' vehicle, pinning them down with gunfire, and then taking possession of the Pyxis device from the bodies. They will use the truck to ram the characters' car, with the motorcycles running interference and providing covering fire.

The characters are likely to encounter other vehicles during the attack, creating a saturation zone (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 109). Unless the characters decide to fight it out as a running battle, they can lose their pursuers by increasing the vehicular zones between them to 4 or more using their piloting skills. At that point, the Zeros have lost sight of the car.

If the characters are having an easy time of it, the GM may wish to spend 1 Heat to add some **Challenging (D2) Pilot tests** – a sharp turn, one-way street, or big-rig truck or other obstacle to be negotiated around.

If the characters successfully lose their Zero pursuers, they arrive at the Bureau Lakshmi facility without further incident. The O-12 scientists there are expecting the characters, although the security staff will likely have questions about the bullet holes and other damage to the car.

The Pyxis device delivered, the characters have a day's reprieve before their return flight to Valkenswijk and their next mission. As it is also an O-12 state-of-the-art biomedical facility, the characters can receive medical care removing up to 2 Wounds – provide they rest. Breaches and Metanoia Harms are unaffected and are recovered from as normal.

LINKSPIKE

Like wetspikes, linkspikes use synthetic long-chain protein springs to piston a blade into their target. Instead of injecting poison, the blade is lined with retractable quantronic interface barbs and a surge capacitor, allowing the attacker to disable otherwise inaccessible augmentations and internal systems. They are usually implanted in the attacker for the advantage of surprise. With a successful Close Combat attack that deals at least one damage, the attacker can make a 3-Momentum spend to target one of their victim's augmentations or internal systems and inflict the Disable Function Breach Effect on it. The attacker cannot selectively DISABLE functions unless they have both a Hacking and Tech focus of 3 or more. (Melee, 1+4 damage, 1H, Piercing 1, Subtle 3)

Car, Motorcycle, Truck –
Infinity Corebook, p. 136

Evasive Action –
Infinity Corebook, p. 135

HEAT SPENDS

- **1 Heat:** Replace one of the truck passengers with a Wardriver (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 467).
- **2 Heat:** Lock and load. One of the Zeros in the truck has a missile launcher (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 374).

RAMMING

A pilot of a vehicle which moves during its turn can attempt a melee attack against a target within reach using the Pilot skill. If the attack is successful, it deals the vehicle's Impact rating as damage. This action includes ramming, sideswiping, and other uses of the vehicle's bulk. When a vehicle makes a ramming attack, its Impact damage gains the Backlash X quality, where X is the target's Scale (or 1, whichever is higher).



SCENE 2: RECOVERY MODE


When the characters return from Al-Hadiye, Wade already has their next mission lined up. In the meantime, Anderson/Massamachos has been busy. He has arranged for a Shasvastii attack on his office using a captured dropship.

He has orchestrated this primarily to establish trust with the characters. Unfortunately, things do not quite go according to the Speculo Killer's plan.


Nihal Batiste is being paid to steal secrets by the Yu Jingese secret service, the Yǎnjīng. In this situation, the secure briefcase Anderson carries represents quite a pay-off, and the temptation is too much.

The characters have a relatively simple mission: keep Anderson safe and assist in the interrogation of the suspects from the incidents earlier in "Satori Sunrise". That means a trip to Satori again. These suspects claim to have intelligence on the Libertos weapons shipments Anderson (and the characters) were investigating.

NIHAL BATISTE

Batiste has average attributes (all 8) and carries a small pistol (Range: R/C, 1+5 , Burst 2, 1H, Vicious 1).


Spitfire –

Infinity Corebook, p. 381. They are armour-plated and grant +4  hard Cover Soak to a character seated at the gun.

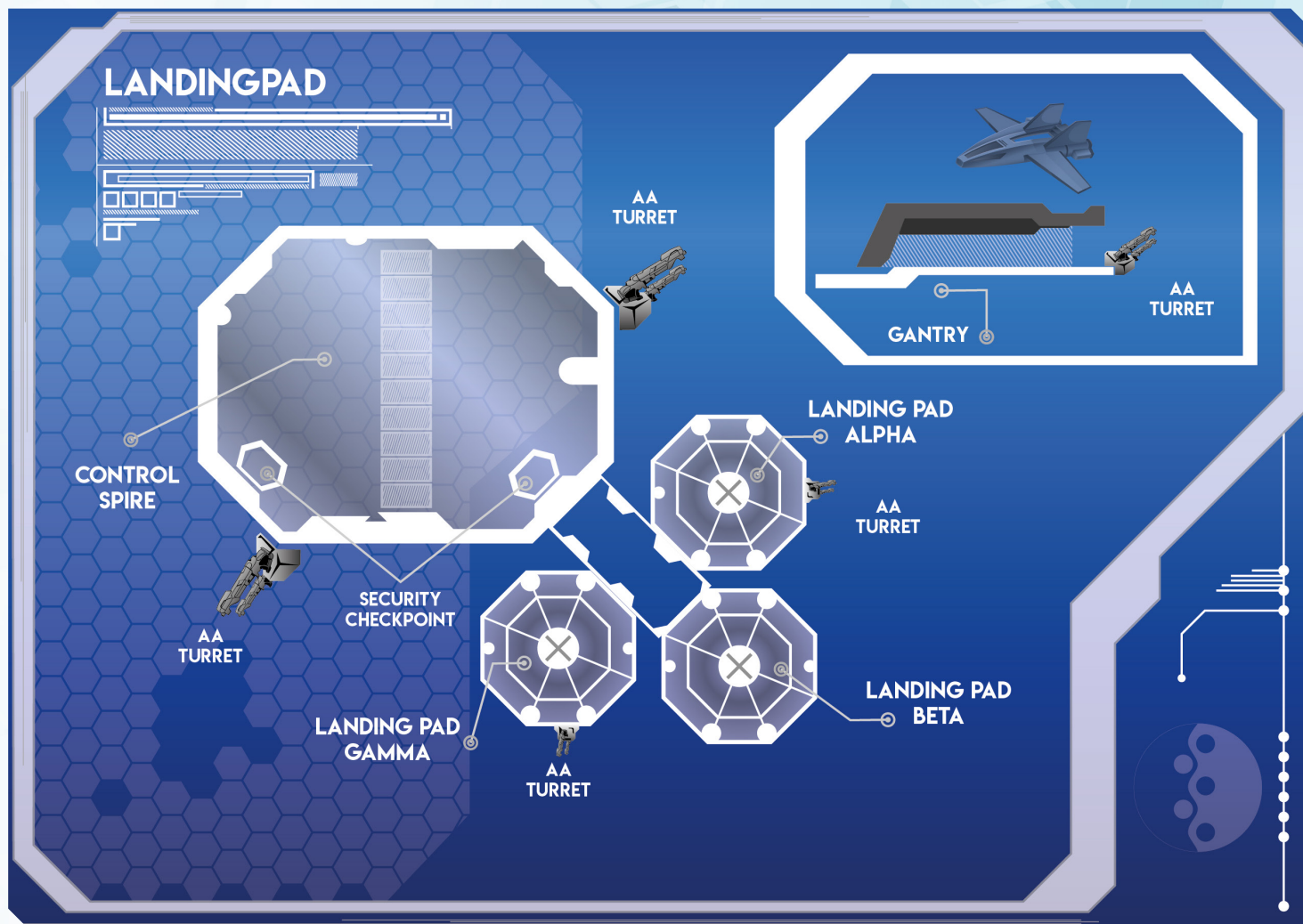
THE SHUTTLE PAD

The roof of the PJC functions as a landing platform and its own aerial defence node in one. Three landing pads jut out from the side of the PJC complex like a fungus, clustered around a central air traffic control spire.

ANTI-AIRCRAFT (AA) DEFENCE TURRET

These turrets are little more than single-armoured bucket-seats for a turret-mounted AA gun. For game purposes, it counts as a spitfire for vehicle combat (Range M, 1+5 , damage, Burst 3, 2H Spread 2, Unsubtle).

The turrets situated here are slung beneath the landing pads, accessed by the gantry. The view is spectacular if dizzying and precarious. Normally locked down, they can be activated by the control spire in 1 round or with a **Challenging (D2) Hacking** test or **Daunting (D3) Tech** test success.



CONTROL SPIRE

The control spire is a closed secure network with a data tunnel to the main PJC complex. It requires physical access and can only be hacked from within the main spire or via a Breach on one of the security checkpoint terminals.

GANTRY


Little more than enclosed metal frameworks over a vertiginous drop, they lead to the AA guns and up sets of steps to the landing pads.

LANDING PADS ALPHA, BETA, & GAMMA

These circular areas are burnt by the exhausts of the many craft landing here regularly. A simple net surrounds the outside, but chance gusts of wind make straying near the edge dangerous. For 1 Heat, a character is inflicted with the Staggered condition on a failed **Average (D1) Athletics test**. The shuttle awaits the characters on Landing Pad Alpha.

SECURITY CHECKPOINT

Two guards man each security checkpoint at all times. The security team count as Corporate Security Unit Troopers. When the dropship attacks, the guards will first contact the tower and then attempt to turn the AA guns on the attacking craft.

The two checkpoints are equipped with an IC-2 Crybaby for infowar purposes, but any Breach here allows access to the control spire's network. The checkpoints' physical structures are robust enough to withstand heavy gusts of winds and downdrafts from VTOL craft and starship boosters and count as +4  hard Cover Soak.

PUSHING TIN

Unfortunately for the characters, Anderson's flight is about to be delayed. Shasvastii strike teams are piloting a captured dropship. Their intent is to attack the characters and make it look like Anderson is the target.

The first the characters know is when the air traffic control spire sounds an alert, advising all security troops to their active stations and for civilians to clear the area. The characters will likely interpret that in one of two ways — to hang around and make themselves useful or run for cover.

Batiste has the same idea. A character succeeding at **Challenging (D2) Insight test** will notice that Batiste is nervous and twitchy. He runs for the shuttle idling on the tarmac, taking the briefcase he was carrying for Anderson. He pulls a previously hidden pistol and threatens the shuttle pilot with it forcing them to lift-off. A **Challenging (D2) Athletics test** success allows a character to catch up with Batiste before he reaches the shuttle.

At the same moment, any characters in communication with the tower will learn that they have a rogue aircraft in the PJC's airspace. The characters have a single round to act.

The attacking craft is an Azure Dragon Dropship, used by both O-12 and Yu Jing troops. The markings on the side designate it as *Yunshuji-5-25*, a craft missing for several weeks in the jungles north of Neiting. An **Average (D1) Analysis test** success with access to O-12's systems will reveal this. Captured by the Combined Army, the crew have been sepsitorized and sent back with express instructions (by Anderson/Massamachos) to attack the launch pad at that specific time. The dropship suddenly rises from below the level of the launch pad and opens fire. The sepsitorized crew have a -1 penalty to any Pilot or ranged combat tests due to their sepsitorization.

Batiste's escape on the shuttle is not something Anderson has planned for, so he will be as surprised as the characters are. Initially, he had planned to leave the Teseum transmitter hard-copy plans in a dead-drop for the Shasvastii raiders on Satori, so Batiste's betrayal causes a few problems.

The passenger shuttle provided for the characters isn't armed so will be of little use. The pilot is not military either, so their first instinct is to get out of the way when the dropship HMGs start shredding the platform, pulling away from the landing pad with Batiste on board (1 Heat) and any character in combat with Batiste.

If the characters decide to opt for discretion and try to get Anderson aboard the shuttle, a 1-Heat spend sees the pilot abandon the shuttle, leaving the characters behind to take off.

The characters will be pursued through the sky by the dropship, so they will have to avoid the guns of the dropship for several rounds while the air defences of Valkenswijk spin up to target the hostile dropship.

Sheltering in the control spire is an option. If so, the characters find themselves in even more trouble since the dropship deploys a strike team of 5 Shasvastii Elites. Their mission is to infiltrate the spire and cause as much havoc as possible (with their D-Charges and needle mines) before disappearing into the city to strike again elsewhere on later nights.

AZURE DRAGON DROPSHIP

Yu Jing's Azure Dragon is a multi-purpose troop carrier capable of carrying TAGs as well as normal soldiers into the thick of battle. O-12 teams use these and those of the other factions as required, owing to the war footing situation on Paradiso.

Corporate Security Unit —
Infinity Corebook, p. 427

Pilot —
Infinity Corebook, p. 445

Shasvastii —
Infinity Corebook, p. 471



WHERE'S BATISTE?

If Batiste does escape, the shuttle is discovered abandoned several days later, with no sign of Batiste or the pilot. If the GM wishes to add further intrigue, Batiste's body is discovered several days later. They have been killed with a bullet to the head and another to the heart, execution style. Alternatively, Batiste has been replaced with another Speculo Killer...

HEAT SPENDS

- **1 Heat: Crosstown Traffic.** A large cargo flyer crosses the shuttle's path. A **Challenging (D2) Pilot test** success is required, or the shuttle suffers 4 **Impact** damage as the shuttle clips the transport.
- **2 Heat: Glasped!** As the dropship HMGs fire, a row of windows in a nearby building blow out, raining shards of glass down on the shuttle. The shuttle suffers a -1 penalty to Piloting tests for that round.

AIRCRAFT, ENCLOSED, RUGGED

AZURE DRAGON DROPSHIP

ATTRIBUTES

Scale	3	Speed	3	Brawn	14 (+2)
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DETAILS

Max Passengers	12	Impact	3+6 IN (Knockdown)
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DEFENCES

Structure	20	Firewall	8	Armour	5	BTS	6
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MOUNTED WEAPONS

- **Chin-Turret:** HMG x 2 (Range L, 2+6 **IN** damage, Burst 3, Unwieldy, Spread 1, Unsubtle)
- **Hard Points (4):** Missile Tubes (currently empty)

PASSENGER SHUTTLE

Passenger shuttles are designed to ferry groups back and forth between orbitals and within the planetary atmosphere. They lack the necessary fuel or supplies necessary for deep space flight but have reserves enough to reach a planetary moon and atmospheric entry. They are not armed.

AIRCRAFT, ENCLOSED

PASSENGER SHUTTLE

ATTRIBUTES

Scale	3	Speed	3	Brawn	10
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DETAILS

Max Passengers	12	Impact	4 IN (Knockdown)
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DEFENCES

Structure	4	Firewall	2	Armour	6	BTS	8
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A FLIGHT THROUGH THE SKIES

If the characters do decide to take the shuttle option and get Anderson away from the attack, the gunship will pursue them through the cityscape. The character must evade the dropship for three rounds. At that point, Valkenswijk's air defence systems kick in and blow the dropship out of the sky.



SCENE 3: BASE TROUBLE

Returning to Grey Lotus Spaceport will likely remind the characters of their first visit here and expect a long wait. Anderson has some pull, though, and it is a remarkably swift ten-minute delay – and no tedious custom inspections.

“Benefits of being a senator,” as Anderson puts it.

Despite that, there is still a welcoming committee. Some familiar faces await Anderson and the characters. Depending on how the characters dealt with them previously, the welcome may be anything but warm.

OLD FACES, NEW LIES

Kui Nanfeng (and possibly Jia Song) and the surly Yǎnjīng Observers from their previous visit to Satori (p. 6) await the characters. None look happy to see the characters, with good reason. They are going to be spending the next four hours cooped up together in what looks like a sealed metal box on sprung wheels. It's a Mǎyǐ (“ant”), a six-wheeled vehicle designed to traverse the rough landscape of Satori. It's been organised by Kui Nanfeng, who wisely stays behind.

The interior is cramped, and the air scrubbers fail to mask the odours of stale sweat. The Yǎnjīng Observers speak a little to each other in Yujingyu but will not talk to the characters in more than brief sentences.

Jia Song and Anderson are a different matter, engaging the characters in small talk, and neither show any signs of being discomfited by the confines of the Mǎyǐ. Unless the characters offer to drive, Jia Song or Anderson will take over. Both have been to Zhi Shan before.

SURFACE TENSION

The blasted surface of Satori is full of craters, a stark reminder from the NeoColonial Wars. Entering the slopes of these vast craters plunge the interior of the Mǎyǐ into sudden darkness. It takes a moment for the internal lighting to flicker into life.

As such it's not always easy to see the landscape around Zhi Shan. The shadows in the deep rifts and craters create a phenomenon called *You hun ye gui*. These “wandering ghosts” often cause reports of travellers seeing hunched figures watching them from ridges. Most of the time, it's simply a trick of the light. Most of the time.

ENCLOSED GROUND, RUGGED,
WHEELED

MǎYǐ

ATTRIBUTES

Scale	2	Speed	2	Brawn	14
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DETAILS

Max Passengers	10	Impact	3+6 (Knockdown)
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HARD POINTS

Chassis	3	Comms	1	External	1
Internal	1	Motive	1	Weapons	–

DEFENCES

Structure	24	Firewall	4	Armour	6	BTS	–
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SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Strong & Stable:** When making a terrain test, the Mǎyǐ's suspension and balloon tyres allow it to count as a Scale 0 vehicle.

THE TRUTH IS OUT THERE

The characters' vehicle is being followed by a detachment of Shasvastii Gwailos, including a Malignos infowar specialist. Their mission is to infiltrate Zhi Shan and use the covert listening post there to eavesdrop on both Yu Jingese space traffic and lay the groundwork for the Acheron Gate assault. The Shasvastii established a small *asharii* base of operations on Satori exactly for this reason.

The characters are unlikely to spot the Shasvastii unless they succeed at a **Daunting (D3) Observation test**. Even then, it's just movement the character spots. The characters aren't likely to spot the Shasvastii inside the prison either, but the GM should feel free to spend a point of Heat or so to create a sense of paranoia – shadows that move, an open door that was previously closed, or tricks of the light (see p. 6).

SHASVASTII GWAILOS

The Gwailos – or the Armed Imposition Detachment to use their correct name – are among the finest troops within the Shasvastii Expeditionary Force. In peak physical fitness, they show extraordinary expertise in assault and support techniques. Trained to operate individually, the Armed Imposition Detachment is often used where the subtle Shasvastii tactics based on deception and pinpoint attacks is not enough. Gwailos are generally not used for Combined Army operations and instead are held in reserve for specific Shasvastii-only operations. One of the best-known Shasvastii troops among the Human Sphere forces, they advance behind nanobot clouds. They pride themselves on being able to conquer any



target without external support. During the Second Offensive of Paradiso, a greatly outnumbered Armed Imposition Detachment took the Yu Jingese factory of Huà Miàn Systems and obtained victory for the Combined Army. It was a victory cementing Yu Jing High Command's belief there was no way of retaking Xiongxiang city. During this battle, they earned their name among human troops, Gwailos, Cantonese for foreign demon.

ELITE

SHASVASTII GWAILOS

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
10	9	9	9	9	6	8

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+2	1	Movement	+2	1	Social	—	—
Fortitude	+1	1	Senses	+1	1	Technical	+1	1

DEFENCES

Firewall	9	Resolve	8	Vigour	9
Security	—	Morale	—	Armour	2

ATTACKS

- **D-Charges:** 2+6 damage, 1H, Anti-Materiel 2, Comms, Disposable, Piercing 3, Spread 1, Unsubtle, Vicious 2
- **Needle Mines:** 2+5 damage, 1H, Comms, Disposable, Indiscriminate (Close), Piercing 2, Spread 1, Unsubtle, Vicious 2
- **Assault Pistol:** Range R/C, 1+5 damage, Burst 2, Unbalanced, Vicious 1
- **Knife:** Melee, 1+4 damage, 1H, Concealed 1, Non Hackable, Subtle 2, Thrown, Unforgiving 1

One of the following:

- **AP Spitfire:** Range M, 1+6 damage, Burst 3, 2H, Piercing 2, Spread 2, Unsubtle 1
- **HMG:** Range L, 2+7 damage, Burst 3, Unwieldy, Spread 1, Unsubtle 1

GEAR: Aletheia Kit, Medium Combat Armour, Multi-Spectral Visor 2, Nanoscreen

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Covert by Nature:** When attempting to remain unseen or unnoticed, any Momentum or Heat spent to add dice to the Shasvastii's Stealth pool adds two d20s, instead of one.
- **Hard to hit:** When taking a Defence Reaction against ranged attacks, a Gwailo increases their Movement Focus by 2.
- **Pioneer:** The Shasvastii can reroll one d20 when making a Stealth test but must accept the new result.
- **Albedo:** The Gwailos have specialist equipment that is dedicated to neutralising Multispectral Visors. Multispectral Visors and similar equipment have no effect against the Gwailos.

NANOSCREEN

Available in various sizes, nanoscreen systems release charged nanobot clouds that rapidly swarm to block ballistic attacks. The required nanobot coordination, response time, and battery discharge gradient against high-velocity threats, not to mention the compact energy to power and recharge the device, place it firmly into the realm of VoodooTech, though Shasvastii researchers are on the verge of discovering the requisite technologies. When active, a nanoscreen adds +1 difficulty to ranged attacks targeting the user from any direction and +3 Cover Soak with any effects rolled adding +2 Soak. Activating or deactivating the device is a stealthy Minor Action, but if the user suffers physical damage from an incendiary attack, the nanoscreen automatically suffers a Fault and is disabled until repaired.

SHASVASTII MALIGNOS

Not all Shasvastii in the Combined Army are skilled infowarriors, but the EI and Combined Army both recognise the value that the Shasvastii place on covert operations and their skillset. While the sepsitor and threat of sepsitorization is a powerful psychological weapon, the prospect of an alien infowarrior creeping about furtively within a network is almost as terrifying.

The Malignos Hacker is a elusive combatant who prefers to use guile and cunning over brute force, the subtle probing of defences first before a surgical slice to disable the defences. Then, once they have what they came for, they are gone. While nowhere near as physically terrifying as an EI Avatar, they are feared almost as much.

NEMESIS

SHASVASTII MALIGNOS

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
10	11	9	10	12	7	10

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+3	1	Movement	+1	1	Social	+1	—
Fortitude	+2	1	Senses	+3	1	Technical	+4	2

DEFENCES

Firewall	12	Resolve	10	Vigour	9
Security	1	Morale	—	Armour	1

ATTACKS

- **Assault Pistol:** Range R/C, 1+6 damage, Burst 2, Unbalanced, Vicious 1
- **Knife:** Melee, 1+5 damage, 1H, Concealed 1, Non-Hackable, Subtle 2, Thrown, Unforgiving 1
- **Assault EI Hacking Device:** CLAW-3, SWORD-0, SHIELD-0, GADGET-0, IC-1, UPGRADE Stop! +3 bonus damage

GEAR: AutoMediKit, Light Combat Armour, Thermo-Optical Camouflage.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Covert by Nature:** When attempting to remain unseen or unnoticed, any Momentum or Heat spent to add dice to the Shasvastii's Stealth pool adds two d20s, instead of one.
- **Hard to Track:** Shasvastii Hackers can make a free Withdraw action once per round when involved in Infowar.
- **Pioneer:** The Shasvastii can reroll one d20 when making a Stealth test but must accept the new result.

SCENE 4: THE PRISON

The characters (and Anderson) are there to interrogate Xi Ping (#457), one of the workers involved in the incident at Aerodome T-56. He allegedly has further information regarding the shipments to Varuna, in return for a reduced sentence. However, it's really to further distance Yu Jing from the disastrous Operation Bāowéi. He is spinning a line to the characters at the Yǎnjīng's insistence.

Yu Jing's Invisible Prisons are where the StateEmpire dumps those they wish to forget – not just criminals but political malcontents, social misfits, or inconvenient family members. The unfortunate individual interred in such places is merely known by a number, sewn into the jumpsuits they wear.

Zhi Shan is little more than a hole in the ground, a former crater repurposed as a prison facility. The prison is also a working mine, since several veins of ilmenite, a mineral containing titanium and iron ore, have been discovered on site. The prison

work gangs of Zhi Shan earn their keep. No work means no food.

The *Zhànshì Qízhì* guards of Zhi Shan do not have to work too hard at their jobs. Even if a prisoner were to escape the prison, where would they go? The lack of an atmosphere is a deterrent itself, and the closest habitat is a day's walk away.

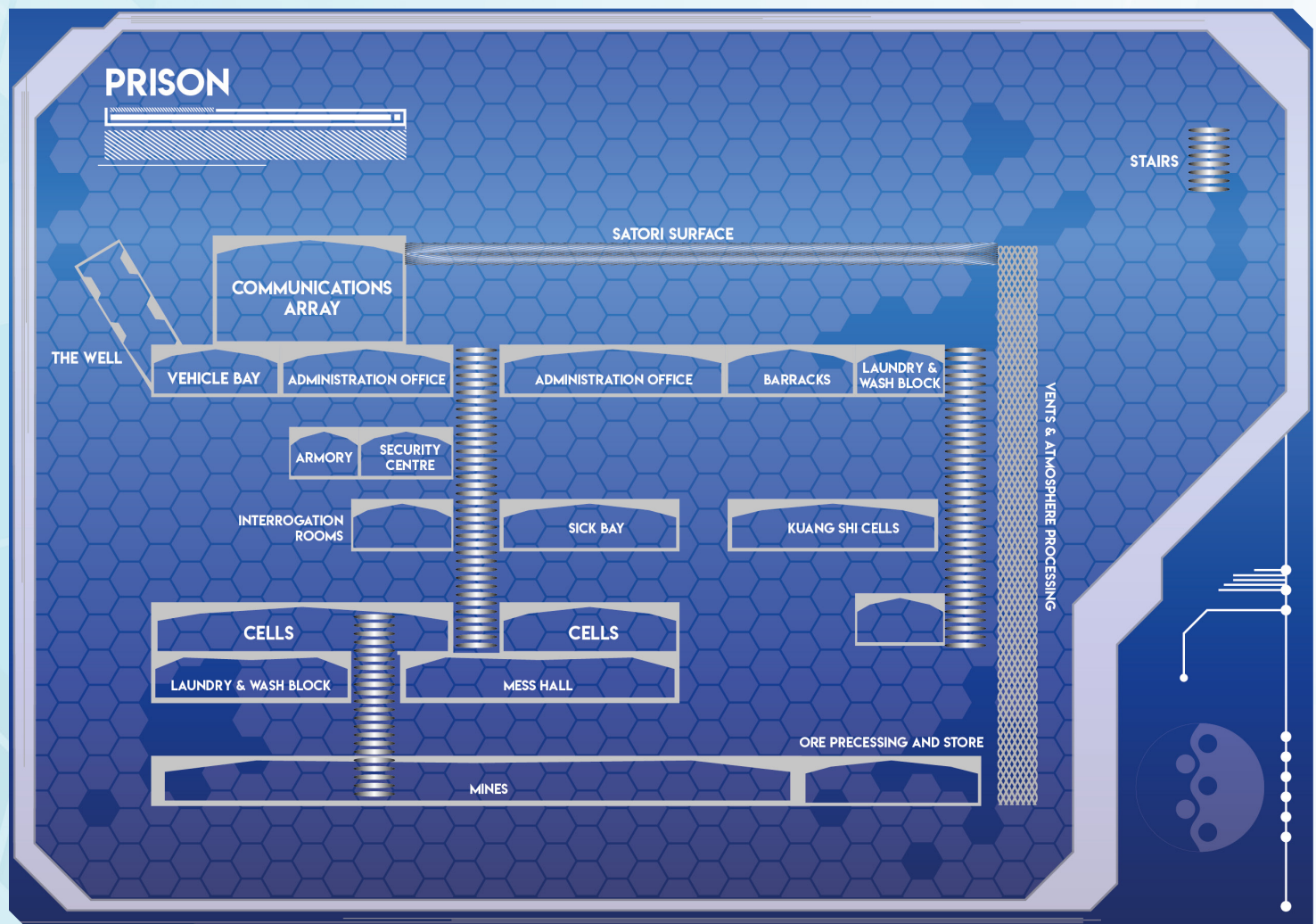
The facility warden is Xiaohan Zi, who likes his prison to run smoothly and without too much interference. The characters' appearance – and an O-12 senator too – wrongfoots him somewhat. The Yu Jingese military node also makes him highly uneasy, especially since it falls squarely under Areum Soo-Yeon's jurisdiction as an Imperial Agent.

ZHI SHAN CENTRE

Zhi Shan is the euphemistic name for the 'administrative installation' that is one of the StateEmpire's Invisible Prisons. It's also a backup node for Yu Jing's military network, although no one aside knows this aside from Xiaohan Zi, the prison warden, and Areum Soo-Yeon.

PRISON LOCATIONS

Administration offices: The warden's office and prisoner orientation rooms are close to the entrance, and a revolving airlock valve system controls






access to the main cell block. They also house the main security centre.


Armoury: Located within the security centre, the door to this room requires a guard's quantronic ID or a **Daunting (D3) Hacking test** success to open. Packed away inside are four suits of light combat armour, six boarding shotguns, six pistols, and six Combi Rifles.

Barracks: While Warden Zi and Areum have their own quarters, the remaining guards have a dormitory and wash block.

Cells: These tiny rooms are basic in the extreme. Blankets, rubber mattress, and a toilet comprise a single-occupancy cell. Each door is controlled by a security office on the corresponding level and requires a **Daunting (D3) Security test** success to open otherwise. A lockdown can be triggered from the warden's office or security centre, sealing the doors to the stairwells and cells.

Communications Array: A military level of encryption overlays the signal equipment here. It's shielded from the atmosphere when not in use and can also be reached from a maintenance hatch within the Well. It is the latter method the Shasvastii plan to use. A **Challenging (D2) Hacking test** success will open it.


Interrogation Rooms: The table and chairs in these rooms are fixed to the floor, although a **Dire (D4) Athletics test** success rips them free. They count as +2  Cover Soak.

Kuang Shi Cells: The prison's dirty little secret, the Kuang Shi cells are where the StateEmpire's penal legion troops are both created and stored for future use. Since the previous medical officer disappeared, no Kuang Shi penal troops have been created at Zi Shan. The cells stand unused, although the explosive harnesses are stored in lockers. A **Daunting (D3) Security test** opens a locker. The harnesses can be used as explosive charges (2+6  damage, 1H, Comms, Disposable, Indiscriminate (Close), Spread 1, Unsubtle, and Vicious 2).


Laundry & Wash Block: Simple recycling facilities provide the water for the basic communal showers, although it is heavily rationed. The guards have their own private wash block.

Listening Post/Communications Suite: While not immediately obvious, the door is always securely locked. Inside is a small server room and Faraday cage. It links directly to the communications array on the surface and a data node sealed below the floor. The door is keyed to Areum's palm-print and quantronic signature. A **Dire (D4) Hacking**

or **Security test** success is required to bypass the lock. Anyone viewing the contents of the room will recognise the military-grade kit on a successful **Average (D1) Observation test**.

Mess Hall: The long benches and fixed seating count as +2  soft Cover Soak. A small kitchen consists of food dispensers depositing a nutritious mush of various kinds into a plastic tray. Designed to outlast prison riots, the goop they dispense is of various colours, nutritious but completely tasteless.


Mines: The ilmenite deposits are manually hewn out of the rock by the inmates, and the tunnels are narrow, dusty, and cramped. The ore is loaded onto cargo trollies which the guards take to the ore processing area. The poor light increases the difficulty of all vision-based tests by one step.

Ore Processing & Store: Nicknamed "*Diyu*" – the Chinese equivalent of Hell – by the inmates, the ore processing and storage room is hot, cramped, and dangerous. The small plasma furnace used to smelt the ore keeps the room so hot that it requires a **Challenging (D2) Resistance test** success to stay in the room more than an hour. Failure means the character suffers 3  damage with the Knockout effect from heat exhaustion.

Power Core: Located well away from the prison cells, a small fusion reactor powers the facility. It can be shut down remotely or locally with a **Challenging (D2) Tech test** success.

Security Centre: The command centre of the prison, there are at least three guards on duty here at all time (1 Heat adds two additional guards). The security cameras and cell doors can also be controlled from here.


Sick Bay: The installation is without a doctor for the time being, so the medical bay has a thin layer of dust. The facility counts as a Surgical Bay (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 383). Characters can find the equivalent of three MediKits here as well. Characters succeeding at a **Challenging (D2) Medicine test** will notice the prison has highly advanced surgical facilities for such a facility as it is also where they create the Kuang Shi.

Stairwells: A security guard post at each landing allows guards to monitor the cameras on each floor. A screen provides soft +2  Cover Soak from attacks originating in the stairwell or corridor. Two guards are always on duty here. In the event of a lockdown, up to eight guards can be stationed here. Individual cells doors on the same level can also be opened by the guard post.



The Well: A cargo lift that leads to the surface, the Well can only be activated from the security centre. The Well is large enough to admit transport vehicles such as the Mǎyǐ. It requires a **Challenging (D2) Stealth test** to access the maintenance hatch to the communications array unseen.

Vehicle Bay: As well as the Mǎyǐ the characters arrive in, there is another similar transport parked here. The keys are kept in the security centre. Two guards are always on duty here.

Vents & Atmosphere Processing: The excess heat and fumes from the ore processing are vented here. The bad air from the prison is also scrubbed and recycled back into the complex. The vents take 5 points of physical damage to create enough space for human-sized creature to crawl through the vents, counting as hazardous terrain (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 109). A character failing a **Daunting (D3) Acrobatics test** takes 6  damage with the Incendiary 2 and Toxic 2 qualities. Breaking into the vents also sets off an alarm in the security centre, spotted on an **Average (D1) Observation test**. It can be disarmed with a **Daunting (D3) Security test** success.

ZHI SHAN DATASPHERE

SYSTEM AUTHENTICATION

There are four pertinent authentications active on the Zi Shan network.


The guards have basic user authentication. They can use the access points on their comlogs (Zone 10) to access the Security Mainframe (Zone 3), Station Monitoring (Zone 5), and the Security Cameras (Zone 6).

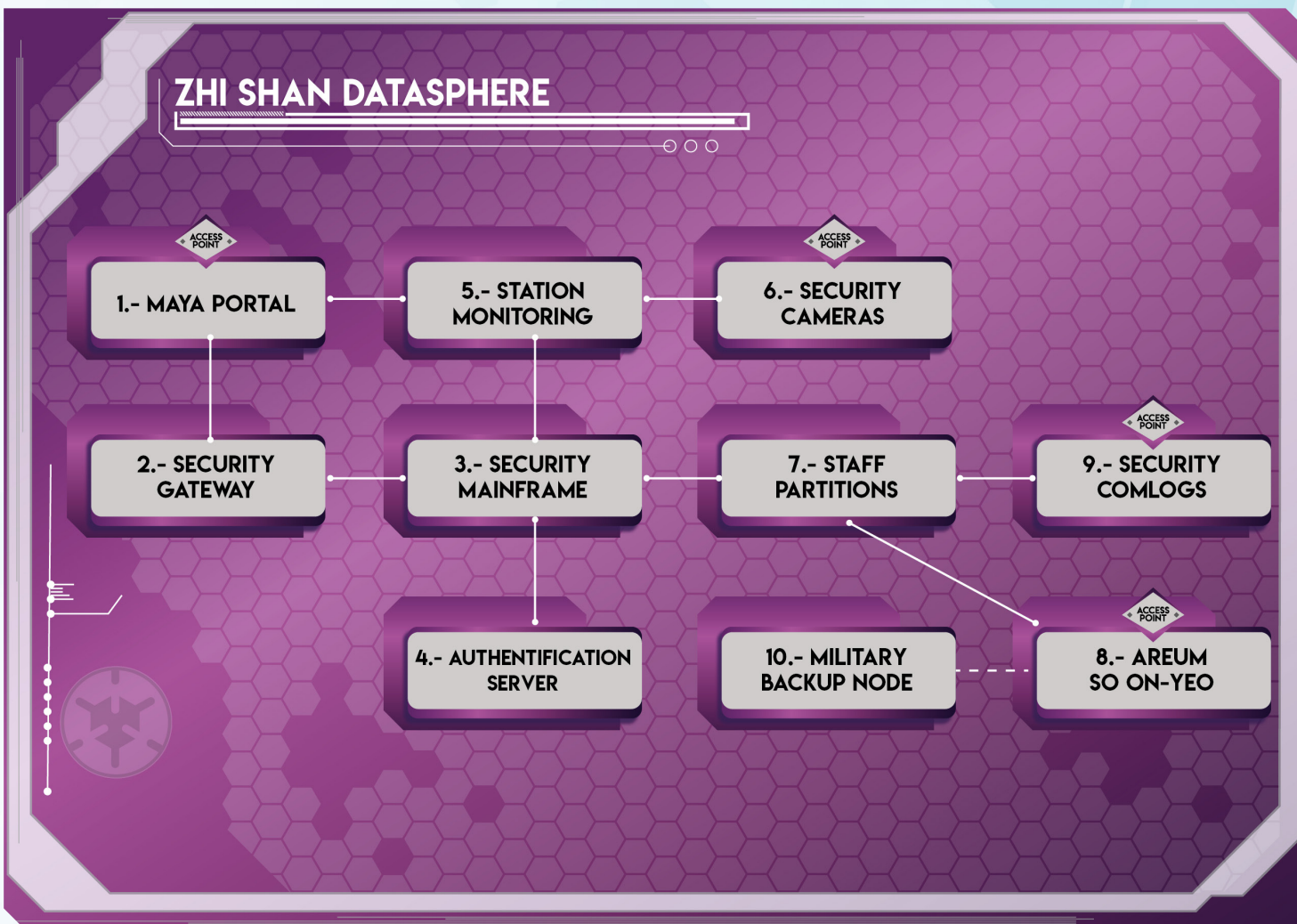
- Xiaohan Zi has superuser authentication. He has complete access to the entire system.
- Areum Soon-Yeo has admin authentication but cannot access Warden Xiaohan Zi's personal files (Zone 7).
- Access to the Yu Jing military node can only be carried out by physical access from the Listening Post/Communications Suite.

ADVERSARIES

There is a Security LAI constantly monitoring the system (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 443). It is normally found within the security mainframe (Zone 3).

NETWORK MAP

General Features: Every zone except Zone 1 has Military HighSec (granting +4  Interference Soak to users with proper authentication).



Zone 1 – Maya Portal: This is the public portal for station security. It is carefully monitored, and prisoners have no comlogs.

- Access Point: As a public portal, this zone is easy to access.

Zone 2 – Security Gateway (Secured: Firewall 8): The station security network is heavily protected from outside intrusion.

Zone 3 – Security Mainframe: The central hub of the Zhi Shan security network.

- IC-1 Crybaby: If a check to penetrate the Crybaby fails, it notifies the Security LAI.

Zone 4 – Authentication Server (Firewall 15): As a Breach Effect, this server can issue valid authentication for the Zhi Shan security network.

- IC-2 Crybaby: If a check to penetrate this Crybaby fails, it notifies the Security LAI and Warden Xiaohan Zi.

Zone 5 – Station Monitoring (Firewall 6): All the data collected from Zhi Shan's scanners is stored here, including access and environmental data.

Zone 6 – Security Cameras (Secured: Firewall 8):

- Access Point: Every security camera on Zhi Shan provides a potential access point.

Zone 7 – Staff Partitions: Data storage for staff is sub-divided by user. From this node, hackers can obtain a complete list of all Zhi Shan's personnel.

Zone 8 – Areum Soon-Yeo (Secured: Firewall 6): Areum Soon-Yeo's partition is encrypted. An **Average (D1) Analysis test** discloses the codes as belonging to the Yu Jing Imperial Agent Section. Within her files are repeated requests for transfer.

- IC-3 Crybaby: If a check to penetrate this Crybaby fails, it notifies Areum Soon-Yeo.

Zone 9 - Security Comlogs

- Access Point: Comlogs carried by the prison personnel (including Warden Xiaohan Zi and Areum Soon-Yeo) provide potential access points to the network.

Zone 10 – Military Node and Secure Communications Array Access: The backup node for Yu Jing military network can only be physically

accessed from the Listening Post/Communications Suite. It is hidden from the existing network by Data Flux Camouflage.

- IC-4 Crybaby: If a check to penetrate this Crybaby fails, it notifies Areum Soon-Yeo.
- Data Flux Camouflage: The zone can only be viewed by a character who knows what to look for with an **Average (D1) Observation test**.

ON-RESIDENTS

The number of prisoners and guards within the facility normally has a ratio of around 5:1, although this numbers varies considerably. During the adventure there are 426 prisoners and fifty guards, of whom 20 are off duty. Warden Xiaohan Zi runs the prison although the guards respect Areum Soon-Yeo more and defer to her judgement.

AREUM SOO-YEON

Appearance: Usually dressed in the regulation prison combat armour and uniform, Areum has a distinctive limp from a previous assignment. She also sports a twice-broken nose that set poorly.

Roleplaying:

- Areum Soo-Yeon feels she's being punished. Zhi Shan is backwater posting, and she feels she deserves better.
- Despite her feelings on the posting, Areum considers Zhi Shan as being "her" assignment and is highly proprietary about it.
- She has little time for politics and considers career politicians scum.

Background: Areum Soo Yeon is ambitious. Perhaps a little too ambitious, and she's overestimated her abilities several times. A covert assignment against a PanOeanian target on Paradiso went bad, and she injured her knee in the escape. While she can no longer be considered an "active" agent by any means, her family is well-connected enough to secure her a role in the prison.

Key Info:

- Knows the existence of the node beneath the communications room.
- She is complicit in the Kuang Shi scheme with Warden Zi. She hates being involved with it.
- Areum will defend the node and data facility with her life, destroying it if need be.

Imperial Agents execute the Emperor's will outside of the Jade Palace. Of the various ranks and castes of agents, the Zhànying, the Fighting Eagles, place lowest. Earning their positions through personal merits alone, they know that their standing remains volatile. Unfortunately for the Zhànying, this means that they must remain vigilant of those opposed to the Emperor's authority, but also remain wary

ELITE

AREUM SOO-YEON, ZHÀNYING AGENT

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
9	10	9	9	8	8	10

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+2	1	Movement	+1	—	Social	+2	—
Fortitude	+2	1	Senses	+2	—	Technical	+1	—

DEFENCES

Firewall	8	Resolve	10	Vigour	9
Security	—	Morale	—	Armour	2

ATTACKS

- **Combi Rifle:** C/M 1+6 Burst 2, 2H, Expert 1, MULTI Light Mod, Vicious 1, Expert 1, MULTI Light Mod
- **Pistol:** R/C, 1+5 Burst 2, 1H, Vicious 1
- **Knife:** Melee, 1+4 damage, 1H, Concealed 1, Non-Hackable, Subtle 2, Thrown, Unforgiving 1
- **Hacking Device:** CLAW-1, SWORD-1, SHIELD-1, GADGET-3, IC-1

GEAR: Cosmetics Kit, Light Combat Armour

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Preceded by Reputation:** Everyone within the StateEmpire knows that Imperial Agents are executors of the Emperor's will and to become an obstacle in their path would be most unwise. Areum Soo-Yeon can reroll one d20 when making a Persuade or Command test but must accept the new result.
- **Sixth Sense:** Whether through training or innate ability, these operatives are extremely cautious. They can make a Defence Reaction against any ranged or melee attacks, including ones they might not have any immediately apparent reason to know about. (They must still pay the normal Heat cost for taking a Reaction.)

of opportunistic backstabbers from within their own ranks.

As extremely competent operatives able to survive on their own in hostile environments, they are often sent to observe and disrupt criminal organisations that subvert the peace and oppress the Emperor's subjects. They rarely receive praise from the common citizen, however, as the liberal media outlets are usually filled with reports about their violent resolutions. Moreover, by virtue of being the lowest rank of agent, the Zhànying usually perform their own dirty work, making them no stranger to both shady deals and firefights.

XIAOHAN ZI

Appearance: Xiaohan Zi is of middle age and attempts to hide a thinning hairline by applying various oils and pomades. He's all too aware that he is no longer as fit as he used to be and has a paunch that threatens to explode out of his combat armour.

Roleplaying:

- Does anything for a quiet life, minimal effort for maximum result.



ELITE

XIAOHAN ZI, PRISON WARDEN

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
9	9	9	8	10	8	10

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+1	1	Movement	+1	–	Social	+3	2
Fortitude	+1	1	Senses	+1	–	Technical	+1	–

DEFENCES

Firewall	9	Resolve	10	Vigour	9
Security	0	Morale	1	Armour	3

ATTACKS

- **Boarding Shotgun:** C 1+5 (N), 2H, Normal Shells/AP Shells, Knockdown, Medium MULTI
- **Pistol:** R/C, 1+4 (N), Burst 2, 1H, Vicious 1
- **Knife:** Melee, 1+4 (N), damage, 1H, Concealed 1, Non-Hackable, Subtle 2, Thrown, Unforgiving 1

GEAR: Medium Combat Armour

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Paranoid:** Someone's always out to get Xiaohan Zi. As a Reaction, Zi can respond to any Infowar or Psywar attack with an attack of his own at +2 difficulty. This attack is resolved before the enemy attack, and if it causes a Breach, then the original attack is prevented.

- It's never his fault; everyone else is incompetent.
- Opportunistic coward, but savvy enough to blackmail someone.

Background: Prison Warden Xiaohan Zi (or Director Zi as he likes to be called) could have had a glowing career in the StateEmpire political hierarchy – if he could have bothered and hadn't been so weak-willed. A small series of scandals saw him packed off to the Paradiso front lines by his family and despairing superiors.

He somehow wheedled his way into his current role and has settled into it. He's left alone most of the time and doesn't have to work too hard. His quarters are luxuriously appointed but littered with pornographic material.

Key Info:

- Has a nice little earner selling on the Kuang Shi.
- The previous Zhi Shan Medical officer had an accident when Zi found out he was planning to sell the information to a Hexas agent.
- He always has a way out and doesn't care who he has to throw under a tank to get it.

ZHÀNSHÌ QÍZHÌ PRISON GUARDS

The bulk of the armed forces of the Yu Jing StateEmpire is formed by the rank and file of the Troops of the Banner, or Zhànshì Qízhi, as they are known in Chinese Mandarin. The units that these soldiers belong to are fairly uniform, a design only strengthened by the ideals of communism such as

TROOPER

ZHÀNSHÌ QÍZHÌ PRISON GUARD

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
8	8	9	7	8	7	9

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+1	1	Movement	+1	–	Social	–	–
Fortitude	+1	1	Senses	–	–	Technical	+1	–

DEFENCES

Firewall	8	Resolve	9	Vigour	9
Security	0	Morale	1	Armour	2/3

ATTACKS

- **Combi Rifle:** C/M 1+5 (N), Burst 2, 2H, Expert 1, Vicious 1, Expert 1, MULTI Light Mod
- **Boarding Shotgun*:** C 1+5 (N), 2H, Normal Shells/AP Shells, Knockdown, Medium MULTI
- **Pistol:** R/C, 1+4 (N), Burst 2, 1H, Vicious 1
- **Knife:** Melee, 1+4 (N), damage, 1H, Concealed 1, Non-Hackable, Subtle 2, Thrown, Unforgiving 1
- **Stun Baton:** 1+4 (N), 1H, Non-Hackable, Knockdown, Subtle 1, Stun

GEAR: Light Combat Armour or Medium Combat Armour*

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Riot Gear*:** For 1 Heat, the guards are equipped with a boarding shotgun and medium combat armour.
- **Unrelenting Barrier:** To serve the StateEmpire is the greatest honour. These soldiers simply refuse to fail. They benefit from a Morale soak equal to their Fortitude expertise. This is incorporated into their profile.

equality and solidarity. The units are differentiated by their banner, and the name was maintained to emphasise the connection between the past and the present. Zhànshì corps provide the necessary troop presence during military operations. They are the backbone, the muscle, the foundation upon which the success of the StateEmpire's efforts rests.

The brave men and women who serve as Troops of the Banner know that great deeds are required of them, and they strive to provide no less.

The prison guards of Zhi Shan are not among the best of Yu Jingese troops, but they are fully capable of being a formidable force. Their riot gear makes them significantly dangerous in close quarters.

ZHI SHAN INMATE

The inmates of Zhi Shan are a varied lot. They are desperate enough to escape the confines of the prison since suffocation is a very real possibility. While some convicts are political dissenters who advocate non-violent protest, the circumstances and general violence is enough to turn even the most passive prisoner aggressive.

None of the inmates at Zhi Shan have working comlogs. They have either been confiscated or removed.

TROOPER OR ELITE

ZHI SHAN INMATE

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
9	8	10	9	7	7	6

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+2	–	Movement	+1	–	Social	–	–
Fortitude	+2	–	Senses	+1	–	Technical	–	–

DEFENCES

Firewall	4	Resolve	3	Vigour	5
Security	–	Morale	–	Armour	–

ATTACKS

- **Plasteel Pipe:** 1+4 (N), Unbalanced, Improvised 1, Non-Hackable, Stun Plus one of the following (requires Heat spend):
- **Pistol:** R/C, 1+4 (N), Burst 2, 1H, Vicious 1
- **Knife:** Melee, 1+4 (N), damage, 1H, Concealed 1, Non-Hackable, Subtle 2, Thrown, Unforgiving 1
- **Combi Rifle:** C/M 1+5 (N), Burst 2, 2H, Expert 1, Vicious 1, Expert 1, MULTI Light Mod
- **Boarding Shotgun:** C 1+5 (N), 2H, Normal Shells/AP Shells, Knockdown, Medium MULTI

GEAR: None

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **We'll Take What We Can Get:** The convicts acquire various improvised weapons, but their numbers will mean they pick up others from fallen guards.
 - **1 Heat:** The convict is equipped with a knife or pistol.
 - **2 Heat:** The convict has a Combi Rifle or boarding shotgun.
- **You Take the Big Guy:** Upgrade a convict from Trooper to Elite with 1 Heat.

Jia Song, it takes an **Average (D1) Persuade test** success to get the prison security to open the access hatch. They do have enough clearance, but the guards ensure that Warden Xiaohan Zhi and Areum Soo-Yeon (his second-in-command) are awaiting the characters' arrival. Neither are particularly happy to have the characters visit, especially with Anderson.

Flanked by the two guards, Areum bluntly asks Anderson why he is here, ignoring the characters. A **Challenging (D2) Psychology test** success also allows a character to deduce the warden is very much intimidated by her. A Yu Jingese character making the test will recognise the tension as that of a bureaucrat and an Imperial Agent.

THE INTERVIEW

The characters (plus Anderson and Jia Song) are led to one of the interrogation rooms to await the arrival of Xi Ping. The warden and his staff are not standing on ceremony, and the characters will not have to wait long.

Xi Ping is roughly shoved onto a chair by two guards and sits glaring at the group. Prisoner number 457, as he is now known, wears blue coveralls and a surly attitude.

The GM can roleplay this out with the characters. Anderson will state that Xi Ping's testimony may result in him being moved off Satori. He then hands over the interview to the characters, who can interrogate Xi Ping for his knowledge of Operation Bāowéi.

The characters' interrogation of Xi is cut short by an unexpected event – the Shasvastii Gwailos begin their assault.

ARRIVAL

When the characters arrive, access to the Well is sealed. If the characters aren't accompanied by





SCENE 5: PRISON BREAK!

While the characters are interrogating Xi Ping, the Shasvastii make their move. They followed the characters into the Well and have concealed themselves within the vehicle bay. It is possible one or more of the characters are present within some of the locations when the Shasvastii enter.

SHASVASTII ATTACK

The first phase of the Shasvastii attack is to infiltrate and sabotage the facility, hitting various locations.

Communications Array: One of the Shasvastii deploys a mobile repeater close to the communications array, accessing the array through the maintenance hatch in the Well.

Vehicle bay: Two of the Shasvastii silently kill the two guards in the vehicle bay. They also set one of their needle mines at each of the Mǎyǐ transports. If the characters have left some form of alert or watch on their transport, it is an opposed Stealth and test to detect the Shasvastii activities here.

Atmosphere Processors: Two Shasvastii make their way to the atmosphere processors and sabotage them. Within ten minutes, toxic fumes begin to fill the prison. The atmosphere control alerts the security centre within two minutes.

Security Centre Strike & Infowar Assault: Two Shasvastii attack the security centre, timed to coincide with the Shasvastii Hacker's break-in at the listening post.

LOCKDOWN!

The attack does not go unnoticed, of course. Warden Xi's first action is to order the security centre to lock down the cells. When this fails, he uses his own authorisation code from his office terminal.

The effect is immediate. All the doors immediately seal closed — not just the cell doors, but those of the entire facility, including the door to the interrogation room. If the characters ask what is going on, they will get confused messages from multiple locations, including the toxic gas build-up and alien attack.

It takes ten minutes for the Shasvastii Hacker to breach the defences in the listening post and achieve their objective. Not only do they plant a viral payload in the Yu Jing tactical network, the

hacker also places Massamachos's twinned Speculo Killer on one of the ships of the Acheron Line. It is carefully concealed by an attempt to download ship movements around the Acheron wormhole. A character can spot the concealment with a **Daunting (D3) Analysis test** success but not the reason if they are able to examine the datasphere. If the characters are within the Zhi Shan datasphere, they will pick up the same alert as Areum Soon-Yeon when the listening post suffers a breach.

During those ten minutes the characters will likely be escaping their own makeshift jail cell. The Shasvastii begin to make their way back to the vehicle bay if unchallenged, shooting their way out otherwise. It's possible the characters have no idea the Shasvastii are involved until they run headlong into them...

PREDICTING A RIOT

One of the Shasvastii in the security centre attack leaves a parting gift, releasing the cell doors in the prison wings. The air is already becoming toxic, filling the corridors with smoke, and increasing the difficulty of all vision-based tests by one step.

- **Anderson:** Anderson's (or Massamachos's) plan is to get out of Zhi Shan as soon as possible. The Shasvastii have achieved their objectives.
- **Areum Soo-Yeon:** As soon as she is aware the listening post has been attacked, she heads straight there. For 1 Heat she gets two guards to accompany her. If the characters arrive before she does, she'll assume the characters are the reason why.
- **Guards:** The chaos caused by the Shasvastii paralyses the guards for several minutes. They retreat to the security posts at each stairwell, but many of them are caught in the security centre when the Shasvastii attack.
- **Prisoners:** Initially, the prisoners are rioting throughout the prison, breaking equipment, and setting fire to things. As the air begins to become thin, panic sets in, and the prisoners start making their way to the vehicle bay. They begin to clash with the guards at the stairwells.
- **Xiaoshan Zi:** Warden Xi is in his office but quickly realises the situation and tasks some of the guards to escort him out. As far as he is concerned, he is high value enough to be first out the Well outside if the prisoners take over. He can use his comlog to trigger the door locks to open or seal them.

HOW MANY SHASVASTII ARE THERE?

Shasvastii are exceptional at hiding and causing chaos. The characters won't be able to get a clear idea of their numbers, and the GM may wish to use 1 Heat to add additional Shasvastii as needed.

GETTING OUT OR GETTING UNDER CONTROL?

The characters have a few options. They can try to get out or help the authorities control the situation. The characters will have to negotiate their way through battling convicts and guards, a thick atmosphere of smoke, and the security countermeasures in either case. Unfortunately, Warden Zi decides to take matters into his own hands. He concludes that the facility is a lost cause and begins locking down doors, trapping anyone inside, including the characters.

- **Fixing the atmosphere processor** takes three hours and a **Daunting (D3) Tech test**.
- **Locking down** the prison cells requires the characters to take control of the security centre before Zi locks them out completely or the prisoners seize control.
- **Getting out** with Anderson (and themselves) will require some creative thinking and the characters run into multiple problems.

The following Heat Spends and encounters can be used by the GM. Remember the facility is becoming choked with fumes from the fires, increasing the difficulty of vision-based tests by one step.

- **Mistaken Identity (1 Heat):** The characters are mistaken for convicts by a fireteam of 5 prison guards.
- **Roaming Inmates (1 Heat):** A group of 3-5 Zhi Shan inmates are roaming the corridors ahead, breaking things up or setting fire to them.
- **Locked Out! (1 Heat):** Zi – or Areum – locks the door behind themselves just as the characters arrive. It requires a **Daunting (D3) Security test** to get it open.
- **High-Value Target (2 Heat):** The characters run into Xiaohan Zi who insists they get him to safety. He can use his comlogs to trigger the door lockdown.
- **Shasvastii Surprise (2 Heat):** If the characters weren't aware of the Shasvastii Gwailo, they encounter two of them in the smoke.


When the characters arrive at the vehicle bay to leave, they may find they are not the only ones with that idea. The Shasvastii have left needle mines attached to both Mǎyǐ transports. A **Challenging (D2) test** success is required to spot it. The Shasvastii are about to leave the vehicle bay and plan to leave the door to the Well open when they do, causing the atmosphere to rush out.


Just as the characters arrive, so do a group of prisoners (three per character) who make their way toward the transports, intent on stealing them and getting away.

They may have the keys for the spare Mǎyǐ (or not) from the security centre.

For an additional 2 Heat, Warden Zi and his escort arrive with the exact same idea in mind.

This will lead to a four-way conflict between the Shasvastii opening the Well, the prisoners trying to steal the Mǎyǐ, and the characters – plus Warden Zi's group as well.

The Mǎyǐ provide +4  hard cover soak although munition ammunition or similar are likely to cause damage to the Mǎyǐ as well. Taking cover by the Mǎyǐ will also trigger a needle mine unless it is spotted.

It takes three rounds for the Shasvastii to open the Well door unless stopped, immediately causing the atmosphere to vent. Characters without a Respirator 1 (or better) suffer 3  physical damage with the Stun quality each round, and the dust kicked up from the venting increases the difficulty of all vision-based tests by two steps.

If the characters are unable to escape in the Mǎyǐ, their best option is to wait it out. Areum (if she is still alive) or Jia Song calls for help, and a detachment of Zhànshì soldiers are despatched to secure the facility. The characters are given a curt “thank you” by the Yu Jing reinforcements and then told to get out.

WHAT HAPPENS TO...?

- Areum Soon-Yeo is recalled to Shentang for reassignment if she is still alive.
- Xi Ping. Unless the character decided to drag him with them, Xi Ping is found dead in one of the cell blocks. If the characters left him behind, he was in one of the interrogation rooms when they last saw him alive.
- Xiaohan Zi disappears, most likely into another ghost prison. This time as an inmate.





OPERATION 8

AT THE GATE OF ACHERON



OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

The characters are back in their StarCo mercenary cover as bodyguards for Anderson. The Pyxis device is in place, although no Shasvastii have been detected (given it doesn't work, that's to be expected). Anderson has arranged for the test of the turbulence platforms to be carried out from the bridge of a Yu Jing destroyer, the *Zhèngyìfēngbào*, under the command of one of the PJC admirals, Captain Chen Xiu Ying.

Unfortunately, this is the culmination of Tokloshii's and Massamachos's plan. The pieces are all in place. The array on Satori has setup the Teseum transmitter to control the turbulence platforms. Tokloshii has attached it to the *Zhèngyìfēngbào*'s reactor, having taken the form of one of the ship's engineers.

Massamachos is also on board as Anderson, and the two Shasvastii begin by activating Wade's micro-explosive, killing him. Then Massamachos attempts to kill Captain Chen Xiu Ying and his first officer. Explosives also go off sealing the bulkheads and killing many of the ship's pilots and defence marines.

The characters will need to take control of the ship, repair the damage, and fight off waves of Combined Army attacks, both inside and outside the ship.

BACKGROUND

THE ACHERON BLOCKADE

Named for the river of Hades, the Acheron wormhole, which leads to the systems controlled by the Ur Hegemony, sits at the edge of the Paradiso system. Acheron remained a mystery to the settlers of Paradiso in the early days of settlement, as the wormhole sat on the opposite side of the system to the jump gates that connected Paradiso to the Human Sphere. Space traffic rarely strayed out

towards the anomaly, and it wasn't until the first waves of the Combined Army's attacks that Acheron was discovered.

There is a constant tension around Acheron, as each fluctuation could mark the arrival of a Combined Army reinforcement fleet, despite travel through the wormhole being a dangerous proposition given Acheron's eccentricity. From information gathered

by interrogation of Combined Army officers, it has been discovered that travel through the wormhole wrack's ships passing through with gravitational tidal forces, some strong enough to destroy a ship if their coherence fields so much as flicker. This works to the advantage of the human fleet, as roughly half the ships that pass through the wormhole are torn apart during transit. The ones that make it through must face down the Acheron Blockade.

The Acheron Blockade itself is built up of humanity's largest and most powerful warships. Dreadnoughts, cruisers, and large fighter carriers, the prides of their respective fleets, stand ready to intercept any Combined Army ships exiting the Acheron wormhole with extreme prejudice. Thanks to the turbulence within cutting their opponent's numbers down and the natural bottleneck that ensues, the technologically inferior human fleet battles the Combined fleet on an even footing.

However, the wide exit zone of the wormhole makes the blockade work nerve-racking. There are simply too many variable egress points from the wormhole and nowhere near enough guns to cover each of the vectors, making static defence and patrols inefficient on their own. Constant scans completed by moving ships are mandatory to ensure that the fleet can respond to threats as they arrive. Further complicating the matter is the Combined Army's superior stealth technology. The Shasvastii ships are able to fool scanners long enough to enter the system and evade the worst of the blockade's firepower. This has led to the Combined Army using distraction tactics to ensure troop transports and supply ships can sneak past the human lines, with drone-slaved systems aggressively engaging the blockade with expendable ships.

LIFE ON THE LINE

The soldiers that fight on the Acheron line also live on the Acheron line. The needs for constant surveillance and being battle ready at all times require a large standing force of troops that can rotate on and off duty and react quickly if called in the event of an attack. Daily life serving on the vessels and stations of the Acheron Blockade is typically made up of long stretches of tedium followed by brief, violent periods of large-scale naval combat. Unfortunately for the troops, this is a nerve-rattling method of warfare.

Having to remain constantly alert, expecting battle and death at any moment, has left marks on the soldiers of the Acheron fleet. Stress and paranoia constantly afflict the personnel stationed closest to the wormhole in particular, as they have to see the shifting anomaly each day. Each fluctuation of the wormhole could be the precursor to a dangerous battle. Every stutter on the radar could

be Shasvastii ships attacking their instruments in preparation for the next assault. Each minor system disturbance could be sabotage from a Combined Army death squad aboard their vessel.

The rigours of unpredictable naval combat aside, the soldiers must also face the alien horror of the Combined forces. Sepsitorization and infiltrating Shasvastii are a constant threat to the security of the Acheron Blockade, and safety checks are common to ensure the systems and officers of the fleet are secure. While these checks might ensure the integrity of the defences, they only further erode the mental wellbeing of the troops, who soon after posting can become jumpy and paranoid. Mental health is considered a priority, with recreation and therapy invested in heavily. Though this can seem like a tedious and fruitless exercise, as week after week of boring support groups and simple, mind-focusing duties pass by, the veterans of the blockade are thankful for these efforts as they keep them alert and sane whilst they wait for the next battle.

THE SHIPS OF ACHERON

The Acheron Blockade is home to some of the most devastating naval weapons humanity has ever produced. Warships from across human-controlled space have been sent to the blockade with the single-minded purpose of fending off a truly dangerous enemy. PanOceanian battle cruisers work in concert with the StateEmpire's *jūnjiàn* for the first time in each nation's history. Nomad ships fight alongside the nations they still consider slaves to ALEPH for the good of all. It would be an inspiring display if it weren't for the continued tensions back in Human Sphere, especially following recent events. As the fleet is united in their common goal, command has been relinquished to unaligned O-12 officials in the interest of cooperation. The aforementioned tensions have given rise to several conflicts already, but thanks to the stern, impartial command of O-12 commanders, the fleet has continued to operate at full capacity and the rowdier admirals have been brought in line.

One of the most important jobs within the Acheron Blockade is the efforts of the combat patrols that drift from capital ship to capital ship. These small wings of craft perform the combat scans that the larger warships would have to risk valuable time and targeting vectors to undertake, ensuring the information coverage of the blockade remains constantly all-encompassing. These patrols are made up of craft lighter than the large warships that anchor the blockade, focusing on speed and manoeuvrability to quickly engage enemy craft in the event of a Combined Army attack during their sweeps. Escorts of fighter craft are common, and it's a job welcomed by the more stir-crazy pilots who can't stand sitting in common rooms until



the Combined Army rear their head. Normally, these ships act as the first responders to an alien incursion, intercepting boarding ships and bombers before they can strike the capital ships of the human fleet. Casualties for these patrol units are high in combat situations, leading to only the most daring and brave pilots volunteering for the job.

The warships these patrols move between can only be described as titanic, truly breath-taking spacecraft with a matching array of weaponry. Although the human dreadnoughts cannot match the Ur Hegemony's navy ship-to-ship with current technology, it would be a dangerous assumption to think that they cannot put up a good fight. Unique military doctrines and divergent technology affect the make of each of these ships, further reinforcing their roles within the fleet. PanOceanian ships, the most numerous of the fleet, often act as the centre of resistance during an attack. Outfitted with cutting-edge systems and weaponry and crewed by well-drilled personnel, they battle at range to wear the Combined Fleet down. The Yujingyu fleet, though not as advanced as the PanOceanian fleet, is famed for their power armoured boarding parties and tactical acuity. Able to outmatch the Military Orders by virtue of numbers and sheer ruthless determination, they have constantly proven their skill against the Combined Army's warriors in intense, close-quarters combat, ripping Combined Army ships apart from the inside out and capturing prisoners for interrogation. Their ships maintain the frontline of the human fleet, a bulwark of steel that levels torpedoes and precise close-range fire at the enemy. The Nomad fleet, familiar with space travel and its rigours, function as the outriders of the human fleet, lashing out at any craft that breaches the human line with speed and precision unmatched by their 'lumbering' allies. The Nomad's combat patrols have orchestrated some of the most successful flanking assaults in the war, and proudly boast of it at any chance they get.

While the Haqqislamite fleet primarily acts in a support role it is nevertheless ready and willing to fight. At a battle's commencement, it is rare for them to engage in direct combat, but their presence is almost always a welcome sight. Regardless of the ferocity of any instance of battle, they take their role maintaining supply lines and rescuing crews from the void very seriously. If that role sends them into the heat of battle, so be it!

Though other smaller nations lend ships to the cause, their contributions are overshadowed by the larger powers' works, and they are typically relegated to rear-guard action, trying to catch any ships the Nomad outriders miss and plug holes that may form in the line. Working in concert, these elements have allowed the human fleet to establish a strong defensive point within the range of Acheron.

MISSION BRIEFING

There's not much to see out here at the Acheron Gate, at least to begin with. There's dozens of ships and the fire platforms out there, but all you can see is the dark of space. As you get closer, you start to make out the running lights of dozens of ships sparkling away, with larger ships looming into view before the shuttle pilot makes a course change.

The Shasvastii detector, the Pyxis device, has been mass-produced and installed on all ships and spaceports – as far as you're aware, none of you are Shasvastii!

Your cover is as StarCo merc bodyguards again. Anderson explained this mission is a PR exercise for the hearts and minds in the fleet. You're here to visit the Yu Jing ship, Zhèngyìfēngbào, where a new defence strategy is being implemented. The turbulence platforms – designed to destabilise the wormhole – are undergoing a test firing.

Apparently, the captain of the Zhèngyìfēngbào is one of the PJC's fleet admirals, so "best behaviour" as Wade puts it...

SPLITTING THE PARTY

While the characters all start at the same site, it is quite possible they end up in different locations. For the GM, this is either liberating or a huge problem. It is important that every character (and player) has some input into the adventure, particularly as this is the conclusion to the campaign. The GM needs to bear the following points in mind.

- A GM doesn't need to run every single plotline/ encounter in this part of the adventure. If the characters aboard a ship are terrible at hand-to-hand combat, the boarding action scene with the Morat is deadly.
- Events happen according to a timetable, and if the characters aren't in the right location, they hear about it on their comlogs during or after. The GM can also advance the timetable if he noticed some of the characters are feeling left out.
- Cut away from characters after a significant moment. They've rolled the dice, and they're waiting to see if something has worked.
- Make sure every character is invested in the game. Infowarriors may feel left out unless they know of the "Infowar in Space" (p. 131) or repeater buoys. Dogfaces may miss combat unless involved in the boarding action.

- Momentum and Heat are likely to be key components in the characters' victory, but the focus should be on the characters (and players).

RUNNING A SHIP

The statistics for the ships in this chapter closely match the ones in *Infinity Gamemaster's Guide* and are repeated here to allow their use, along with their equivalent stats if the GM prefers to use the system from the main rulebook.

SYSTEMS

Each vessel has four Systems scores, which function in a similar way to a character's Attributes. Whenever a character attempts a skill test that makes use of the vessel's systems, the vessel assists, rolling against a Target Number created from one of its Systems and an accompanying Personnel score. A vessel's Systems are as follows:

- **Construction (Brawn):** A vessel's Construction represents how solidly constructed it is, and how easily it can stand up to the stresses of non-standard operations.
- **Engines (Agility):** A vessel's Engines represent the output of its reactors, the thrust of its main engines, and its ability to adjust its heading and velocity quickly.
- **Network (Intelligence):** A vessel's Network represents its computer systems, LAIs, interfaces, and communications technologies.
- **Sensors (Awareness):** A vessel's Sensors represent its sensory and detection systems, and its ability to perceive objects, phenomena, and potential hazards.

A vessel's score in any one of these Systems will normally be between 6 and 17. In many cases, the score will be accompanied by a secondary value in parentheses. This score is treated similarly to a Superhuman Attribute (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 418), adding X additional successes on tests assisted by that System. For example, a vessel with extremely powerful Engines may have a score of 13 (2), adding two automatic successes to any skill test assisted by the vessel's Engines.

PERSONNEL

Personnel is the other part of the assistance a vessel provides to characters attempting skill tests. A Personnel score is added to one of the vessel's Systems to create the Target Number for the vessel's assistance. In addition, that Personnel score is used as the vessel's Focus range for that assistance.

If any assistance dice rolls are equal to or less than the Personnel score, it scores two successes instead of one.

A vessel's Personnel score is split into three categories, representing different areas of competence and skill and is valued from 0 to 5.

- **Combat:** This score governs how combat-ready the crew are, both in terms of operating weapons and defensive systems and in terms of boarding actions, combat flight missions, and any other activities related specifically to combat.
- **Navigation:** This score governs how well the crew can manoeuvre and guide the vessel, both short-term adjustments in combat or some other hazardous or delicate situation and plotting the course for a longer journey.
- **Technical:** This score governs how well the crew handles technical issues aboard the vessel, such as making repairs, performing maintenance, and adjusting ship performance during a crisis. In the case of the smallest vessels, this refers more to software and automation aboard the craft, as well as the work of flight crews and other personnel who maintain the vessel when it isn't in use. Regardless, it has the same effect.

THRUST

Spacecraft do not have an absolute speed. Instead, a vessel's thrust – working against its mass – determines how quickly and easily a vessel can accelerate and alter course. Small vessels require very little thrust to manoeuvre easily, while large vessels require a lot of thrust simply to get moving in the first place.

A spacecraft's base Thrust score is equal to half its Engines score, rounded down.

ARMOUR

Even lightweight spacecraft are strengthened against the rigours of interplanetary travel. At the bare minimum, this will be armour plating and thermal and radiation shielding to protect against debris, but warships will have outer layers laced or plated with Teseum to protect them against high-yield explosives and considerable impact forces from mass drivers.

A spacecraft's Armour functions as Soak, reducing damage inflicted to the vessel by attacks and hazards. Spacecraft have a basic Armour equal to half their Construction score (round down) plus their Class.

HULL INTEGRITY (VIGOUR)

A vessel's Hull Integrity is normally proportionate to its size, the resilience of its construction, and whether it was built for combat or other hazardous conditions. Tougher ships have higher Hull Integrity, allowing them to withstand greater stress and punishment.



Hull Integrity functions similarly to a character's Vigour or an object's Structure and is reduced by damage suffered. Too much damage suffered, or damage that reduces Hull Integrity to 0, will cause Hull Breaches, which can be disastrous.

A spacecraft's Hull Integrity is equal to its Construction multiplied by its Class. For Class 0 vessels, their Hull Integrity is equal to half their Construction, rounded down.

SECURITY AND FIREWALL

A ship's network has security features no different to those of any other quantronic network. Security Soak and a Firewall score, just as it would be for any other network, follow the normal Infowar rules. A vessel's basic Firewall is equal to its Network plus Technical scores, with a basic Security equal to its Technical score.

IMPACT

Impact is used to determine the force of a collision between the vessel and another object. Impact is a flat value equal to the vessel's Scale, plus a number of **N** equal to half its Construction score (rounding down).

ENDURANCE

While not a massive concern for civilian vessels, which are designed to disperse heat at approximately the rate at which they generate it, warships must consider their thermal capacity carefully. The capabilities of a combat vessel are incomplete without considering how much heat a warship can generate before it must disengage. A vessel's basic Endurance is equal to its Construction.

When a vessel's Endurance is at 0, any actions or effects which would reduce the vessel's Endurance further instead cause a single Hull Breach.

SCENE 1: TEST ENVIRONMENT

BATTLES IN SPACE

Ships of the Human Sphere and the *Infinity Gamemaster's Guide* provide additional space combat rules and material for space-based conflict.

Some of the information from those books is reproduced here.

If the GM doesn't have access to the *Infinity Gamemaster's Guide*, see "Running a Ship" on p. 123.

Naval Officer –
p. 145

Reporter –
Infinity Corebook, p. 452

The Shasvastii detector is put in place throughout the ships of Acheron Blockade while the characters heal up from their battles. Unless the characters have suspicions regarding Anderson, they are assigned to guard Anderson on a visit to the *Zhèngyìfēngbào* (translated as "the righteous storm"), a Yu Jing *Jiāngnán*-class destroyer. It's also the ship where the other Speculo Killer, Tokloshii, has been assigned.

BOARDING PASSES

Wade happily points out the alien silhouette of the Tohaa *Errant*-class ship, *Noore the Kiinote Tael* (*Kiinote-2*) and its triad of smaller *Toomaro* support vessels. Anderson sits quietly looking out the window, speaking only when spoken to.

With the Pyxis Shasvastii detector in place, this "diplomatic mission" to the Yu Jing ship is little more than a PR exercise, but it is needed by O-12. It's also requires the command staff to be in attendance, which is a perfect distraction for Tokloshii to get the Teseum transmitter in place and working.

BLOCKADE RUNNERS

The ship the characters are arriving at is one of Yu Jing's workhorse destroyers, one of the *Jiāngnán*-class. The *Zhèngyìfēngbào* isn't the most attractive of ships, but that's one of the reasons O-12 chose it. The StateEmpire's political officers may have had some time to cordon off the more classified areas, but there's less chance for Yu Jing to show up the other G5 powers.

Docking with the *Zhèngyìfēngbào* is a simple process, and likely to come as a surprise to the characters after dealing with Yu Jing forces in their previous adventures. Once through the airlock, Captain (Admiral) Chen Xiu Ying waits to greet the delegation, together with his second-in-command (and political officer) Zhang Mǐn (they are both Naval Officers, see p. 145). A quintet of StateEmpire marines form an honour guard, along with the inevitable Party journalist there to film the situation. Zhou Xiùlán is an up-and-coming star in the Yu Jingese news agency broadcasts. Expected to become Yu Jing's very own answer to Candy Double, she is hugely popular due to the StateEmpire's broadcasts.

The captain greets the characters warmly. Zhang Mǐn's body language and posture suggest she is far from happy at the situation. A successful **Challenging (D2) Psychology test** success reveals she is under a great deal of stress with Zhou Xiùlán onboard. The fact that a PanOceanian senator is also on board with an acting Admiral isn't helping...

Zhou Xiùlán is one of those individuals that queries everything. She's likely to become an annoyance to the characters within seconds, especially if they are Ariadnan to whom she is amazingly patronising and condescending.

"Is this your first time on a proper spacecraft?"

"I'm recording this quantronically. Do you know what that word means?"

"You poor dear. No Cube."

The captain leads the delegation on a brief courtesy tour of the ship, nothing classified, although it is enough to allow the characters to see where everything is. The five marines are in constant attendance. If a character states the need to use the facilities, one will stand guard outside the head.

CREW COMPLEMENT OF THE ZHÈNGYIFÈNGBÀO

As well as the marines the characters encounter, there are around 200 crew stationed aboard the ship. Of these, 110 are engineering or other tech support staff (see “Tech Support”, *Infinity Corebook* p. 457), 32 are fighter or interceptor pilots (see “Pilot”, *Infinity Corebook*, p. 455), and 64 Zhànshì Marines. Around half of the ship’s complement are actively on duty, with the remainder asleep or off duty in the racks.

The crew are classed as competent, with a TN of 11 and a Focus of 1 in regard to their specific roles.

ZHÀNSHÌ MARINE

The armed forces of the State Empire on the Zhèngyifēngbào, the Zhànshì Qízhi marines are used to fighting in little or no gravity, and train extensively for such situations (see **Gravity Zones**, *Infinity Corebook* p.109). While they may not be initially well-disposed towards the characters, they are both efficient and pragmatic and will take the threat to the spacecraft seriously. There are two marines assigned to the bridge at all times – if the GM wishes, they are also hurt or killed when Wade detonates (1 Heat).

The marines have fought Shasvastii before, so have some familiarity with their infiltration tactics – the GM can use the marines as possible plot hooks. For example: “They’re making their way to the reactor!” as communication chatter during the battle.

For 1 Heat, the marines are also equipped with Boarding shotguns (*Infinity Corebook*, p.363).

TROOPER

ZHÀNSHÌ MARINE

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
8	8	9	7	8	7	9

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+1	1	Movement	+1	–	Social	–	–
Fortitude	+1	1	Senses	–	–	Technical	+1	–

DEFENCES

Firewall	8	Resolve	9	Vigour	–
Security	–	Morale	1	Armour	2

ATTACKS

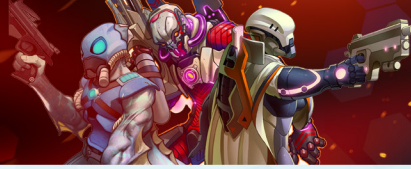
- **Combi Rifle:** C/M 1+5 (N), Burst 2, 2H, Expert 1, Vicious 1, Expert 1, MULTI Light Mod
- **Pistol:** R/C, 1+4 (N), Burst 2, 1H, Vicious 1
- **Knife:** Melee, 1+4 (N), damage, 1H, Concealed 1, Non-Hackable, Subtle 2, Thrown, Unforgiving 1
- **Stun Baton:** 1+4 (N), 1H, Non-Hackable, Knockdown, Subtle 1, Stun

GEAR: Light Combat Armour

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Unrelenting Barrier:** To serve the State Empire is the greatest honour. These soldiers simply refuse to fail. They benefit from a Morale soak equal to their Fortitude expertise. This is incorporated into their profile.





ZHÈNGYÌFÈNGBÀO, JIǎNGNÁN DESTROYER

Jiāngnán – literally “south of the river” – was not only one of historical China’s most prosperous regions, it was home to the Jiāngnán Shipyard, birthplace of many a powerful destroyer in its heyday. The Jiāngnán-class destroyer pays tribute to Yu Jing’s storied past, while charging boldly into its future. Capable of light orbital bombardment, launching attack craft, and trading blows with other warships, Jiāngnán Destroyers are utilitarian vessels, capable of providing whatever the StateEmpire needs in a given situation.

As generalist ships, they lack any one standout feature. That said, any opponent who underestimates these powerhouses does so at their own peril. The lack of best-in-class features is academic when facing the full might of a destroyer’s arsenal.

ATTRIBUTES

Class	3	Type	Antimatter Drive, Ionclad 2, Limited Carrier 2, Remora, T-Clad, Warship				
Construction	13	Engines	10	Network	10	Sensors	11

COMBAT

Combat	3	Navigation	2	Technical	2
Thrust	5	Impact	3+6	Endurance	10

DEFENCES

Armour	14	Hull Integrity	39	Security	3	Firewall	13
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ARMAMENT

- **Bombardment Cannon:** Mass Driver, Class 3, Range 3, Burst 2, Damage 4+8 , Front Arc, Piercing 2, Precise 2, Vicious 1; 6 Reloads
- **2x Missile Battery:** Missile, Class 2, Damage 3+8 , Area 0, Piercing 2, Vicious 1; 5 Reloads each
- **Defensive Battery:** Point Defence, Class 1, Range 1, Burst 3, Damage 2+5 , Salvo 1 (Area 0), Piercing 2; 6 Reloads

NOTES

- When fired into a planet’s atmosphere, the bombardment cannon’s attacks are dispersed into hot shrapnel, dealing 2+4 damage to a number of zones equal to the number of effects rolled, to a minimum of 1.
- Carries 2 squadrons of attack craft: 1 x Fighter, 1 x Interceptor.
- **Mass Driver:** Mass Drivers propel a projectile at incredible speeds, using kinetic energy to inflict harm. They have no additional special rules.
- **Missile:** Missiles are self-propelled, with a range of payloads, remote-guided to their targets. Each salvo of missiles uses a single Reload. Missiles do not have Range or Burst categories, as they are fired differently. A salvo of missiles is considered to be a Class 0 vessel with Thrust 8, Hull Integrity 3, and Armour 0, controlled remotely by an LAI or the launching vessel’s hacker. A missile, when launched, has a current speed of 5, and the salvo’s first movement is performed immediately upon launch. The missiles detonate if they enter the same zone as the target and succeed at an **Average (D1) Spacecraft test**.
- **Point Defence:** These weapons are used for close range defence and are normally fired in response to an attack. They cannot be used at range 3 or beyond, but they can be fired as a Reaction to an enemy vessel (including missiles) entering within range.

SCENE 2: TURBULENCE WARNING

RED ALERT!

The characters become aware of a sudden tension in the air of the command bridge. Several of the experimental turbulence platforms are apparently malfunctioning. Designed to create gravitational fluctuations, they appear to be drawing significantly more power. The Teseum transmitter has been activated by Tokloshii. Not only has the transmitter reconfigured the turbulence platforms to stabilise the gravitational flux of the wormhole, the transmitter is hiding what’s happening until the last minute. Massamachos reveals his true nature at this moment and tries to take out as many of the bridge crew as possible.

The tour is cut short by a sudden alarm, and the ship suddenly bursts into motion. The lighting shifts to emergency red. Hatches are closed and sealed, and marines move to guard corridor nexus points.

If the characters ask, the ship is now on high alert. Unless the characters specifically try to stop him, the captain makes his way to the bridge, swiftly followed by Anderson. Physically stopping the captain will get the marine guards involved.



As the characters make their way to the bridge, ask them to make a **Challenging (D2) Observation test**. A success means they think they spot a familiar face among the crew (which may be one of their Wilderness of Mirrors objectives). It's Tokloshii, who has taken the form of one of the ship's engineers.

As this point, ask what the characters are doing. If they choose to head back to the shuttle, they will have to drag Anderson from the bridge first. Alternatively, if they abandon Anderson, they may find the shuttle is already leaving (see "The Shuttle Now Departing..." on p. 128).

Arriving on the bridge, the captain consults his subordinates. Increased neutrino emissions suggest the wormhole is becoming active, according to the sensor sweeps from the sensor network there. Two marines take up guard duty at the bridge entrance.

The captain looks at Anderson for confirmation. Anderson nods and the two of them move to the captain's ready room. If the characters follow, there's only enough space for two other characters, possibly leaving the others outside.

Captain Chen — or Admiral Chen as he describes himself — performs both a retinal scan and a voiceprint identifier. Then it is Anderson's turn.

Anderson turns and winks at the characters before doing the same as Chen, recounting a particularly crude limerick as a voiceprint. There's a pause, and then a small display pops up in both the ready room and bridge. It shows a series of small dots flickering into green life around the wormhole.

Other members of the PJC and the other Acheron Blockade ship commanders also flicker into life as the turbulence platform defence grid comes online.

PREPARE FOR TURBULENCE!

A **Challenging (D2) Tech test** success allows a character to figure out the source of the dots; the turbulence platforms are being brought online. These devices, while experimental, are about to be tested in battle.

TURBULENCE PLATFORMS

A development submitted to the O-12 military committee from an anonymous source, the plans for the turbulence platforms offer a method to further destabilise Acheron. Using E/M emitters and fusion energy injection, the turbulence platforms aim to create more fluctuations in the wormhole and attack the systems protecting ships passing through it. Results so far have been difficult to measure, but if they can achieve their promised function, they may be able to swing the Paradiso conflict into the favour of the Human Sphere. Unfortunately, the technology is untested until today.

A character succeeding at a **Daunting (D3) Science test** notices the power draw is high for these platforms. There are murmurs and nods of assent, and Anderson and Captain Chen shake hands. Of course, things are about to go to hell in a spectacular way.

Both Massamachos and Tokloshii's plan is now in the final phase. Neutrino emissions spike as the wormhole begins to open...

BRIDGE TAKEDOWN

Most of the bridge crew are seasoned veterans, but the wormhole's opening is still enough to fill the room with tension. More than a few crewmembers wipe the sweat from their faces, shifting nervously as the wormhole slowly blossoms open. Unfortunately, the threat isn't out there – it's already aboard.

WADE BLOWS UP

The micro-explosive in Wade's Cube (p. 145) is activated. Wade turns to the characters to say something then his head – and most of his upper torso – explodes. Any characters on the bridge must make an **Average (D1) Athletics test** or suffer 1+5 **W** damage with the Piercing 2, Spread 1, Terrifying 2, Unsubtle, and Vicious 2 qualities. Wade is naturally killed although he can be Resurrected.

BOOM TODAY!

Tokloshii has also been busy. Planted D-charges and needle mines cause a hull breach and multiple casualties in the pilot and marine living quarters. The detonations create further chaos, and the explosions are felt throughout the ship.

THE SHUTTLE NOW DEPARTING...

Both Tokloshii and Massamachos have their escape plan and exit strategy in place. Tokloshii has sealed the bulkheads to the breaches – and the rest of the ship – giving Massamachos a clear run to the shuttle.

Whether the characters are in the ready room or not, Massamachos/Anderson pulls his weapon and attempts to shoot Chen point-blank, using 1 Heat to take the initiative. At this point, Massamachos drops all pretence of his Anderson persona and implements his escape plan. If he gets the chance, he'll attempt to shoot Zhang Min as well.

If the characters are completely unaware of events in the ready room or bridge, then the first they know of it is when they feel the rumble of each explosion through the deck. They arrive at the shuttle just in time to see the airlock close. For 1 Heat, they see Anderson/Massamachos wave at them as the airlock seals behind him.

If the characters are on the bridge or in the ready room, they can attempt to follow Massamachos or at least keep up with him to shoot him. It requires a successful face-to-face Athletics contest to catch up with the Speculo Killer.

Massamachos will use their smoke grenades, and **Hard to Hit** ability to keep the characters occupied or covered until they can get to the shuttle.

Even if the characters do manage to stop Massamachos, they're not the only Speculo Killer on board of course. Tokloshii is still aboard if Massamachos is killed.

Shasvastii Speculo Killer –
Infinity Corebook, p. 473

SCENE 3: WELCOME WAGON

In the aftermath of Wade's death and the explosions — plus any chase through the ship — both the captain and Zhang Mǐn are dead or possibly incapacitated in the latter case. It takes a **Daunting (D3) Psychology** or **Medicine test success** to restore Zhang Mǐn to consciousness and to at least some semblance of normalcy. She's in no fit state to command.

HEADLESS OR LEADERLESS?

Since Zhang Mǐn is either dead or perceived unfit to command, the characters could take control of the ship. Zhou Xiùlán suggests this loudly since,

“They are after all O-12 agents.”

This doesn't come as much of surprise to the surviving crew, which suggests the characters' StarCo cover is now irrevocably blown.

The comms chatter suddenly goes crazy as a large area of the sensor net around the Acheron Gate goes dark. The Shasvastii have been busy. Their agents have been able to move around since the detector is utterly useless and have sabotaged part of the sensor net. It has caused a cascade failure, and the Acheron Blockade is partially blinded. The characters may be able to use the ship's sensors or otherwise take control of the situation on the bridge.

TAKING A ROLE & TAKING BACK CONTROL

After Massamachos hits the bridge, there's every chance the characters need to step up or step in. The crew of the Zhèngyìfēngbào have been badly shaken by the death of their captain and the explosions. If one of the characters wants to try to inspire the crew and shake them out of their shock, it takes a **Challenging (D2) Command test success**, although the GM may impose a +1 bonus if the character can make a rousing enough speech. If the characters fail to motivate the Zhèngyìfēngbào's crew, the ship's complication range on any test increases by one step.

The following roles are Crew Roles on the bridge, although the explosions have also decimated the ships defences as both the marines and fighter pilots have taken significant losses.

- **Commander:** A Commander is a key part of a large vessel's crew, coordinating disparate actions and providing a central authority who makes all the vital decisions. A vessel may have



only a single Commander. A character in the Commander role may assume any other roles in addition to being Commander and may relinquish other roles (a Minor Action) to allow other characters to take them.

- **Pilot:** A spacecraft may have only a single Pilot. The Pilot may take actions to manoeuvre the vehicle. Whenever the vessel needs to make a skill test related to physical movement, the Pilot will make the test using the Spacecraft skill unless specified otherwise. A spacecraft without a Pilot automatically fails all tests to avoid hazards or other terrain.
- **Gunner:** A Gunner operates weaponry mounted on the vessel itself. A vessel with multiple weapons can have multiple Gunners, but any single weapon may only be operated by one Gunner each round.



SPACECRAFT HARMS: HULL BREACHES

Hull Breaches are spacecraft harms. A vessel can withstand a number of Hull Breaches equal to its Class. If a vessel suffers more Hull Breaches than its Class, then it is disabled and cannot take further action during the scene, though crew and passengers can be assumed to survive due to emergency life support provisions.

If a disabled vessel suffers one or more additional Breaches, it is destroyed, and any crew and passengers left aboard are slain.

- **Hacker:** A Hacker oversees control of the ship's quantum defenses and network security, as well as coordinating remote-operated weapons, quantum attacks on other vessels, and other Infowar techniques. A vessel may have only a single Hacker, though other characters may assist the Hacker's actions.
- **Engineer:** An Engineer is responsible for the technology that allows a spacecraft to function. In a crisis, a skilled Engineer can enhance a vessel's performance, pushing it to the very limits. A vessel may only have a single Engineer, though other characters may assist the Engineer's actions.

FIXING THE SHIP

There are several problems needing fixed on the ship, thanks to the Shasvastii sabotage. It's also possible that Tokloshii stayed on board if Massamachos was stopped. Since Tokloshii has taken a role in the engineering section, the repairs may not go according to plan – Tokloshii will attempt to conceal the Teseum transmitter for as long as possible (see p. 99).

- **Bulkheads:** Many of the crew are trapped inside the ship by the sealed bulkheads. It takes a **Challenging (D2) Hacking test** success

or **Daunting (D3) Tech test** success to unravel the mess the Shasvastii have made of the door codes. If the characters attempt to discover how the bulkheads were sealed, a **Challenging (D2) Analysis test** success discovers the bulkheads were sealed from the engineering section. If the bulkheads are not fixed, the ship's Technical score is reduced by 1.

- **Venting Atmosphere:** The explosions also caused a Hull Breach. A section of the ship has been opened to space, losing atmosphere and personnel. The vessel immediately loses 3 Endurance, and it increases the difficulty of the skill tests it attempts by +1. This can be mitigated by the character in the Engineer Crew Role issuing a Repair Team order.

PANIC AT PAN-O

The *Zhèngyìfēngbào* mission is backing up one of the PanOceania carriers, the *Majestic-class H.S.S. Sydney*. Unfortunately, the *Sydney* is having problems. Its advanced network and systems have been severely compromised by a Shasvastii agent, and they are way out of position. This leaves a hole in the line, and unless the characters ship fills the gap left, the Combined Army fleet is likely to exploit the weakness.

SCENE 4: UNWANTED ARRIVALS

A wave of Xhantri drones is first out of the wormhole. They are followed by a swarm of Shasvastii ghost ships and then fighters and bombers. The characters' ship is right in their path, and with the *H.S.S. Sydney* offline, the *Zhèngyìfēngbào* is the only defence.

ENEMY CRAFT

The Combined Army faces a challenging prospect in breaching the Acheron Blockade to get reinforcements to their terrestrial forces. Normally, the navy of the Ur Hegemony would have no issues breaching blockades and resupplying, and during the initial stages of their invasion they proved as much, devastating the human forces in the first two waves of conquest. Now the Combined Army faces a new challenge after the defenders of Paradiso plugged the gaps in their forces and blockaded the Acheron wormhole itself. Superior numbers and technology are no longer enough, and the warriors of the EI have had to adapt to account for the losses incurred by the wormhole and the defenders on the other side of it, a task made possible by their experience and tactical skill honed by hundreds of years of warfare.

To safely deploy troops to the other side of the wormhole, the Combined Army has established a doctrine of wave assaults and bait and switch tactics. The initial wave of each Combined Army assault is predominantly made up of probes, to establish the positions of enemy ships. These drones feed information back to the second wave and beyond, highlighting vital targets and gaps in the blockades firing vectors. The second wave is a force of unmanned fighter drones and carriers that engage the first wave of the human defenders, attempting to disrupt the targeting lanes of the larger ships. The third wave consists of manned fighters, bombers, and explosive-rigged fire ships that directly engage the enemy, causing as much damage as possible. This makes way for the fourth and final wave, the troop carriers and supply ships, which emerge and make attempts to pass by the Acheron Blockade. Any ships remaining from the initial waves will break off after the ships are through to escort and protect them as they make for Paradiso, but casualties of the first few waves tend to be high, and the fourth wave must usually rely on their own wits to make it to the planet.

SPLITTING THE PARTY

There's a chance the characters split up at this point.

- **Launch Protocols:** If the characters are pilots, they can join the fighter or interceptor defence.
- **Battle Stations!** The characters can also take charge of the ships' defences, both the gun batteries and troops.

During combat the GM should switch between the characters, in the same way movies cut between scenes.

INFOWAR IN SPACE

Infowar attacks are both extremely potent tools in vessel-to-vessel combat and extremely difficult to accomplish. The limited range of hacking devices and similar technologies means that would-be infowarriors need to get extremely close to their targets or have some way of extending their range. The use of repeater buoys deployed by missiles and mounting repeaters on fast-moving vessels both allow for an onslaught of quantronic attacks. Naturally, any object identified as carrying an enemy repeater becomes a high-priority target.

Infowar attacks in space can only be attempted at Close range, with the attacker able to strike from repeaters scattered around the battlefield as if they were in that zone. These repeaters can be attacked and subverted by the enemy.

Whenever a hacker runs a program, attempts an Infowar action, or makes or defends against quantronic attack, they attempt a Hacking skill test as normal. However, in all these cases, they also benefit from their vessel's network infrastructure, assisted by the vessel's Network and Combat scores (for attacks) or Network and Technical scores (for nonattack Infowar actions).

Every spacecraft is considered to have a repeater, though these are not always active as they can pose a vulnerability. They also frequently load repeaters into missiles to scatter them across the battlefield and have other ways to spread them. Any repeater that isn't part of a ship self-destructs after a short time, to avoid leaving network vulnerabilities everywhere. At the end of each round, remove any repeater that isn't aboard a ship and wasn't deployed during that round.

SPACECRAFT ACTIONS

The following actions are available to characters in one of the Crew Roles (see p. 129). Characters may also attempt any of the following standard Warfare and Infowar actions to affect the ship: Assist, Attack (quantronic attacks only, assisted by the vessel's Network and Combat scores), Exploit (cannot be used to benefit attacks with the vessel's weapons), Ready, Recover (quantronic damage only), Access System/Terminate Connection, Transmit, Use Program.

A vessel's ability to Manoeuvre is based on two factors, its Thrust, and its Class.

- As a Minor Action, a Pilot may spend Momentum on the Manoeuvre Momentum spends (below) to alter the vessel's speed and direction. Those spends may be used in any combination, though some are restricted in when, and how often, they can be used. The total amount of Momentum that can be spent in this way is equal to the vessel's Thrust, reduced by its Class, to a minimum of 0. Taking this Minor Action reduces the vessel's Endurance by 1.
- As a Standard Action, a Pilot may attempt a Spacecraft test, assisted by the vessel using its Engines and Navigation scores. If successful, they may spend Momentum on the Manoeuvre Momentum spends. The difficulty of this test is equal to the Class of the vessel, and a successful test receives bonus Momentum (which cannot be saved) equal to the vessel's Thrust minus its

Class, to a minimum of 0. Taking this Standard Action reduces the vessel's Endurance by 2, and Complications may be spent reducing Endurance further (each Complication costing 1 extra Endurance).

- A Pilot may attempt only one of the action options above each Round.
- In addition, a Pilot may attempt Evasive Action as a Reaction to an incoming attack. This turns the attack into a face-to-face test, with the pilot rolling a Spacecraft test with a difficulty equal to their vessel's Class. In addition to adding to Heat (as a Reaction), this also reduces the vessel's Endurance by 1. Success allows the pilot to use Manoeuvre Momentum spends, altering course as part of the Reaction.

ACTIVE SENSOR PULSE (COMMANDER OR HACKER, STANDARD)

The vessel emits RADAR and LIDAR pulses to gain more information from their sensors. The character makes an **Average (D1) Tech test**. If successful, reduce the difficulty of all Analysis tests made to detect enemy ships by 1, plus 1 per Momentum spent, to a minimum of Difficulty 0. However, enemy vessels attempting to detect the ship also gain the same bonus until the start of the character's next turn.



COORDINATE (COMMANDER, STANDARD)

The Commander directs their subordinates to bolster their effectiveness. This is a **Simple (D0) Command test**, intended to generate Momentum for the group.

DEFENSIVE PERIMETER (GUNNER, STANDARD)

This may only be attempted by a Gunner operating a point defence weapon. The Gunner directs their weapons to fill the void with explosions and shrapnel, deterring vessels and destroying projectiles that stray too close. Choose either the zone that the Gunner's vessel is within or any zone adjacent to it. Any vessel that enters the chosen zone must attempt a **Challenging (D2) Spacecraft test** immediately. Failure means that the vessel suffers the point defence weapon's normal damage. This costs 1 Reload for the point defence weapon and 1 Endurance.

DIRECT (COMMANDER, STANDARD)

The Commander gives an immediate, specific order. Choose a single other character in the crew; that character may immediately attempt a single Standard Action, assisted by the Commander (who uses their Command skill to assist). This counts towards the number of standard actions that the chosen character may attempt each round.

ENHANCE PERFORMANCE (ENGINEER, STANDARD)

The Engineer adjusts key systems, pushing performance above normal levels. This reduces the vessel's Endurance by 3. Make a **Daunting (D3) Tech test**, assisted by the ship's Engines and Technical scores. If successful, add +2 Thrust and +1d20 to the next test involving a single System (choose Construction, Engines, Network, or Sensors). Momentum may be spent to reduce the Endurance cost of this action by 1 per Momentum spent.

FIRING SOLUTION (COMMANDER OR GUNNER, STANDARD)

The character takes additional time to calculate a precise firing solution for a subsequent attack. The character nominates a target they can detect, and one of the vessel's weapons and attempts a **Challenging (D2) Analysis test**, assisted by the ship's Network and Combat scores. If successful, the next attack with that weapon against that target, before the end of the character's next turn, gains the Piercing 2 quality.

HEAT MANAGEMENT (ENGINEER, STANDARD)

The character attempts to vent built-up heat in the vessel, cycle the vessel's coolant systems, or otherwise dispose of built-up heat, restoring some of the vessel's Endurance. The character attempts

a **Daunting (D3) Tech test**, assisted by the vessel's Construction and Technical scores. If successful, the vessel regains 1 lost Endurance, plus one more per Momentum spent. This cannot increase the vessel's Endurance above its normal maximum.

LAUNCH ATTACK CRAFT (COMMANDER, MINOR)

This can only be attempted by ship carrying an attack squadron. The Commander gives the order to launch attack craft using magnetic catapults (which also serve to catch landing vessels travelling at high speeds). A single squadron of attack craft are launched, with a speed of 3, and make their first move immediately.

QUANTRONIC COUNTER-MEASURES (HACKER, STANDARD)

The Hacker deploys a swarm of repeaters around the ship and begins broadcasting disruptive signals. Every zone adjacent to the ship's zone now contains a repeater. In addition, make a **Challenging (D2) Hacking test**, assisted by the ship's Network and Technical scores. If successful, any enemy remote action and any Infowar action attempted within the vessel's zone or a zone adjacent to it is increased in difficulty by +1 plus an additional +1 for every 2 Momentum spent until the start of the Hacker's next turn.

REPAIR TEAM (ENGINEER, STANDARD)

The Engineer directs and oversees repairs of the vessel. This is a **Challenging (D2) Tech test** as a Standard Action, assisted by the ship's Construction and Technical scores. If successful, restore Hull Integrity equal to the vessel's Technical score plus an additional 2 per Momentum spent. This action may instead be used to remove the effects caused by Hull Breaches. A successful test removes the effect of a single Hull Breach, though that Hull Breach still counts towards the maximum number that the vessel can withstand.

SPACECRAFT REACTIONS

The following Reactions can be attempted by a vessel's crew on behalf of the ship. If an event would allow more than one of the following Reactions from a single ship – regardless of which characters attempt them – only one may be chosen. For Evasive Action from the pilot, see p. 131.


DEFENCE (HACKER)

As a Reaction to a quantronic attack, a Hacker can attempt to defend the spacecraft. This functions as the normal Defence Reaction to a quantronic attack, described on p. 113 of the *Infinity Corebook*.

DEFENSIVE FIRE (GUNNER)

As a Reaction to an enemy vessel entering a zone within a range of 2 of the vessel, a Gunner may attempt Defensive Fire. This is a normal attack with a single point defence weapon under the Gunner's control. If an enemy vessel enters multiple zones within range during a single movement, it may only be targeted by a single Defensive Fire Reaction from each vessel it has moved within range of.

BRACE FOR IMPACT (COMMANDER OR ENGINEER)

As a Reaction to an attack, a Commander or Engineer may give the order to brace for impact. This adds 4  to the vessel's Armour against that attack as preparations are made to respond to the damage, but the next skill test attempted by a member of the vessel's crew suffers +2 difficulty as a result of those same preparations.

RETURN FIRE (GUNNER)

After being declared the target of a ranged attack, a Gunner may perform a Return Fire Reaction if they have a suitable weapon under their control. This functions in the same way as the normal Return Fire Reaction, described on p. 113 of the *Infinity Corebook*.

EVENTS

As detailed, the Combined Army attacks follows four waves. The characters may be involved in intercepting all four. The technology of the Exrah ships is equivalent to that of the Human Sphere, but the sheer volume of numbers could overwhelm the defenders. There is little difference in the smaller craft of both the Human Sphere defenders and the Combined Army attackers.

WAVE 1: PROBING ATTACKS

The first wave of consists of Xhantri bumblebee drones and remote carriers. The former are tiny drones designed to map out gaps in the defences. They are grouped into units of four drones (1 Heat adds another 4 drones). Each group of drones does its best to avoid attacking craft and get as far as possible to Paradiso. Although they can do little to harm attacking craft, for every two drones that get past, add 1 Heat to the GM pool.



FIGHTER

Though their precise construction and configuration may vary, fighters are a commonplace form of attack craft, often used in large quantities for short patrol and guard duties. Fighters are not particularly specialised and used both against other attack craft and against larger vessels.

ATTRIBUTES							
Class	0	Type	Warship				
Construction	8	Engines	10	Network	8	Sensors	9
COMBAT							
Combat	3	Navigation	2	Technical	1		
Thrust	4	Impact	4	Endurance	8		
DEFENCES							
Armour	5	Hull Integrity	4	Security	1	Firewall	1
ARMAMENT							
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Main Cannons: Mass Driver, Class 0, Range 0, Burst 3, Damage 2+4, Front Arc, Precise 1; 6 Reloads• Rockets: Munition, Class 0, Range 0, Burst 1, Damage 2+5, Vicious 1; 6 Reloads							

INTERCEPTOR

Highly agile craft, interceptors are outfitted to intercept other attack craft and guided missiles and to destroy them long before they can pose a threat. Interceptors are almost entirely incapable of dealing meaningful damage to large vessels.

ATTRIBUTES							
Class	0	Type	Antimatter Drive, Warship				
Construction	6	Engines	12	Network	10	Sensors	10
COMBAT							
Combat	3	Navigation	2	Technical	1		
Thrust	6	Impact	3	Endurance	6		
DEFENCES							
Armour	4	Hull Integrity	3	Security	1	Firewall	11
ARMAMENT							
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Main Cannons: Mass Driver, Class 0, Range 0, Burst 3, Damage 2+4, Front Arc, Precise 1; 6 Reloads• Defensive Guns: Point Defence, Class 0, Range 0, Burst 3, Damage 1+4, Salvo 1 (Piercing 1); 6 Reloads							

REMOTE CARRIER

ATTRIBUTES							
Class	0	Type	Passenger Ship				
Construction	8	Engines	7	Network	6	Sensors	5
COMBAT							
Combat	0	Navigation	3	Technical	2		
Thrust	3	Impact	4	IN	Endurance	6	
DEFENCES							
Armour	4	Hull Integrity	5	Security	2	Firewall	8
NOTES							
• Remote Carriers carry around 30 Remotes.							

XHANTRI BUMBLEBEE DRONE

Combined Army ships and troops fire these reconnaissance drones in large swarms through the Acheron Blockade, looking to find a way past O-12's defences. Although the majority are destroyed, many still find a way through. On Paradiso itself, these remotes are often released into the jungle, scouting the terrain ahead of Combined Army forces or providing an extra level of security around Combined Army holdings.

TROOPER


XHANTRI BUMBLEBEE DRONE

ATTRIBUTES						
AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
8	12	4	12	4	4	4

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE								
Combat	+1	–	Movement	+1	–	Social	–	–
Fortitude	–	–	Senses	+1	–	Technical	+1	–

DEFENCES					
Firewall	4	Resolve	4	Structure	4
Security	–	Morale	–	Armour	–

ATTACKS

- **Stun Attachment:** Melee, 1+4  damage, 1H, Knockdown, Subtle 1, Stun

GEAR: Stealth Technology

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Common Special Abilities:** Inured to Cold, Disease, Poison, and Vacuum, Superhuman Agility 2.
- **Tiny:** These remotes are so small they increase the difficulty to hit them by one step.
- **Stealth Technology:** Xhantri bumblebee drones have two bonus Momentum on all Stealth tests.



WAVE 2: DRONES

The second wave is designed to force capital ships to commit resources to their defence by having to deal with high volumes of dangerous remotes and navigational hazards.

COMBAT REMOTES

Combat remotes are designed to exploit the weaknesses in the defences. They carry a repeater and can be remotely piloted by a geist, making them useful tools for infowarriors.



TROOPER

COMBAT REMOTE

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
9	9	10	9	6	4	5

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+2	1	Movement	+2	—	Social	—	—
Fortitude	+1	—	Senses	—	—	Technical	—	—

DEFENCES

Firewall	6	Resolve	6	Structure	10
Security	2	Morale	—	Armour	3

ATTACKS

- **Slam:** Melee, 1+5 $\frac{1}{2}$ damage, Knockdown, Vicious 1
- **Combi Rifle:** Range C/M, 1+6 $\frac{1}{2}$ damage, Burst 2, 2H, Expert 1, MULTI Light Mod, Vicious 1

GEAR: Repeater

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Common Special Abilities:** Inured to Cold, Disease, Poison, and Vacuum, Supernatural Brawn 2



FIRESHIP

The fireships are remotely controlled fighters pointed at the Human Sphere's larger ships. They are usually set to follow a specific flight path but can also be remotely piloted by a geist.

ATTRIBUTES							
Class		0	Type	Warship			
Construction	8*	Engines	10	Network	8	Sensors	9
COMBAT							
Combat	1	Navigation		2	Technical		1
Thrust	5	Impact		4 (N) + see below	Endurance		8
DEFENCES							
Armour	5	Hull Integrity	4	Security	1	Firewall	9

ARMAMENT

- **Main Cannons:** Mass Driver, Class 0, Range 0, Burst 3, Damage 2+4 (N), Front Arc, Precise 1; 1 Reload
- **Fly Straight and True:** Fireships move directly at their target in a straight line, and don't deviate unless remotely piloted. Attempts to hit fireships have a +1 bonus.
- **Ready to Blow:** Fireships are rigged with charges to explode when an enemy vessel collides with them or when hit by fire. Fighters can evade these easily, but Class 2 or higher ships must take an Evasive Action to avoid hitting the craft, which does 2+6 (N) damage with the Anti-Materiel 2, Comms, Disposable, Piercing 3, Spread 1, Unsubtle, Vicious 2 qualities.



WAVE 3: ATTACK WAVE (FIGHTERS & BOMBERS)

As well as bomber attacks (normally escorted by two fighters), a cluster of Shasvastii ghost ships (see p. 25) attempts to make use of their stealth abilities to slip past the blockade. From there, they will spread out into the Human Sphere. They avoid combat if possible. If the ship searches for a ghost ship using an active sensor pulse, they spot one.

The fighters and bombers target the characters' ship (or ships if they are flying the fighters or interceptors). For 1 Heat, the bombers are equipped to use torpedoes instead.

BOMBERS

ATTRIBUTES							
Class	0		Type	Warship			
Construction	11	Engines	8	Network	10	Sensors	8
COMBAT							
Combat	3	Navigation	1		Technical	2	
Thrust	4	Impact	4 (N)		Endurance	11	
DEFENCES							
Armour	5	Hull Integrity	4	Security	1	Firewall	9

ARMAMENT

- **Defensive Guns:** Point Defence, Class 0, Range 0, Burst 3, Damage 1+4 (N), Salvo 1 (Piercing 1); 6 Reloads
 - **Heavy Bombs:** Munitions, Class 0, Range 0, Burst 3, Damage 2+6 (N), Precise 1, Salvo 1 (Area 0), Vicious 1; 3 Reloads
- or
- **Defensive Guns:** Point Defence, Class 0, Range 0, Burst 3, Damage 1+4 (N), Salvo 1 (Piercing 1); 6 Reloads
 - **Torpedoes:** Missile, Class 0, Damage 2+6 (N), Piercing 2, Vicious 1; 2 Reloads, turning the bomber into a torpedo bomber.

BREACHING PODS

Breaching pods are designed to affix themselves to the hull of a target then quickly burn through the hull and form a vacuum seal. From there, a unit of Combined Army soldiers rapidly deploys to the target ship. Normally these are Morat, since the Shasvastii prefer to deploy their Seed Soldiers from their ghost ships.


ATTRIBUTES					
Class	1	Type	Passenger Ship, Remora		
Construction	12	Engines	6	Network	6
COMBAT					
Combat	1	Navigation	3	Technical	2
Thrust	6	Impact	1+6	Endurance	6
DEFENCES					
Armour	5	Hull Integrity	8	Security	1
				Firewall	10

NOTES

- Can carry up to 6 passengers.
- **Limpet:** Destroying an attached breaching pod causes 1 Endurance damage to the vessel it is affixed to. Attaching to a vessel and burning through the hull takes several rounds, equal to the target ship's Class.

BOARDING ACTION

Breaching pods hit the hull and proximity alerts warn the bridge of a minor hull breaches. No atmosphere is being lost. A successful **Average (D1) Extraplanetary test** allows a character to realise the ship has been boarded.

The characters defending the ship face off against a Morat boarding party, a fireteam of five Morat. A 2-Heat spend replaces one of the Morat with a Daturazi Witch-Soldier. The close confines of the ship's corridors mean that any firefight takes place at Medium to Close range, and the bulkheads and support buttresses of the ship grant soft Cover Soak (+2  Cover Soak). The Morat target is the bridge.

Daturazi Witch-Soldier –
Infinity Corebook, p. 467

Morat –
Infinity Corebook, p. 465





SCENE 5: ACHERON'S FALL?

The characters are now entering the final scenes of the adventure. Not only is the wormhole still opening, but it is also opening *wider*. A **Challenging (D2) Analysis test** success allows a character to surmise that something larger than the small craft the Combined Army have sent through is coming through.

The characters are on the clock as *Raxora*-class troop carriers are already making their way into the wormhole on the other side, together with ephemeral Exrah fighter escorts and other ships. The *Raxora*-class is an Exrah-built carrier, but by Human Sphere standards it's the size of the *H.S.S. Sydney* supercarrier. It's an expendable Exrah asset since the EI has no wish to risk an Ur Hegemony craft on an untried technology.

The characters may be wondering how the wormhole is being kept open. A **Challenging (D2) Science test** success allows a character to realise the turbulence platforms are being used to correct the gravimetric shear of the wormhole, but the platforms require a control signal. Anyone using an active sensor pulse or succeeding at a **Daunting (D3) Analysis test** realises the signal is emanating from their ship, the *Zhèngyifēngbào*, and most of the power from the ship's reactor is being siphoned off somewhere...

THE TESEUM TRANSMITTER

The characters must shut down the transmitter which is hard-wired to the ship reactor. The other Speculo Killer, Tokloshii, is still aboard and capable of defending itself and the transmitter. If the characters can destroy the transmitter, the gravitational turbulence will return and destroy the Combined Army carrier ship.

It takes a **Daunting (D3) Observation test** success to spot the device in engineering, a sinister-looking octagon of black metal with cables snaking into the main reactor. It will take 10 minutes and a **Daunting (D3) Tech test** success to deactivate it. It also needs a successful **Challenging (D2) Athletics test** to climb up to the precarious ledge as well. That's almost the same amount of time it will take the *Raxora*-class carrier to emerge fully from the wormhole...

For a 1-Heat spend, Tokloshii has also hidden some needle mines around the transmitter (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 349 for detecting and disarming mines). Tokloshii will also be present and will defend the Teseum transmitter for as long as possible, delaying the characters any way he can.



RAMMING SPEED!

If all else fails, the characters can also crash their ship into the oncoming vessels triggering an explosion and destroying the transmitter – leading to a frantic race to the lifeboats and encounters with Combined Army boarding parties on the way out. The Combined Army at that point will attempt to seize the ship and do their best to stop the characters once they set their course.

The *Rexora* is significantly larger than the *Zhèngyifēngbào* but has limited space to manoeuvre. Any impact will knock it into gravimetric shear.

They will need to hold the bridge until the last possible moment though, so the characters will need to fight their way through Morat fireteams to escape. There's also the small matter of the two Exrah escort ships that will attempt to pound the ship to pieces. As the Pilot or Engineer powers up the engines to full, an **Average (D1) Observe test** success allows them to notice the power draw in engineering.

EXRAH ESCORT SHIP

ATTRIBUTES							
Class	3	Type	Ironclad 2, T-Clad, Remora, Warship				
Construction	15	Engines	12	Network	10	Sensors	10
COMBAT							
Combat	4	Navigation	1	Technical	3		
Thrust	6	Impact	3+7 	Endurance	15		
DEFENCES							
Armour	15	Hull Integrity	45	Security	3	Firewall	13
ARMAMENT							
• 3× Defensive Battery: Point Defence, Class 1, Range 1, Burst 3, Damage 2+5  , Salvo 1 (Area 0), Piercing 2; 6 Reloads each							



RAXORA-CLASS CARRIER

ATTRIBUTES							
Class		5	Type	Antimatter Drive, Ionclad 6, Minotaur Motor, T-Clad, Warship			
Construction	16	Engines	14	Network	12	Sensors	14
COMBAT							
Combat	5	Navigation	3	Technical	4		
Thrust	7	Impact	5+8	Endurance	16		
DEFENCES							
Armour	20	Hull Integrity	80	Security	4	Firewall	16
ARMAMENT							
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Missile Battery: Missile, Class 2, Damage 3+8, Area 0, Piercing 2, Vicious 1; 4 Reloads• 2× Broadside Batteries: Mass Driver, Class 3, Range 3, Burst 3, Damage 4+10, Area 1, Piercing 2, Salvo 1 (Vicious 1), Vicious 1; 6 Reloads each• 3× Defensive Battery: Point Defence, Class 1, Range 1, Burst 3, Damage 2+5, Salvo 1 (Area 0), Piercing 2; 6 Reloads each							

ENDGAME

The characters can take a certain amount of satisfaction as the *Rexora*-class carrier is torn apart by either the collision with the *Zhèngyifēngbào* or the restoration of the turbulence platforms in a shattering clash of metal. For a brief instant, the wormhole flares wide, and the characters can see other carriers behind the one they've just destroyed. They see the alien stars and nebulae of the other side of the wormhole, as well as huge space stations of alien construct.

The wormhole suddenly slams shut, and all that's left is the smouldering wreckage of the carrier. Wreckage from other ships, both Human Sphere and Combined Army, spiral through the void. Here and there are secondary explosions as debris detonates or the Human Sphere and Tohaa ships destroy another straggler. A few ships might have made it through, but those are a job for the Orbital Blockade. And of course, no one knows just how many of the Shasvastii ghost ships got through.

The characters are thoroughly debriefed by O-12 then given a few months' vacation time, as well as medical care or Resurrections. Then they're given their next mission – and one that probably gets them as far away from the PJC as possible, such as the Human Edge, until O-12 decides what to do with the characters.

APPENDIX 1
EXPERIENCE POINTS
& STORY SEEDSEXPERIENCE
POINTS

Characters gain XP at various points in the campaign, and the time between operations allows them to spend them – so long as the GM approves it. See the *Infinity Corebook*, p. 74 for more information on spending Experience Points (XP).

- **Base Award:** Each member of the group gains 300-500 XP per session.
- **Wilderness of Mirror Goals:** Achieving a successful Wilderness of Mirrors objective is worth 50-100 XP.
- **Bonus Awards:** The GM can award 25-50 discretionary XP to individual characters, but never more than 100 XP (if they also achieved Wilderness of Mirrors Goals).
- **Operational Success:** Each operation in the campaign gives a character 100 XP.
- **Completing the Campaign:** every character surviving the campaign (Resurrected or not) gains 100 XP. They also gain an Infinity Point, up to the maximum of 5.



STORY SEEDS

- **Shasvastii Teardrop (Paradiso):** A Shasvastii teardrop explodes over a major urban centre. These teardrops are large, heavily armoured stealth-ballistic missiles that shatter near the surface and distribute a multitude of Seed Soldier capsules. When one goes off, you're never entirely sure where the actual Shasvastii infiltrators emerged... or if they emerged everywhere at once. It's an intelligence nightmare.
- **Clearcutting (Paradiso):** The PCs pick up a scrub contract through their StarCo cover to burn back the voracious, fast-growth vegetation of the Paradiso jungle. But they're given secret orders to maintain a listening post on what they're told is Combined Army signal traffic. If they listen in on the traffic, however, they'll discover that what they're really spying on is the com chatter for a different O-12 op. Why is ALEPH having them spy on Bureau Toth operations?
- **Rescue Op (Paradiso):** A transport ship carrying Ariadnan troops is shot down over contested territory. The PCs are well-positioned to carry out a rapid rescue mission before an Onyx Contact Force can reach the crash site.
- **Satori Embezzling (Satori):** During the "Satori Sunrise", a criminal accounting analysis of financial records reveals a Yu Jingese employee's petty embezzlement of corporate funds. The PCs can use this leverage to flip the employee.
- **ALEPH Exposed (Paradiso):** Near the Southern Front in Yingxian Province, there are top secret ALEPH nodes which could be used by the EI to infect the Paradiso datasphere. The PCs stumble on a Combined Army plan to seize one of the nodes while investigating the disappearance of a data worker. If their investigation isn't quick enough, they end up in a desperate siege defence against Morat troops, trying to hold them long enough for it to be destroyed.

APPENDIX 2

NPCS

JHAERIX ANDERSON

Appearance: Tall and distinguished, Anderson is always smartly dressed and tends to tap his chin when considering matters (which is often). He has a slight limp from a hip wound caused by a Morat scimitar in the Second Offensive.

Roleplaying:

- His Darwin accent is more pronounced when excited.
- Gracious in defeat, cautious in victory, relentless in the search for truth.
- Will wield a pen or pistol if needed.

Background: Jhaerix Anderson was born in Darwin on Neoterra. He started out as PanOceanian career military but found the political arena far more to his liking. He has a knack for diplomacy and rose quickly through the ranks before being co-opted into O-12. His death at the hands of the Speculo Killer Massamachos is a massive loss to O-12.

Key Info:

- Takes charge of the characters and their investigations personally.
- Considers O-12 field agents as a commander considers front-line soldiers.
- His wife was an Atek and still chooses to eschew the various technological advancements of PanOceania.

Stats: Diplomat (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 429), Shasvastii Speculo Killer (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 473)

CHLOE BARNES

Appearance: Freakishly tall thanks to low gravity, Barnes has a cadaverous appearance that is helped little by her close-cropped white hair. Half of her face is covered in subdermal tattoo of Mandelbrot patterns.

Roleplaying:

- Hunts and pecks when speaking, bobbing her head.
- Paranoid — if you're not with her, you're against her.
- There's her way. And that's it.

Background: Barnes has spent years excising her past and fighting the good fight against ALEPH.

She's clawed her way up through the ranks, and most of the other Dark Sapphire analysts know her by reputation. She's convinced that ALEPH has sold out the Human Sphere to the EI.

Key Info:

- Hates ALEPH with a pathological passion.
- Her FastPanda is burned and blackened.
- Prefers to deal with events from afar and through intermediaries like the Zeroes.

NEMESIS

CHLOE BARNES

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
8	9	8	9	11	8	10


FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+1	—	Movement	—	—	Social	+2	—
Fortitude	+2	—	Senses	+2	—	Technical	+2	1

DEFENCES

Firewall	11	Resolve	19	Vigour	8
Security	2	Morale	1	Armour	2

ATTACKS

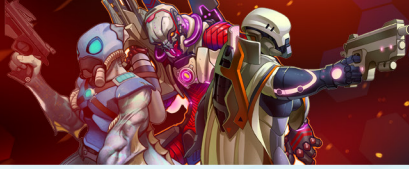
- **Defensive Hacking Device:** CLAW-0, SWORD-0, SHIELD-3, GADGET-1, IC-3
- **Assault Pistol:** Close Range, 1+4  damage, Burst 2, Unbalanced, Close Quarters, Spread 1 (Silencer)

GEAR: Light Combat Armour, FastPanda, Deflector-1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **A Mind for Chaos (1–5 Heat):** Barnes has a knack for detecting patterns, behavioural or situational. When making an Analysis test, she can spend X Heat and reroll X d20s but must accept the new result.
- **Surfing the Curve:** Barnes is one of the crème-de-la-crème of the Black Hand's analysts and knows it. She benefits from a Morale and Security soak, incorporated into her profile.
- **FastPanda:** A half-metre tall, these tiny humanoid automatons vaguely resemble panda cubs and carry a repeater with a high-output battery. Their battery only lasts an hour, and they are cheap enough that only the most impoverished or sentimental operatives retrieve them after use. They function as deployable repeaters, except that when deployed as a Standard Action, they move under their own power to any point their controller designates within Medium range. On reaching their destination (usually within Reach of cover), they sit down and devote all remaining power to their repeater.

They have Structure 3, are destroyed after suffering a single Fault, only move when first deployed, can take no actions besides waddling to a destination and activating their repeater, and take an hour to recharge once used.



Stats: Reporter –
Infinity Corebook, p. 472

GALINA YAHONTOVA

Appearance: “Slightly rumped” is how Yahontova would describe herself. Her dark – now greying – hair is tied back, and her face is weather-beaten from too much time in Dawn sun. Her nose was broken in Dogbowl-related fistfight.

Roleplaying:

- Pragmatic, and borderline fatalistic.
- “Can do” attitude.
- Knows everybody in Dalniy.

Background: Born and bred in Dalniy – or forged, as Yahontova puts it – she’s had a chequered career, narrowly avoiding the *gulags*. She’s worked with the Irmandinhos since her teens, and her O-12 handler side-line actually works out. It is a mutually beneficial relationship.

Key Info:

- Knows Kardell Corporation is likely a front.
- She’s heard of monsters roaming the Xin-Jinfeng town.
- Has links to local Submondo, including the *Bratva* if needed.

NEMESIS

GALINA YAHONTOVA

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
8	9	10	8	8	10	10

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+1	1	Movement	+1	1	Social	+2	1
Fortitude	+1	1	Senses	+2	–	Technical	+1	–

DEFENCES

Firewall	8	Resolve	10	Vigour	10
Security	–	Morale	1	Armour	2

ATTACKS

- **Knife:** Melee, 1+5 damage, 1H, Concealed 1, Non-Hackable, Subtle 2, Thrown, Unforgiving 1
- **Boarding Shotgun:** Range C, 1+6 damage, Burst 1, 2H, Knockdown, Medium MULTI (Normal/AP Shells)
- **AP Shells:** Piercing 2
- **Pistol:** R/C, 1+5 Burst 1, 1H, Vicious 1

GEAR: Analysis Suite, Fake ID 3, Light Combat Armour, Negotiator’s Suite

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Brotherhood Trained:** All Irmandinhos receive regular training from veterans of the Irmandade. They can reroll up to 2 when making a ranged attack but must accept the new results. Additionally, they reduce the penalty for firing at a range other than the weapon’s optimal range by one, to a minimum of 0.
- **Cost of Procurement (1 Heat):** Irmandinhos are skilled at inflating costs for their services. They can pay 1 Heat when making a face-to-face test as part of haggling for the provision of their goods. If the Irmandinhos succeeds at the test, the final cost of the goods is increased by 1 Asset.
- **Kinesics Expert:** Procurers are excellent at understanding their client’s needs and limits through body language. When making an Analysis or Psychology test, they can reroll any dice that did not generate a success on the initial roll but must accept the new result.

REYNA MORALES

Appearance: A small woman with curly black hair and bright blue eyes, Reyna is compactly muscled, and looks after herself. She ties her hair back when working.

Roleplaying:

- Morales is tenacious. She’s not easily intimidated.
- Gets “right up in your grill” when angry.
- Drinks heavily.

Background: Morales has been a freelancer reporter since school. She hates missing out on things, and it’s a simple leap to becoming an investigative journalist. She’s worked all over the Human Sphere and is used to following a story wherever it takes her.

Key Info:

- The events of Bright Island have made her wary and nervous.
- Has a source in the human membership of the Libertos organisation.
- Independently wealthy (her family are among Varuna’s super-rich).

JIA SONG

Appearance: Her shining black hair is plaited into an elaborate, waist-length braid. She’s clad in tight red silk embroidered with scintillating, *neon-noir* technomantic designs.

Roleplaying:

- Her braid is laced with motile thread, gifting it with a prehensile motion upon command.
- Jia responds to most stimuli with a coy, enigmatic smile.
- When thoughtful, taps her chin softly with the tip of a sideways-turned finger.

Background: Jia Song’s mother was a Yǎnjīng agent, and she spent a fair portion of her youth hopping from one embassy to another, dragged along in the wake of her mother’s security assignments. Her mother now lives in a quiet retirement on Earth, having returned to the homeland of her ancestors, but Jia Song followed in her footsteps.

While still in her Yǎnjīng training, Jia Song became friends with another “eyes brat” by the name of Ko Dali. After training, their careers took them in different directions – Jia Song into the External Assets Section, Ko Dali into Special Operations – but their paths repeatedly crossed. During an extended operation in the Russian colonies on Callisto, Song realized she was in love with Ko Dali.

Jia Song is now a *chù zhǎng* (section chief) in the External Assets Section. She is rarely involved in running operations directly involving Shēngrén assets, the various terrorists, anarchists, and others

who serve as “stranger” allies. Her specialty is running security on those operations, limiting any potential blowback that could tarnish Yu Jing’s reputation. The whole point of the EAS, after all, is to give the Jade Empire plausible deniability.

Tragically, Ko Dali heroically died during an operation on Paradiso two years ago... or so everyone, including Jia Song, had assumed.

See “Scenario 2: Killing Ko Dali”.

Key Info: Jia Song appears at several points during *Acheron Cascade*, and the GM (or the agents) may find her a useful asset to call upon at other junctures. Each time she appears, however, Jia has a distinct agenda, as described in that operation.

NEMESIS

JIA SONG

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
9	10	10	9	10	8	10




FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+2	1	Movement	+1	1	Social	+3	1
Fortitude	+2	1	Senses	+2	1	Technical	+2	1

DEFENCES

Firewall	10	Resolve	10	Vigour	10
Security	—	Morale	1	Armour	2

ATTACKS

- **Combi Rifle:** C/M 1+6 , Burst 2, 2H, Expert 1, MULTI Light Mod, Vicious 1, Expert 1, MULTI Light Mod
- **Pistol:** R/C, 1+5 , Burst 2, 1H, Vicious 1
- **Knife:** Melee, 1+4 , damage, 1H, Concealed 1, Non-Hackable, Subtle 2, Thrown, Unforgiving 1
- **Hacking Device:** CLAW-1, SWORD-1, SHIELD-1, GADGET-3, IC-1

GEAR: Cosmetics Kit, Light Combat Armour

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Common Special Skills:** Menacing 1
- **Preceded by Reputation:** Everyone within the StateEmpire’s intelligence community knows agents like Song are executors of Yǎnjīng will and becoming an obstacle in their path is most unwise. She can reroll one d20 when making a Persuade or Command test but must accept the new result.
- **Sixth Sense:** Whether through training or innate ability, Song is extremely cautious. She can make a Defence Reaction against any ranged or melee attacks, including one she might not have any immediately apparent reason to know about. She must still pay the normal Heat cost for taking a reaction.



KO DALI

Appearance: A bulging mass of phero-blossom tendrils erupt from the skull of a heavily augmented and genetically modified woman. Rippling, red-scaled bio-armour clings to her form, and rocket-propelled wings have been surgically grafted to her shoulders. Her eyes are fractally dilated with glowing, emerald depths.

Roleplaying:

- Fanatical in her devotion to the Evolved Intelligence. The scales have fallen from her eyes, and she is born again.
- Her voice has a slight, biomechanical crack to it.

Background: Ko Dali’s father was a Yǎnjīng agent. She followed in his footsteps, becoming one of Yu Jing’s most achieved covert agents. When her father was murdered by a PanOceanian double agent, however, she threw away her career to pursue a bloody campaign of vengeance. Only when she had assassinated every single person she held responsible for her father’s death did she allow herself to be apprehended. She was court-martialled, stripped of her rank, and sentenced to six months in prison. She was still in prison when the Combined Army invaded the Human Sphere. When she was released, she adopted her father’s name as a tribute and joined the special forces. Now serving in the light of day, her achievements on Paradiso rapidly transformed her into a national hero.

In 65 NC, the Paradiso Affairs (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 320) began when a PanOceanian research team detected the action of an ancient alien relay station in the NiemandZone. The location was intercepted by Yǎnjīng hackers, and Ko Dali’s regiment was sent to capture the relay station. Operation Jìng Fēng (Silent Wind), unfortunately, was a fiasco born out of bad intel. By the time Ko Dali’s team arrived, PanOceanian knights were already onsite, and a massive Morat force had responded to their presence. Ko Dali managed to salvage the operation through sheer tactical genius, committing her forces to a suicidal defensive action in order to buy the Yǎnjīng techs enough time not only to duplicate the data PanOceania had already extracted, but to also destroy the facility before it could fall into the El’s hands. The operation succeeded, but only at the cost of her own life. She was last seen by a Yu Jing drone draped over the corpse of one of the half-dozen Morats she had slain in her final stand. She was awarded the Order of the Victorious Leopard, *in absentia*, after her presumed death.

Three months ago, she reappeared, leading a Combined Army strike force in an assault on the Technological Investigation Centre on Satori, where she retrieved intel uploaded by Massamachos. Since then, she and her team have danced across the surface of Paradiso, popping up in virtually

"Look well at her, humans. She is the face of the future. The face of your failure."

— Reply of Prisoner CA-S00208, Gwailos Unit officer, Shasvastii race, when shown a holo-image of Special Operative Ko Dali.

every theatre of the war, with perhaps a slight bias towards Yu Jing operations. Her activities have been a PR disaster for humanity.

Nobody knows whether the current Ko Dali was convinced to join the EI (what she says), sepsitorized by the EI (what human intel analysts suspect), or replaced by an impostor (the official Yu Jing story).

Key Info:

- Jia Song and Ko Dali have history (see Jia Song's entry).
- Ko Dali has been modified extensively with Ur biotechnology and VoodooTech.
- Ko Dali's augmentations include a suicide module. If captured, she will activate it, causing her internal organs to melt 1+1^{IN} rounds later.
- **Intransigence 4:** If the PCs manage to disarm her suicide module and overcome her considerable Intransigence, Ko Dali can be forced to reveal her part in Massamachos's operations. She has not been fully briefed, but she knows the following points.
 - Massamachos retrieved intel from a Yǎnjīng facility on Satori and uploaded it to the Technological Investigation Centre, from which Ko Dali retrieved it. Ko Dali doesn't know exactly what that intel contained, but she knows that it involved a company called



Aka Technologies on Dawn. (See "Scenario 5: Ariadna Dawning".)

- She knows that Massamachos has been inserted into the Yangshuo refugee convoy, with the goal of seeking off-world transport.
- She can reveal that Massamachos's operation has something to do with the Acheron Blockade. (This is based on various snippets of conversation she's overheard, but she doesn't know what, exactly, the operation entails.)
- She knows that Massamachos is one of a twin-bonded pair of Speculo Killers. She has not directly interacted with the other, named Tokloshii.

Ko Dali's second-in-command during Operation Jīng Fēng was Sergeant Guo Buqīng. He's now a lieutenant with the Tiger Soldiers.

NEMESIS

KO DALI

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
13	10	10	12	10	11	7

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+4	3	Movement	+3	2	Social	+2	2
Fortitude	+1	—	Senses	+1	1	Technical	+1	—

DEFENCES

Firewall	11	Resolve	8	Vigour	11
Security	—	Morale	2	Armour	2

ATTACKS

- **Nanopulser:** Range C, 1+7^{IN} damage, Burst 1, 1H, Biotech, Subtle 3, Torrent, Vicious 2
- **Yungang Xing 4.2 (Combi Rifle):** Range C/M, 1+7^{IN} damage, Expert 1, MULTI Light Mod, Vicious 1
- **Light Flamethrower (Secondary):** Range C, 1+7^{IN} damage, Burst 1, 2H, Incendiary 3, Munition, Terrifying 2, Torrent
- **Assault Pistols (x2):** Range R/C, 1+6^{IN} damage, Unbalanced, Vicious 1
- **Knife:** Melee, 1+5^{IN} damage, 1H, Concealed 1, Non-Hackable, Subtle 2, Thrown, Unforgiving 1
- **D-Charge:** Explosive Charge, 2+6^{IN} damage, 1H, Anti-Materiel 2, Comms, Disposable, Piercing 3, Spread 1, Unsubtle, Vicious 2

GEAR: Combat Jump Suit (Armour 2, BTS +3), Multispectral Visor 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Custom Biotech (1 Heat):** Tohaa biotechnology is incredibly subtle and difficult to detect. For 1 Heat, the GM can reveal that Ko Dali has a previously unnoticed augmentation.
- **Hypermobile:** Ko Dali can move one additional zone when performing a movement action.
- **Protheion (1 Heat):** Ko Dali performs a special melee attack (1+5^{IN} damage, Biotech, Terrifying 2, Unforgiving 3), causing prehensile VoodooTech extrusions to attach to a victim. If damage is dealt, Ko Dali gains a matching number of Vigour points (up to her maximum Vigour).
- **Winged Guardian:** Ko Dali can retract her wings into a defensive posture as a Minor Action, losing the benefit of Hypermobile but increasing her Armour Soak by 2.

WADE BAILEY

Appearance: Wade dresses smart casual. He's still a Varunan "Rippa Dude" at heart, with the surfer's build, bleach blonde hair, and tan to accompany it.

Roleplaying:

- Very laid back.
- Hates being indoors.
- Doesn't talk about his past and tends to deflect such questions.

Background: It's not all sun and surf for poor Varunan families like the Bailey's, even on minimum income. Wade got bored at an early age and made a name for himself as a data thief. He's been employed by O-12 as a handler for some time, and always feels a sense of responsibility, a holdover from the days when he and his mates used to boost a corporation.

Key Info:

- Wade doesn't know it, but Massamachos has place a subdermal explosive in his collarbone. Wade's certain it's an old injury playing up.
- Wade knows Anderson's wife is in Atek.
- He and Anderson go back a long way. He thinks Anderson is stressed out.

ELITE

WADE BAILEY

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
8	9	7	8	11	9	11

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+1	—	Movement	+2	—	Social	+2	—
Fortitude	+2	—	Senses	+2	—	Technical	+2	1

DEFENCES

Firewall	11	Resolve	11	Vigour	7
Security	4	Morale	—	Armour	—

ATTACKS

- **Pistol:** R/C, 1+5 damage, Burst 2, 1H, Vicious 1
- **Knife:** Melee, 1+3 damage, 1H, Concealed 1, Non-Hackable, Subtle 2, Thrown, Unforgiving 1
- **Hacking Device Plus:** CLAW-2, SWORD-1, SHIELD-2, GADGET-3, IC-2, UPGRADE White Noise; +3 bonus damage

GEAR: Fake ID, Breaking & Entering Kit

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Blending In:** The best secrets are always well hidden, as are the best data thieves. The first sneaky action Wade makes in a given scene does not provoke a stealth state test.
- **Master of Improvisation:** Data Thieves soon learn to work without access to their preferred toolbox. They suffer no penalties for Technical tests attempted without proper tools.
- **Master Hacker:** Wade lives and breathes Maya (and Arachne, for that matter). His gear provides him with a Security Rating of 4 (included in the profile).

NEW ADVERSARIES

NAVAL OFFICER

The ships of the Human Sphere still follow many of the naval traditions of old Earth. While the firmament they sail upon is now the depths of space, they still use the same titles and follow the same command structure as the navies of old.

Naval officers must be calm under pressure and often have to make hard decisions in the gulfs of space. Making a choice between sealing a bulkhead and trapping crew in a hull breach or saving the ship are dilemmas they train for.

NEMESIS

NAVAL OFFICER

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
11	9	7	11	13	10	9

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+2	2	Movement	+2	2	Social	+2	1
Fortitude	+2	1	Senses	+3	2	Technical	+3	1

DEFENCES

Firewall	13	Resolve	9	Vigour	7
Security	—	Morale	—	Armour	—

ATTACKS

- **Pistol:** Range R/C, 1+4 damage, Burst 1, 1H, Vicious 1
- **Knife:** Melee, 1+3 damage, 1H, Concealed 1, Non-Hackable, Subtle 2, Thrown, Unforgiving 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **All Hands on Deck:** An officer's crew is never far from the call of their comlog. When the officer is in a scene, the Heat cost of summoning reinforcements is reduced by 2 (to a minimum of 1).
- **Burden of Leadership:** Ship's crews are inspired by the presence of a naval officer, and perform better, adding 1 Morale for the duration of any scene where the officer is present.
- **Power of Command:** Naval officer can reroll a single dice on any Command test but must abide by the new result.





WILDCATS

During the Barabara Vita (Road Wars) devastating Africa in the 21st century, the Mkuki Soldiers were a Swahili tribe enlisted as corporate mercenaries. Nicknamed *Mkuki*, meaning “spear” in Swahili, they would impale their victims to instil terror in their foes. When the Road Wars came to an end, the Mkuki were disbanded and convicted as war criminals. Many of those who escaped punishment ended up in Lazareto, the Corregidoran refugee module.

General Juan Sarmiento, the infamous Mexican General, became aware of the Mkuki survivors when they attempted to form a Submondo on *Corregidor*. He gave them a simple choice. Sign up to form the core of the new specialised shock troop unit he wanted to create for his mercenary units or take a long walk out a short airlock.

TROOPER

WILDCAT

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
9	10	9	8	6	7	7

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+2	—	Movement	+2	—	Social	—	—
Fortitude	—	—	Senses	+2	—	Technical	—	—

DEFENCES

Firewall	3	Resolve	4	Vigour	5
Security	—	Morale	—	Armour	3

ATTACKS – LOADOUT 1:

- **Combi Rifle:** C/M, 1+7 damage, Burst 2, 2H, Expert 1, MULTI Light Mod, Vicious 1
 - **Light Flamethrower (Secondary):** Range C, 1+6 damage, Burst 1, 2H, Incendiary 3, Munition, Terrifying 2, Torrent
- **Pistol:** R/C, 1+6 damage, Burst 1, 1H, Vicious 1
- **Knife:** Melee, 1+3 damage, 1H, Concealed 1, Non-Hackable, Subtle 2, Thrown, Unforgiving 1

ATTACKS – LOADOUT 2:

- **Boarding Shotgun (AP Slugs):** C, 1+7 damage, Burst 1, 2H, Knockdown, Medium MULTI, Piercing 3
- **Pistol:** R/C, 1+6 damage, Burst 1, 1H, Vicious 1
- **Knife:** Melee, 1+3 damage, 1H, Concealed 1, Non-Hackable, Subtle 2, Thrown, Unforgiving 1
- **Flashbang Grenade (x3):** 1+7 damage, 1H, Blinding, Deafening, Disposable, Indiscriminate (Close), Nonlethal, Speculative Fire, Thrown, Unsubtle, removes Marked.

GEAR: Medium Combat Armour, Deployable Repeater

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Terrain Specialist:** Wildcat teams are trained to operate in specific environments. Pick one (Arctic, Desert, Jungle, Mountain, Forest, Plains, Subterranean, Urban, Zero-G). When making a Survival tests or terrain tests in that environment, Wildcat troopers gain +1d20 to the test.
- **Group Morale:** Wildcats operating in a fireteam cannot be routed or otherwise removed from combat by Metanoia Effects until the fireteam has suffered Metanoia equal to half the number of characters in the fireteam (round up).

The Mkuki are gone now, but their legacy lives on in the Wildcats, who still make a point of recruiting corridor boys hardened in the *maras* gang wars of *Corregidor*. Wildcat recruits are subjected to the harshest training possible, turning alley tomcats into elite polyvalent tactical units capable of carrying out the missions Wildcats specialise in, high priority, high risk, high probability of enemy contact.

ELITE

WILDCAT LIEUTENANT

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
10	12	10	8	8	7	8

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+3	2	Movement	+2	1	Social	+2	—
Fortitude	—	—	Senses	+2	—	Technical	+1	—

DEFENCES

Firewall	8	Resolve	8	Vigour	10
Security	—	Morale	—	Armour	3

ATTACKS – LOADOUT 1:

- **Combi Rifle:** C/M, 1+8 damage, Burst 2, 2H, Expert 1, MULTI Light Mod, Vicious 1
 - **Light Flamethrower (Secondary):** Range C, 1+7 damage, Burst 1, 2H, Incendiary 3, Munition, Terrifying 2, Torrent
- **Pistol:** R/C, 1+7 damage, Burst 1, 1H, Vicious 1
- **Knife:** Melee, 1+4 damage, 1H, Concealed 1, Non-Hackable, Subtle 2, Thrown, Unforgiving 1
- **D-Charge:** Charge, 2+6 damage, 1H, Anti-Materiel 2, Comms, Disposable, Piercing 3, Spread 1, Unsubtle, Vicious 2

GEAR: Medium Combat Armour, Multispectral Visor 1, Repair Kit, Spotbot

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Concentrated Fire (1 Heat):** Once per turn, a Wildcat Lieutenant can spend 1 Heat to make an additional attack against the same target.
- **Terrain Hyper-Specialist:** Wildcat teams are trained to operate in specific environments. Pick one (Arctic, Desert, Jungle, Mountain, Forest, Plains, Subterranean, Urban, Zero-G). When making a Survival tests or terrain tests in that environment, Wildcat Lieutenants gain +2d20 to the test.



ELITE

WILDCAT HACKER

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
8	10	8	8	12	8	9






FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+2	1	Movement	+1	—	Social	—	—
Fortitude	—	—	Senses	+2	1	Technical	+3	2




DEFENCES

Firewall	12	Resolve	9	Vigour	8
Security	—	Morale	—	Armour	3

ATTACKS – WARFARE:

- **Combi Rifle:** C/M, 1+7  damage, Burst 2, 2H, Expert 1, MULTI Light Mod, Vicious 1
 - **Light Flamethrower (Secondary):** Range C, 1+6  damage, Burst 1, 2H, Incendiary 3, Munition, Terrifying 2, Torrent
- **Pistol:** R/C, 1+6  damage, Burst 1, 1H, Vicious 1
- **Knife:** Melee, 1+3  damage, 1H, Concealed 1, Non-Hackable, Subtle 2, Thrown, Unforgiving 1
- **D-Charge:** Charge, 2+6  damage, 1H, Anti-Materiel 2, Comms, Disposable, Piercing 3, Spread 1, Unsubtle, Vicious 2

ATTACKS – WARFARE:

- **Hacking Device:** CLAW-1, SWORD-1, SHIELD-1, GADGET-3, IC-1, +3  bonus damage (included in attack stats)
- **CLAW-1 Gotcha!** 1+5  spend 2 Momentum to immobilise mechanised target
- **CLAW-1 Spotlight:** On successful attack, target is marked.
- **SWORD-1 Brain Blast:** 1+7  Piercing 1, Vicious, spend 2 Momentum vs. targets with Neural quality to deal physical damage.

GEAR: Medium Combat Armour, Stealth Repeater (x3)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Terrain Specialist:** Wildcat teams are trained to operate in specific environments. Pick one (Arctic, Desert, Jungle, Mountain, Forest, Plains, Subterranean, Urban, Zero-G). When making a Survival tests or terrain tests in that environment, Wildcat troopers gain +1d20 to the test.
- **SHIELD-1 U-Turn:** Attacks with weapons using Guided quality within Long range suffer +1 difficulty.





SAMPLE NPC NAMES

The GM may need to come up with a name for an NPC's name quickly. The following lists of names can be useful in that respect.

ARIADNA

CALEDONIA

Jack Robertson
Charlie Campbell
Callum Paterson
Rory Campbell
Gawen Stewart
Robert Balfour
James Conroy
Nairn Kinnison
Rannoch MacGillivray
Connor MacLaren
Lachlan Rose
Caitlin MacDonald
Imogen Anderson
Dierdre Murray
Eila Young
Elesbeth Mitchell
Isobella Christie
Katreine Culloden
Roselette MacColl
Williamina MacEdwards
Vanora O'Neill
Besseta Paget
Fynvola Cunningham

USARIADNA

Sebastian Smith
Noah Williams
Benjamin Jones
Mason Miller
Ethan Rodriguez
Jacob Carter
Luke Parker
Jaxon Flores

Eli Rivera
Connor Rogers
Nathan Morgan
Dominic Price
Kennedy Johnson
Abigail Brown
Scarlett Garcia
Lily Wilson
Penelope Anderson
Addison King
Natalie Myers
Caroline Foster
Gabriella Taylor
Julia Robinson
Vivian Bennett
Athena Jenkins

MEROVINGIA

Alexandre Thomas
Armand Picou
Bastin Vallot
Florian Germaine
Gabriel Figard
Hugo Dubois
Leo Helbert
Louis Lefevre
Raphael Martin
Sacha Bonneville
Theo Leroy
Alice Pichon
Camille Autry
Chloe Bonnet
Delphine Dutoit
Emma Petit

Gabrielle Durand
Jade Demerchant
Juliette Laurent
Lea Marcoux
Maelys Viverette
Margarete Sauvage
Mathilde Simon

RODINA

Maksim Smirnov
Artyom Voyennoy
Ivan Lebedev
Andrey Kozlov
Yegor Novikov
Mark Vorobyov
Fyodor Ushakov
Sergey Lukin
Konstantin Davydov
Platon Falin
Leonid Gurin
Amir Dmitriev
Irina Ivanova
Zlatov Kusnetsova
Angelina Sokolova
Kristina Morozova
Sofiya Petrova
Mariya Volkova
Anna Bogdanova
Viktoriya Savina
Kseniya Angeloffa
Valeriya Berezina
Kira Shubina
Alyona Melnikova

HAQQISLAM

CALIPHATE

Afif Al-Medini
Ghayth Al-Ferdousi
Hasan Al-Qalawari
Iqbal Al-Bahiti
Ismail Al-Ravansari
Jamaal Al-Funduqi
Khaled Boutros
Miraj Faheem
Muhammad Hadrami
Nurul Mortara
Saleh Dandachi
Zahira Al-Talawati
Suraya Al-Medinati
Shadiya Al-Amali

Azra Al-Mish'iyahi
Dania Al-Nawali
Fidda Al-Turfani
Hadia Hajji
Inas Farrugia
Janan Nadwi
Laila Okasha
Aaliyah Rashid
Munira Tarhouni

KHANATE

Nabi Abdullayev
Waleed Akhmatov
Ghafoor Sulaimanov
Jangi Isakov

Habib Karimov
Ghulam Sultanov
Aibek Yunusov
Yerulan Zhaparov
Sukhrab Babaev
Taalay Ergashev
Kanat Rasulov
Kasym Tynstanov
Homa Kadyrova
Zeyba Akmatova
Fereyba Osmonova
Laila Asanova
Nasrin Ialiyeva
Ayesha Rakhimova
Anara Sydykova

Bermet Sultanbekova
Gulnara Zhusupova
Jyrgal Aytamova
Byubysara Ergasheva
Nazira Kurbanova

SHAHNATE

Yousef Abbasi
Vahid Esfahani
Omid Dehkordi
Reza Gul
Kian Hashemi
Khurshid Jahandar
Davud Khadem
Eskandar Mokri
Azad Parsi
Bahman Rajavi
Sadeq Tir
Amaya Ahura

Astar Avesta
Leila Dabiri
Delara Farahmand
Mina Hooshang
Firuzeh Jamshidi
Yasamin Kazemi
Zaynab Lajani
Jaleh Mehregan
Roshanak Paria
Maryam Shamshiri
Kiana Jazani

SULTANATE

Yusuf Aga
Mustafa Aslan
Mirac Bata
Ayaz Dogan
Ahmet Kaya
Muhammed

Emir Koca
Koray Malas
Mansur Onder
Zekeriya Ozan
Ensar Sari
Ozturk Ceylan
Medine Asker
Mira Barak
Elif-Nur Beg
Esmâ Kaplan
Beren Koc
Zeynep Kocak
Ecrin Mogul
Defne Osman
Elif-Ada Reis
Hulya Tabak
Fadime Tati
Cemile Younan

NOMADS

Emilio Accardo
Gianpiero Allegra
Mirko Balla
Alfonso Carota
Cipriano Ferrari
Renzo Colombo
Jacopo Scuderi
Dieter Ahlbrecht
Michael Beissel
Christian Damitz
Karl Doring
Lukas Finkel
Jannik Glass
Jurgen Welle
Sorin Petran
Artem Vaduva
Sebastian Nicolescu
Marisus Adam

Remus Ardelean
Victor Ionescu
Emil Matei
Ignas Kublius
Darius Simonis
Tautrimas Zukauskas
Titus Pavlis
Benas Miskinis
Livia Alessandrini
Samanta Rossi
Monica Bergamo
Tatiana Carriere
Marilena Codella
Zaira Mancini
Perlita Lombardi
Gertrud Allendorf
Gisela Banghart
Christa Dall

Petra Ganske
Lena Goerdts
Birgit Vogus
Karin Loeb
Ioana Balan
Daria Grigorescu
Ralu Lungu
Orsi Pacuraru
Anita Botezatu
Maia Angeles
Ramona Radu
Greta Adomaitis
Rosita Rubis
Alina Wirkus
Victoria Markunas
Elina Gabrys
Lalia Dinius
Modesta Gaida

PANOCEANIA

Afendi Tengku
Nagor Megat
Samuri Nik
Zulfikri Merican
Jalani Daeng
Anastacio Abaya
Venju Bautista
Romulo Dacua
Jestoni Esguerra
Sinag King
Diwa Mateo
Jelvin Silonga
Chyll Tizon
Jagjeet Apte
Kashif Badami
Sunpreet Chaudhari
Nihal Jain
Midhu Padmanabhan

Anandkumar Sethi
Ricardo Fernandez
Jupiter Blanco
Ryano Varela
Francisco Nunez
Jorao Medina
Miguel Valenzuela
Carlinhos Ferreira
Adirah Wan
Dilah Raja
Jetny Che
Nitia Khan
Sofea Teuku
Aisa Fontanilla
Dharla Galvez
Lunabeth Hidalgo
Charina Lucero
Trixia Nofuente

Philomena Perez
Ellithia Ramirez
Naomae Zapata
Inika Chandra
Shamiya Ganesh
Shivi Kala
Navitha Mani
Bashita Narang
Mamta Radhakrishnan
Abril Garcia
Edmea Suarez
Ivone Sosa
Kinnia Cardoso
Ticiania Rojas
Raica Fuentes
Jandira Contreras
Maira Sepulveda
Adriana Rousseff



YU JING

MANDARIN

Ang Bing
Au Yeung Lei
Bo Dewei
Bu Gao
Cai Liko
Cao Ming
Cham Wang
Chang Guanting
Cheong Hong
Chin Zhuang
Deng Chen
Du Min
Feng Rong
Fok Niao-ka
Fung Shi
Geng Qiang
Guan Genjo
Han Yao
Hsiao Xi-Wang
Hsueh Jiang
Ip Hsin
Jang Deshi
Kam Qing
Kho Zhu
Kwock Ye
Lei Fo-hsing
Lok Da-xia
Lu Kimora
Mei Ushi
Moy Fai
Ng Zhi
Ngai Xun
Ping Hua
Qi Lee

Rao Li Mei
Seto Ting
Shan Ya
Shieh Lim
Shing Bao
Song Chen-chio
Soong Xi
Tan Xiang
Toh Jingyi
Tong Jun
Tsang Bo
Tso Bai
Tzeng Xiao-Niao
Wan Lim
Weng Ping
Wong Ru
Xiang Chen-tao
Xiao Shufen
Yang Yin
Yeh Shui

JAPANESE

Abe Fukuya
Fukuda Keiji
Hattori Buichiro
Komatsu Hanamaru
Ishida Aihito
Nakajima Makkenyu
Sakamoto Mikko
Takashima Hiro
Honda Sao
Ashikaga Renki
Hamada Segiko
Fujita Kumori
Kaneko Ikumi

Nitta Menori
Sada Natsune
Shintani Madoka
Tanaka Iro
Tao Yoshimi

KOREAN

Jeong Beom-seok
Ban Seo-jun
Hyun Tae-hwan
Kwan Jun-seo
Lee Min-jun
Pyun Ju-heon
Han Chae-seon
Lim Eo-jin
Moon Han-sol
Paek Min-seo
Youn Da-eun
Seo Seo-yun

VIETNAMESE

Nguyen Bien Vy
Binh Lanan NInh
Pham Dao Tam
Vu Khoi Hoang
Tran Cuong
Ngo Gia Trung
Nguyen Auco Shamiakwa
Diep Chan Than
Hoang Khiem Baolinh
Duong Hang Zaochi
Dao Lanan Thikim
Kien Nghia Khue





