GHOSTS IN
DARKNESS

NOVA PRAXIS
SAVAGE WORLDS EDITION

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VOID STAR

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CREDITS

INTRODUCTION

This scenario is designed to introduce new players and GMs to the *Nova Praxis* setting. It contains an overview of events that happened prior to the scenario's start, a synopsis of events to come, and advice for GMs who want to expand and customize the scenario.

Ghosts in Darkness assumes one GM and four players. Create characters using the standard creation rules, though you could instead just give the players copies of the sample characters from the Nova Praxis core book. At least two PCs need to have undergone Apotheosis. Otherwise, the GM will need to rework many of the scenario's details.

The scenario begins with the resurrection of the PCs. Apparently, they had been killed and were restored from backup after a few months. Pure PCs will have a different introduction, but most of the adventure will focus on investigating what happened to the Apotheosized PCs between their last backup and their recent resurrection, discovering why they were killed, and getting caught in the Shadow War along the way.

Background

The Apotheosized PCs in the crew received notice of a salvage contract from one of their usual contacts. The contact directed them to Kestrel, a Kimuran Astralist and apostate sympathizer located on Asola.

The PCs met with Kestrel, who explained that his client wanted them backed up before giving the details of the contract. This is a fairly standard procedure for Auxiliary contracts, as it protects the House should the Auxiliaries be killed.

Kestrel is a "talent acquisition specialist" for several clients. In this case, he offered a contract from Expanse Worldsystems, a subsidiary of House Tsarya. The person behind the contract is Isabella Nowak, a high-ranking Tsaryan representative and head of Expanse Worldsystems. As part of their contract, however, Kestrel is not allowed to divulge Nowak's identity.

The contract required the crew to travel to an outpost belonging to House Kimura. This outpost, believed abandoned, was in geosynchronous orbit around a recently discovered planet designated RS-412, aka Opportunity Four.

The crew's job was to visit the outpost, take inventory, and determine if anything left was worth salvaging.

They were warned that, while the planet apparently had little to offer, the outpost might now house pirates, remnant forces, or other vagrants or vultures. If so, the crew was expected to deal with them.

When the crew arrived at the outpost, they were attacked by the outpost's automated defenses. The ship and the outpost were damaged in the battle, and the crew was captured.

On board the outpost, they discovered that a subsidiary of House Kimura, called Mindscapes, was performing illegal mnemonics research. Any Pure characters with the crew were killed. The others had their cores removed, and their egos were merged into one.

The hybrid ego called himself Chimera. A massive breach of the Humanity Preservation Act—a fact he knew well—he faced death and erasure if captured.

To protect himself, Chimera set about erasing information from the PCs' private and public records, as well as any clues to what happened to the PCs and Chimera's location. This information included Extranet interactions, passwords, and intimate knowledge only the PCs would possess.

When the PCs—now dead or merged—went four days without contacting Kestrel, he became alarmed. When he reported this to Nowak, she declared them dead and the mission a wash.

Making it Yours

The "chain of events" below describes the most likely course of events for the PCs. But PCs will be PCs, and its fairly likely that they will go off on some tangent or come up with some other problem solving approach that causes them to deviate from the outlined sequence of events.

And that's great! You can always steer them back on track later. In the mean time, as long as its fun and interesting, let the PCs explore their options and the world around them. Likely they will get themselves back on track eventually, but if the game begins to drag and it doesn't seem like the PCs know what to do next, you'll want to drop some clue or remind them of something somebody said to nudge them back in the right direction.

The GM should also take the time to try to customize the scenario to emphasize the PCs strengths and weaknesses as much as possible. Remember, this is your game. Many of the details really aren't that important and can be easily changed. Maybe the PCs resurrect on Titan instead of Asola. Maybe Kestrel is replaced with a contact the PCs have worked with in the past. Maybe Nowak represents House Cipriani instead of Tsarya.

Before starting, you should probably take another look at the PC's back-stories, personal goals, and motivations; and try to find a few places to tie them in them in wherever possible.

In the chain of events diagram, you'll see three triangles marked A-C. These indicate good points along the chain to insert tangents, points in the plot where the PCs can go off to explore sub-plots that may have arisen during play, or spots for the GM to interject additional scenes and/or her own plot ideas.

Some suggestions for tangents are:

Tangent A – Kestrel requires the PCs to do him one or more favors before he is willing to tell the PCs about Vantage. Depending on the desires of the GM, Kestel's favors can be their on sub-campaign. See the "Kestrel's Job" sidebar on pg. 12 for more.
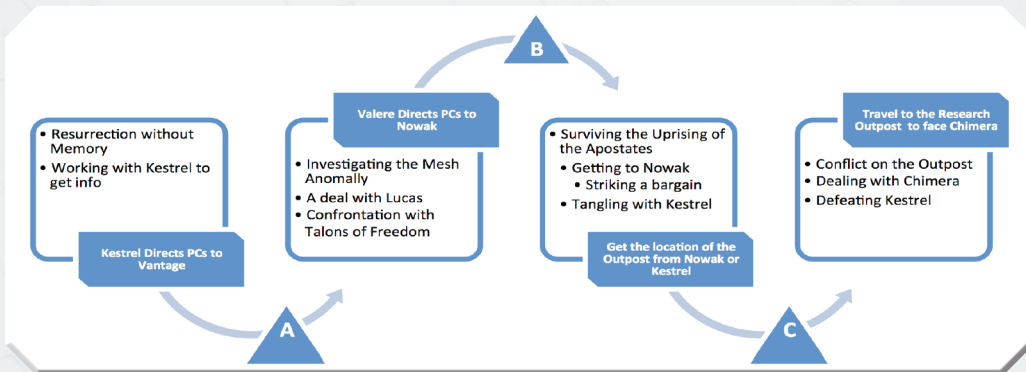
Tangent B – When Valare is discovered, the GM may introduce any number of complications that prevents her from simply telling the PCs what she knows.

Here is one example: Valare has a remote backup module, and her fork has already been resleeved. She won't help them unless they can convince her fork to merge. Her fork, knowing she died from vacuum exposure, does not want those memories and does not want to merge.

Tangent C – When the PCs arrive near the outpost, they immediately come under heavy fire from the outpost, its security drones, and perhaps some additional attackers. They also detect a distress signal coming from the planet.

Their ship becomes damaged and is forced to land on the planet. Their only hope of getting back off is to locate the source of the distress signal, a research outpost.

A small group of captives managed to trigger the distress signal before being huddled into a secure storeroom by Red Sun thugs. The PCs will have to take over the outpost and either use resources they find to repair their ship or find a new one.

B

Valere Directs PCs to Nowak

- Resurrection without Memory
- Working with Kestrel to get info

Kestrel Directs PCs to Vantage

- Investigating the Mesh Anomaly
- A deal with Lucas
- Confrontation with Talons of Freedom

A

- Surviving the Uprising of the Apostates
- Getting to Nowak
  - Striking a bargain
- Tangling with Kestrel

Get the location of the Outpost from Nowak or Kestrel

Travel to the Research Outpost to face Chimera

- Conflict on the Outpost
- Dealing with Chimera
- Defeating Kestrel

C

Soon after, though, Nowak's people discovered that the PCs' digital footprints were being cleared off the Extranet. Assuming she might be in danger, and a bit paranoid, Nowak hired a Savant named Valare to use a rare and powerful Savant Program to scrub the Extranet, wiping any security logs or local mesh data related to the PCs and their failed mission.

Once declared dead, the PCs were restored by their insurance policy.

This is where the scenario begins.

THE CHAIN OF EVENTS

Part 1 — In the Dark

The Apotheosized PCs awaken on Asola. Their last memory is of being backed up before meeting with someone called Kestrel. Their backups were paid for by, and stored at, Second Chances, a division of House Tsarya.

A quick look through their personal records indicates that their activity logs, much of it very private, has been cleansed of anything about the events of the last two months. And worse, security footage and intel related to their assignment has also been cleaned from both private and public systems. The only thing left is that they needed to meet Kestrel.

Holes in mesh data like these shouldn't be possible. Kestrel has heard of this happening before; if the PCs can convince him to help, he can point them to a similar event on Vantage.

Part 2 — Lots to See on Vantage

Their investigation leads them to Vantage, where they discover that their records were erased by a Savant member of the Talons of Freedom.

The Savant, Valare, died during an exchange of goods, food, and meds for weapons, meant to go to Talons on the Icarus Hub in orbit around Proch.

After recovering the Savant's core, they learn that she was hired by Nowak, a high-ranking Tsaryan official on the Icarus Hub, to wipe out any traces of the PCs' actions related to their mission.

Part 3 — Civil Unrest

As the PCs arrive at the Icarus Hub, an explosion rocks the station. This is the first stage of an apostate uprising, instigated by The Talons of Freedom and made possible by Chimera.

Resentment had been growing among the workers on the hub for a while, so Chimera decided to use this opportunity. This attack would allow Chimera to both get revenge on Nowak for sending the crew to the outpost—which led to Chimera's creation—and create additional complications for the PCs should they be searching for him.

Chimera doesn't want to be found, so he left behind plenty of clues linking the uprising to the PCs.

Nowak directs Lighthouse to contain the uprising and, finding the clues left by Chimera, flags the PCs as the instigators. The PCs must get to Nowak and find out what she knows.

As Lighthouse goes to war against the Talons, apostates, and PCs, Kestrel, ordered by his House to clean up this mess, arrives with a group of Red Sun enforcers. Their job is to kill the PCs, Nowak, and anyone else involved, cutting ties between Kimura and recent events. The Red Suns try to avoid the conflict, instead focusing their efforts on finding and eliminating the PCs.

Nowak is on the Icarus Hub in orbit around Proch. If the PCs get to her before Kestrel does, she offers them a deal: get her off the hub safely, and she'll tell them the location of the outpost and clear their names.

If they fail to get to Nowak first, Kestrel kills her. He then sends them the location of the outpost.

VANTAGE STATION

Part 4 — Opportunity Four Resolution

The PCs leave the ruined Icarus Hub and head for the outpost. If they couldn't save Nowak, they will be branded traitors and enemies of the Coalition. They are now effectively apostates until they can find a way to prove their innocence.

At the outpost, the PCs must battle Chimera and the outpost's security measures. During the fight, the comm-buoy for the security system is remotely detonated, cutting off intersystem communications.

Once the PCs defeat Chimera and the outpost's security drones, they discover more clues about what happened. Doctor Haruto Nakamura, the scientist that headed the illicit experiments, created Chimera. Chimera used his contacts and House Kimura's resources to help initiate the mutiny on the Icarus Hub.

If possible, Chimera will try to flee in an escape pod to the planet's surface. Once there, he will go into hiding.

Shortly after the PCs deal with Chimera and learn what they can, Kestrel and his Red Suns arrive. Before boarding the station, they try to disable the PCs' ship.

Their mission is to destroy all evidence of Chimera, the PCs' mission, and recent events. That means wiping all data storage devices, killing the PCs, station personnel, and Chimera, and blowing up the station. The first step is essential—the last thing they want is sensitive data floating among the debris.

Once the PCs defeat Kestrel and the Red Suns, they're in the clear. But they may have some loose ends to deal with.

If Chimera was killed, the PCs can find his mnemonic core, which they can use to prove their innocence in the mutiny. The core also implicates House Kimura in both the mutiny and the illegal mnemonics research, so the Kimurans will do anything necessary to stop it from being used against them.

If Chimera escaped, the PCs will need to apprehend him before the Kimurans do.

NPCS OF NOTE

Many NPCs play major roles in this scenario. They know things, and can provide breadcrumbs for the PCs to follow to the answers they seek.

These characters are detailed below. However, Fate lets players make Declarations that could change elements of the story and facts about these characters.

GMs, you can change pretty much anything you wish about the characters in this scenario. You can also allow the PCs the same privileges. Just make sure that anything changed doesn't break the chain of events, unless you're comfortable with improvisation.

Kestrel

A member of House Kimura and the Red Suns, Kestrel has taken it upon himself to help the poor apostates of Asola.

Kestrel uses his contacts among the Coalition and apostates to arrange deals between them. He is often called upon by discreet employers to perform dirty jobs with crews recruited from both factions.

Kestrel does not fully understand the depth of the Shadow War, but he's beginning to suspect that "fixers" like himself are more common than most believe.

What does Kestrel Know?

✦ He hired the PCs because he needed an expendable party.

✦ The PCs were hired by a representative of House Tsarya to explore an outpost.

✦ The outpost might have been dangerous.

✦ [Secret: 5] The mesh recently blacked out on Vantage.

> ## Secret Ratings
>
> *Nova Praxis* is a game of mystery and intrigue, and some secrets are buried deep.
>
> Secret ratings present a standard difficulty rating to uncover the secret through the basic use of Skills tests, be it Research, Favors, etc.
>
> The GM may lower the difficulty of uncovering a secret as the PCs find clues.

Lester Lucas

Lester is just trying to get by. A member of House Silva, he has been smuggling weaponry out of the Naesock Processing Hub in orbit around Neptune, trading the arms with Talons on Vantage.

Lester really hasn't had a role in recent happenings, suffering a severe case of "wrong place, wrong time."

He was making an exchange with the Talons when one of them was revealed to be a Centurion. Valare blacked out the mesh just before a grenade went off. Lester got behind cover and managed to survive, but he caught some shrapnel in the process.

Wounded, he has been struggling to get by on Vantage. His ship, the Chickenhawk, has been impounded and docked on one of the station's secure arms.

Lester has been in contact with the Talons, who have basically taken his ship and hidden Valare in it. Lester wants it back so he can get off Vantage.

What does Lester Know?

✦ The Talons are planning something pretty big, and have been for several months now.

✦ Lester's ship is tied to a CID, now possessed by the Talons. They are helping him survive in exchange for the ship, but Lester isn't at all happy with the arrangement and feels like he is being bullied.

✦ Valare can black out the mesh.

✦ Valare's sleeve is on the *Chickenhawk*.

✦ The *Chickenhawk* is attached to a secure wing of the station. You can't get to it from within: security is far too tight. You have to get to it by exiting the station.

Valare

A small-time smuggler with a big-time gift, Valare is a Savant who wrote a Program to cover her tracks.

Valare was an invaluable Shadow War asset to House Tsarya, providing cover and cleanup for their Auxiliary teams. But the more she learned about the behind-the-scenes dealings of the Coalition government, the more disgusted she became.

Wiping out the PCs' tracks was her last mission for House Tsarya, after which she wanted to help the poor apostates trying to make lives for themselves working for the Houses.

She disappeared, covered her tracks, and joined up with the Talons of Freedom on Vantage. There she worked to help the Talons prepare to strike at House Tsarya, covering up smuggling operations until one went wrong, killing her.

What does Valare Know?

✦ Valare died when a deal went sour. One of her Talon compatriots turned out to be a Centurion in her friend's sleeve. A grenade went off and she got spaced.

✦ Her sleeve and core were recovered and hidden in the Chickenhawk until the Talons could figure out how to resurrect her.

✦ She had been hired by Nowak to scrub the PCs' tracks across the Extranet. She was not told why.

✦ [Secret: 5] She had been helping apostates and Talons move resources in preparation for a Talon-led mutiny on Proch's Icarus Hub.

✦ [Secret: 7] Valare has heard about a benefactor, providing aid to the Talons and arranging opportunities for them on the hub. She doesn't know who it is, but he has upped their timetable and may initiate the strike any day.

[Tac-Comm v1.76.4/ 17:16-01,12,98]

[Tac-Comm Verification] – Please enter your access code to enter secure channel.

[AKnox] – **********************

[Access Granted]

Welcome to the Hub_Party Channel

[AKnox] – Hello?

[0CHI111324] – Is everything accounted for?

[AKnox] – I'm sorry. Who is this?

[0CHI111324] – Who is this?

[AKnox] – I'm Detective Knox. I came upon this access code during a murder investigation aboard the Proch's Icarus Hub. Your cooperation would be appreciated.

[0CHI111324] – Of course detective.

[AKnox] – So who are you? You should know that I've dispatched a Moitor to run a trace.

[0CHI111324] – Really? And what did your Monitor discover.

[AKnox] – Nothing.

[0CHI111324] – You want to know who I am Mr. Knox? I'm am the beginning of the end. I am the herald of change.

[AKnox] – Okay, Harold. Any chance you could be a tad more specific?

[0CHI111324] – The Coalition has gown fat and lazy, bloated and content, off the hard work of the oppressed. The Coalition is a cage made of gold, but it's people are no less prisoners. A Rep-Rating doesn't represent a person. The people have no privacy, no agency, and no voice. Their outcries are buried in the noise generated by an endless stream of propaganda.

[AKnox] – And you're going to change all that?

[0CHI111324] – I'm going to scream loud enough to be heard.

Isabella Nowak

Isabella Nowak sits in the center of the chaos, the eye of the storm. As Executive Administrator of Planetary Logistics, Isabella is charged with maintaining Tsarya's interests on the Icarus Hub in orbit around Proch.

Feeling she has more than proven herself at the Icarus Hub, Nowak has been maneuvering for a promotion. But just as everything seemed to be going her way, it all fell apart.

First the crew hired to prospect the outpost went missing. Now they appear to be undermining her by setting the apostate workforce in the hub's docks against her.

Against a burgeoning mutiny, Isabella is working desperately to bring everything back under control. And in her desperation, she let Lighthouse off their leash.

What does Nowak Know?

✦ Nowak got word of an abandoned Kimuran research station set up around a new planet (Opportunity Four). She knows where the station is.

✦ [Secret: 7] The location of the outpost.

✦ Suspecting hostile squatters or pirate, she hired an expendable crew (the PCs) to deal with them and secure the outpost.

✦ The PC crew went dark, so she declared them dead. Three months later, they were resurrected.

✦ Soon after declaring the PCs dead, Nowak discovered that records of the crew's activities were being purged from the Extranet.

✦ Worried about the reason for the data purge, and fearing implication in illegal forking, Nowak hired Valare to wipe out all security logs and sensor data of the crew from the last few months. Nowak wanted to eliminate as many links as possible between the crew and herself.

Chimera

Born of an experiment in cutting-edge mnemonics technology, Chimera is a gestalt entity, a being made from the PCs' merged egos.

Every Apotheosized PC who had gone on the mission to prospect the outpost has been merged into Chimera and inhabits a single sleeve. Chimera remembers everything they did, knows everything about them, and fears them.

Forking an ego is illegal, a very severe breach of the Humanity Preservation Act. The experiments that led to the creation of Chimera are far more extreme than simple forking—they could kill and even erase everyone and everything involved.

Note: Chimera can identify as male, female, or neither, depending on its composition. If it is mostly composed of male egos, it generally considers itself male, and likewise for female egos. To keep this scenario consistent, we will assume that Chimera identifies as male in the remainder of our writing.

What Does Chimera Know?

✦ Chimera has the complete memories of every Apotheosized PC, meaning he knows pretty much everything going on.

✦ He has been covering his tracks and distancing himself from the PCs by wiping data from their personal data logs and social networks.

✦ Chimera blames Nowak for his creation and the mess they're stuck in now. Being somewhat insane, he has targeted her for revenge, which he's facilitating by fanning the fires of rebellion on the Icarus Hub and by aiding the Talons of Freedom.

✦ [Secret: 3] The apostate uprising is backed by the Talons of Freedom.

✦ [Secret: 5] The Talons of Freedom were aided and encouraged to act now by Chimera.

PART 1 — IN THE DARK

The scenario begins as the PCs wake up in a resurrection chamber on Asola, about three months after they'd been declared dead.

They have no memory since their last backup, just before they started their mission.

Second Chances

Sleeved PCs awake in a resurrection chamber owned by Second Chances, a third-party backup service that works with all major insurance providers. Their resurrection is overseen by an apostate mnemonics engineer named Salvadore "Sal" Bendry, a SIM.

After being helped from the chamber, they are subjected to a quick series of diagnostic tests and escorted to a recovery room. Biosleeves are treated to a massage and a good meal. Cybersleeves undergo additional diagnostics.

SIM PCs awaken in an idyllic glade, surrounded by healthy trees and chirping wildlife. They appear seated at a wooden table. Sal appears across from them.

To both the sleeved and SIM PCs, Sal explains that they've been restored from backup and it's been about three months since they were officially declared dead. It's standard procedure to wait three months before resurrection in case any mnemonic cores can be recovered. Theirs weren't.

Presumably, after taking the contract the PCs upgraded their sleeves and gear, leaving their old gear in a storage locker and their old sleeves on ice. Assume that the PCs' current gear and sleeves are what they had stored before starting the mission.

Pure characters won't be restoring from backups, as they have none. The GM and players will need to discuss why the Pure PC or PCs are now joining with the others.

This shouldn't be too difficult. Perhaps the Pure PCs simply couldn't join the crew on their last mission, but now they can.

Alternatively, the Pure PCs could be meeting the others for the first time. Because the Apotheosized PCs need transportation rather soon after being resurrected, they might sign a contract or promise a favor to get transportation. A Pure PC might be the pilot of a ship or the muscle hired to ensure the other PCs make good on the favor they owe.

Filling in the Blanks

All that the PCs remember about the mission is that they'd received a tip about a contract. They were supposed to go to Second Chances, get a free backup, and meet someone named Kestrel.

The PCs didn't meet Kestrel before backing up, though, so they don't remember anything about meeting him or anything after being backed up.

As the Apotheosized PCs' systems come online, they will likely check their social networks to try to piece together clues about what happened to them. It is then that they make a startling discovery.

Their personal records are missing time, and their social network activity has been scrubbed. To do this, their personal passkeys would have been required. Any records of their activities—from the day before their backup to now—are gone.

Any friends will just say that the PCs went quiet after they'd taken the contract and went in to have their egos backed up. Silence like this isn't especially unusual, though, as many crews are required to limit any unnecessary contact while running off-the-book jobs for the Houses.

But their personal data going missing is very unusual indeed. It shouldn't be possible. They would've needed to have cleared it themselves. At the very least, someone else would have had to have access to their CIDs.

THE LUNAR CITY OF ASOLA

Meeting Kestrel

Kestrel, a member of House Kimura—specifically, the Crimson and Sons subsidiary—is an apostate sympathizer and unofficial leader and spokesman for an underground collection of apostate scavengers. A mid-level Red Sun operative, he specializes in Shadow War operations, though even he doesn't truly understand the depth of the conflict.

He can be found at his shop, a small hole-in-the-wall establishment on Asola. The ARID on the door identifies the place simply as "Serendipity: Consultations and Arbitrations."

The small shop is narrow and long, lined with rows of bookshelves. In reality these shelves hold nothing, but in AR they house a number of digital documents represented as translucent books.

In the back of the long room sits a low counter, where a basic merchant beta AI works waits. The AI takes the form of an attractive Asian woman in a kimono.

The AI is pleasant and willing to answer any questions the PCs ask. Some common questions and answers are below:

What is this place? or What does Kestrel do?

"You are in *Serendipity: Consultations and Arbitrations*. We are in the business of offering proffesional consultation for investement or representation; or serving as an objective third party in mediating disputes, whether personal or legal in nature."

Where is Kestrel?

"I am sorry. I am not at liberty to divulge that information."

Can we meet with Kestrel?

"Please hold while I check his schedule... Yes, Mr. Kestrel will see you now. Please, follow me."

After the AI tells the PCs to follow her, the back wall opens to reveal a hallway leading into a back room.

The room is octagonal and outfitted with pillows to sit or kneel upon. A very young man—no more than 25 years old, if he's Pure—kneels on one of the pillows facing the door. This is Kestrel. It's unclear whether he is Asian or wears a biosleeve based off of an Asian genetic template.

He has silver hair that he wears a little long and messy, and he wears a silver silk suit, a white tie, and no shoes.

Leaning against a wall to the side, a large cybersleeve—covered in Asian-inspired bio-skin, wearing a tight gray t-shirt and military-style fatigues—holds his arms crossed. Any PC who looks him over (Perception: 2) can see the heavy rail pistol tucked into the back of his pants.

Kestrel has dealt with the PCs before, recalling that their meeting was both pleasant and productive. He does not like unscheduled meetings, however, and only agreed to see them on short notice because of his curiosity. Having heard the PCs declared dead, Kestrel wants to know what happened.

If the PCs ask any questions, refer to what Kestrel knows on page 7. He will answer truthfully, but does not know who hired them or where the outpost is. He had negotiated with the contractor at anonymous meets in Stygia, and the details of the mission had been passed to him through an encrypted file, which he did not try to open.

During the conversation, Kestrel will call up security footage of their last meet to make sure he hasn't forgotten anything important. He then discovers that the footage, stored on his own personal mesh, has been edited. Anything related to the PCs is missing.

This footage should be impossible to access by anyone except himself, so Kestrel becomes very concerned. Someone able to delete this data would have had access to Kestrel's personal server array. Further investigation quickly reveals that any security data featuring the PCs during the time of their mission, regardless of their location, has been blacked out.

This is highly unusual, so the PCs might search the Extranet in hopes of finding another instance of this happening.

This information is a rank 5 Secret, and can be discovered with Apostate or House Networking as well as with Research. House Networking suffers a -1 penalty, while basic Research suffers a -2 penalty.

Kestrel's Job

A local Centurion is putting pressure on Kestrel's people. Make him stop.

The Centurion, Tarj McClaren of House Dalianis, thinks one of Kestrel's people (a Pure apostate named Jebediah) is selling a drug called Symmetry. He wants either proof, or his core.

The PCs can get proof by making a sensie of the drug deal, and its use.

Symmetry enhances a person's mood based on their surroundings. So a person in a happy and fun place would become very happy, while a person in a sad place would become very depressed.

However the PCs do it, once satisfied, Kestrel tells the PCs that he had heard rumor of the sort of mesh blackout they are seeing now on Vantage. Apparently something bad went down there a few weeks ago, but nobody knows what since the record of it was stripped from the mesh data.

The PCs will likely fail to uncover the secret on their own, but luckily for them Kestrel knows that a similar blackout happened recently on Vantage.

He will not part with this information easily though. He agrees to help if...

✦ The PCs can convince him during a Mental Conflict. In this case, Kestrel has a Determination of 1; if the PCs have offended him, it is 2.

✦ The PCs help him get food and medical supplies (Cost: 8). Kestrel genuinely wants what is best for his people, the downtrodden of Asola. Some are apostates, but many are civilians with very low Rep. He can't get it himself without raising suspicion.

✦ The PCs get him a new array and six VR links (Cost: 9).

✦ The PCs agree to do a job for him. To make this scenario longer, consider making this option the only one that Kestrel offers. The sidebar below offers an example job for Kestrel to give.

PART 2 - A DIFFERENT VANTAGE POINT

The crew has come to Vantage to investigate the last known incident of a mesh blackout. They don't know how or why the blackout occurred; they just know that a large chunk of mesh data was wiped a few months ago. It appears to have been wiped the same way as their own mesh presence had been between their last backup and recent resurrection.

Investigating the blackout leads the PCs to Lester Lucas, smuggler and captain of the Chickenhawk. Living on the station in fear, Lester desperately wants to get off it before the Talons of Freedom decide that he knows too much to be left alive.

Investigating the Incident

Asking around the station can give the PCs enough clues to begin investigating the last blackout in earnest.

Either type of Networking Skill will work here. Research suffers a -1 penalty.

Social Skills can net the same results if the PCs speak to a friendly dockworker or Centurion. They can also get most of this info by intimidating a Talon of Freedom.

[Secret: 2] – The blackout happened in a docking bay on level 11.

[Secret: 3] – The blackout happened in docking bay 117 while the Chickenhawk was docked there.

[Secret: 4] – The blackout was apparently used to hide a transfer of goods. During this time, witnesses heard an explosion.

[Secret: 5] – Multiple bodies were carried out of the dock after the explosion. Some sort of deal probably went sour. The captain of the Chickenhawk was smuggling weapons to members of the Talons of Freedom in exchange for food. He is missing.

[Secret: 6] – The Chickenhawk belongs to Lester Lucas, a member of House Silva. The ship has been moved to quarantine. Lester can usually be found in the the Waypoint Bar.

[Secret: 7] – Lucas never left Vantage. Instead, he changed his ship's ID and docked his ship in one of Vantage's secure repair bays. The repair bay is located at the end of a long "arm" protruding from the station. To get to the ship, you must walk down a heavily secured passageway or exit the station and travel down the arm on the outside.

Finding Lester

If the crew asks around enough, word will get back to Lester. He has a handful of allies among the low-Rep civilians and the few apostates onboard. If possible, he will try to arrange a meeting on one of the station's observation decks.

If the crew discovers where Lester is, they can go to Waypoint to try to find him.

In any case, Lester is looking for a crew just like the PCs to help him out. The Talons of Freedom have a hold on Lester, and he wants to get away from them.

Lester will tell the PCs what he knows if they agree to help him out. He just wants to get his ship back and to get off the station.

Recovering the Core

The PCs need to get to Valare's sleeve—more specifically, her mnemonic core. Right now, both are stashed on the Chickenhawk awaiting someone friendly to the Talons to retrieve them and resurrect her.

The Chickenhawk's docking umbilical has been damaged. Lacking this, it is instead attached to Vantage's arm with a mag-lock connection on top of the ship. This means the PCs must go outside the station to get into the ship, even if they went down the inside of the arm.

The ship's only entrance is a sealed door that will only respond to the CID of one of the local Talons of Freedom.

Unless the PCs can get through the tight security inside the repair arm, they must enter the ship by traveling outside the station.

If they insist on going down the inside of the arm, they'll contend with three sealed blast doors and a security checkpoint manned by three Centurions and four Lonestar drones.

If they go outside the arm, they won't have to bother with station security, but Pure and biosleeved PCs will need vacuum suits. Cybersleeved PCs won't need suits, but they will need mag boots, suits with zero-g assist jets, or both.

There are only a few good places to exit the station. There are external mesh sensors that the PCs must avoid, but Lester has studied the route and can show them how to best avoid notice.

Once the crew parts ways with Lester, the Talons will attempt to capture and interrogate him. Unless the PCs take extreme measures to keep Lester safe, the Talons will succeed and Lester will cave to the interrogation. He will tell them everything he knows. And then they will kill him.

If the PCs take Lester's advice, they won't need to make tests to avoid the mesh sensors outside the station. However, if Lester is captured and interrogated, the Talons will know exactly where the PCs plan to exit the station.

If Lester spilled the plans, the PCs will find his body lashed to the station's hull as they work their way to the ship. As soon as they can make out his identity, they are ambushed and fired upon by the Talons.

If Lester wasn't captured, the PCs may be able to sneak into the ship before being noticed.

Some Talons are hiding on the ship, using the arm's support ribs as cover, as well as on the bottom of the station's arm. The number of Talons in wait equals the number of PCs plus 1. One of the Talons has the CID needed to get into the ship.

At least one Talon, hiding on the ship itself, will have a sniper rifle. The others have assault rifles and will rush to reach the optimal firing range to the PCs.

Meeting Valare

Once the PCs get to the Chickenhawk, they discover Valare's sleeve. She was killed when a hell ball went off, damaging the umbilical connecting the Chickenhawk to Vantage.

Valare's sleeve is in the Chickenhawk's engine room. The biosleeve is extremely swollen and covered in bruises. Dried blood surrounds every orifice. Her mnemonic core is intact and contains recordings of everything up to her death.

If Valare is brought up in VR, it's clear that she's suffered extreme psychological trauma from having died in vacuum. Her last memories were of a deafening explosion, fire, and rapid decompression. As a result, she has suffered an Extreme Mental Consequence.

Mnemonic editing may be in order. If she is aided, or at least calmed, she can tell the PCs what happened to her.

Valare can also tell the crew that she had been hired by House Tsarya to scrub their net presence. While she doesn't know where their cores are, she agrees to tell them the name of the person who hired her to wipe their Extranet fingerprints—if they agree to needle beam her ego to her insurance provider on Rho.

Once the PCs appease Valare, she points them to Nowak, the Tsaryan official who offered their original contract. Nowak is the Executive Administrator of Planetary Logistics, based out of the Icarus Hub in orbit around Proch.

She also tells them that the deal that led to her death was an exchange of food and meds for weapons meant for Talons on the Icarus Hub. She had met the Talons on the Icarus Hub when she went to meet Nowak, and she'd been working with them on Vantage since she completed Nowak's job.

What are the Talons up to?

Until now, the PCs have only heard rumors that the Talons are up to something, perhaps a big move against the Coalition. Those rumors are about to become reality.

About a year ago someone decided that the Icarus Hub servicing Proch would be a prime target for the struggling remnant force. Not only did the hub have an increasingly disgruntled working class, but its capture would yield both a strategic asset and a much needed morale boost.

Even more, the hub is a treasure chest. If captured, it would provide the Talons with hundreds of ships, thousands of new recruits, and enough weapons and supplies to last for years.

This victory would also be a major blow to Proch. Without the hub, Proch would soon be starved of supplies. Redirecting incoming shipments would be a logistical nightmare, taking months to sort out. House Cipriani certainly wouldn't be pleased.

The victory here proves the might of the Talons and that someone can stand up to the Coalition.

The Mission

The Talons can't hope to withstand the might of the Coalition—and they know it; they aren't stupid. In the grand scheme, this mutiny is a hit-and-run operation.

With Chimera's help, the Talons have planted agents and weapon caches within the hub. In the days before the strike, they docked several ships full of additional weapons, armor, and explosives. These ships are scattered all over the hub, placed as distribution centers for the Talons and their allies.

The Talon's first target is one of the cube's corners, chosen because it contains the only docking stations that can accommodate the Legion's larger troop transports. Destroying these docks would force Coalition forces to rely on smaller transports, slowing the flow of soldiers to the station.

Once the mutiny begins, a Savant working for the Talons will gain control of the docking stations. This allows the Talons to control who can and cannot dock. It also allows them to control which ships can decouple and depart.

Once the Talons gain control, they pack the transport ships with all the supplies and new recruits they can get. During this time, they dispatch several demolition crews to place explosives around the structures connecting the station's cubes.

The Talons then depart, blowing the connecting structures, which rips the station's cubes apart.

Aftermath

It's exceedingly difficult for the PCs to stop the Talons from completing their mission, but they may try.

The PCs are massively out-numbered and out-gunned. So when things start to go bad, try to steer them back to their original objective: getting to Nowak to find out why she hired them, why she blacked out their Extranet activity, and where the outpost is.

The Talons will accomplish their mission unless the PCs mess up their plans. This means the PCs get to witness, first hand, the event that marks the Talons of Freedom as a serious threat.

With the ships, supplies, and new recruits they gained from the mutiny, the Talons will go on to become a real thorn in the Coalition's side.

The Chickenhawk

If the PCs check the Chickenhawk's registration, they find it registered to a false CID that Lester Lucas had been using. This CID is carried by a Talon.

The Chickenhawk has suffered a damage, and is unable to safely dock due to its damaged umbilical system. Until this is repaired, the ship cannot establish a pressurized connection to another ship or station. Instead, it must attach itself using a mag-lock system; anyone entering or exiting the ship must expose themselves to space.

Medium Starship: Size 8, Acc/TS 50/650, Climb 2, Toughness 27 (8), ECM 10 (2), Crew 5, Cost 13, Remaining Mods 0
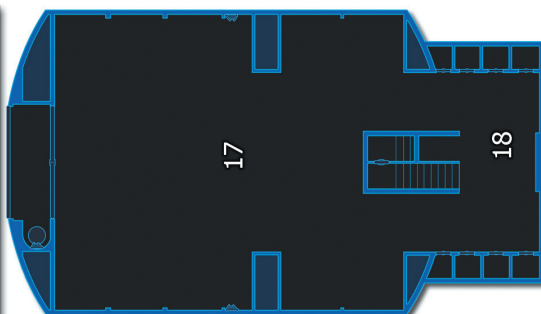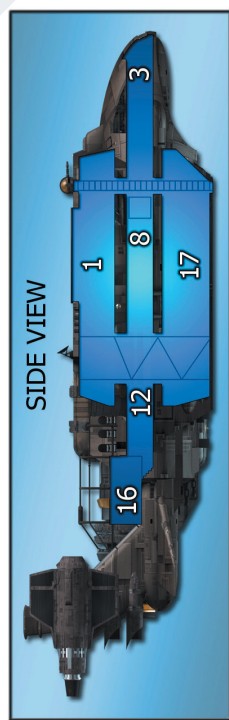
Notes: Armor, Artificial Intelligence, Atmospheric, Crew Space, Cyber-Warfare Suite, Firewall, Mesh System and Extranet Connectivity Suite, Sensor Suite (Planetary), Speed, Stealth System

Weapons:
- ✦ Auto-Cannon, Medium x 2
- ✦ Missile Launcher
- ✦ Missile Heavy (8)

The Chickenhawk

SIDE VIEW

MIDDLE DECK

3. Bridge
4. Captain's Cabin
5. Conference Room
6. Horticulture
7. Workshop
8. Auxiliary Hold
9. Air Lock (broken)
10. Crew Quarters
11. Restroom
12. Lounge & Galley
13. Escape Pods
14. Medical
15. Kitchen
16. Engine Room
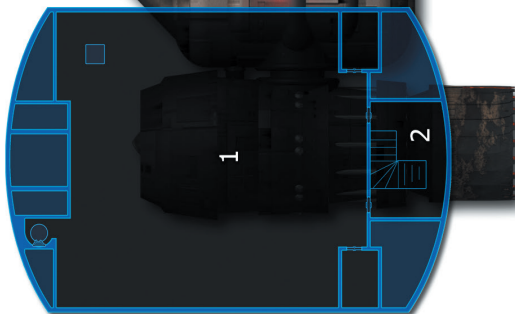
UPPER DECK

1. Shuttle Bay
2. Utility Room

LOWER DECK

17. Main Cargo Hold
18. Storage Lockers

PART 3 — CIVIL UNREST

Attempts to contact Isabella Nowak through the Extranet prove useless. Even if the PCs can get a personal message to her, she won't acknowledge them. Their only option is to approach her in person, meaning they must travel to the Icarus Hub orbiting Proch. In the *Chickenhawk* or another jump-capable ship, the trip takes about 20 hours; if they use the public jump-ring network, about 30 hours.

The Icarus Hub that services Proch is, like most Icarus Hubs, a cluster of large cubical structures, each edge about a kilometer long, arranged into a larger cube. Each smaller cube hooks onto those adjacent with dozens of connecting structures, allowing passage of both shipping containers and people.

The cubes are spaced apart enough for most mid-sized craft to pass between. Every surface of every cube is exposed, and each surface features a few dozen docking stations.

When the crew arrives at the hub, before docking they see the corner of a cube explode and break away. The mutiny has begun. Though the hubs are owned and operated by House Cipriani, this hub is staffed mostly by House Tsarya. By and large, the dockworkers and manual laborers are apostates and Tsaryans with very low Rep.

For years the hub-workers have been treated unfairly by House Tsarya, and Cipriani has largely turned a blind eye to the growing problem. Cipriani considered it Tsarya's problem, and Tsarya hasn't seen it as a problem at all. Until today...

Chimera played a large role in instigating the Talon's attack. While it would have happened eventually, Chimera saw an opportunity to shorten the timeline and, knowing that the attack could help cover his tracks, took it.

Not only does Chimera know everything the PCs do, but he has the advantage of being better able to collate it all and understand how to best take advantage of the PCs' combined skills, contacts, and assets.

Framework: Hunting Nowak

Goal: As described on pg. 19, the PCs must reach and capture Nowak so she can be interrogated.

Complexity: 8   **Segment Time:** 10 min

Characteristics:

✦ Icarus Hub in Orbit Around Proch
✦ Lighthouse has been called in to put down the threat... with extreme prejudice.
✦ The mesh has been damaged, and is unreliable.
✦ Chimera helped instigate this—he's a hero to the apostates and Talons.
✦ Much of the station is damaged, and the environmental systems have been compromised.

Complications:

✦ Nowak's Location in the Hub is Unknown (Mission Critical, Diff: 4)
  1. She has sealed herself in, and the offices are on lockdown. (Diff: 4)
     A. Nowak has a contingent of seasoned bodyguards. (Diff: 8)
✦ Get Her Before She Gets Away! (Mission Critical, Diff: 4)
✦ Kestrel and the Crimson Sons are coming for the PCs and Nowak (Diff: 6)
✦ Lighthouse Reinforcements Are Using Dock 27 to Land Reinforcements (Diff: 6)
✦ Light Patrol – Lighthouse Security Sweep & Clear Team (Diff: 4)
✦ Heavy Patrol – Heavily Armed and Armored Lighthouse Security Sweep & Clear Team (Diff: 6)

Disadvantages:

✦ *Damaged Mesh* - The Mesh has been damaged, and somewhat unstable. (-2 on most SINC rolls, or other Trait rolls that rely on the mesh)

Chimera and House Kimura used the hub's systems heavily in their attempts to aid the Talons, and Chimera intentionally left behind some digital fingerprints.

Knowing what he does about the PCs, Chimera left evidence that implicates the PCs in the mutiny, hoping to direct some retribution back at them instead of just the Talons. This was yet another attempt to obstruct their investigations.

Whatever morality the Apotheosized PCs' egos had before merging into Chimera, it has all been stripped away—fragmented beyond recognition by the merger. Chimera's primary motivation is self-preservation. If that means killing the PCs, aiding the Talons, and blowing up a space station full of innocent people… then so be it.

Nowak unleashes Lighthouse on the apostates, declares the PCs to be enemies of House Tsarya, and sends Lighthouse after them in the chaos. The docks have become a war zone, instigated by Chimera to get revenge against Nowak. The PCs may hear about how Chimera helped arm the Talons and apostate workers, but the PCs never meet him or anyone who has.

The PCs need to get to find and capture Nowak so they can interrogate her. The GM can present this however she chooses, but it is recommended that you play it out using the new rules for Mission Frameworks (pg. 27).

Success

If the PCs succeed, they manage to get an open route to Nowak. They'll find her in one of the local security posts, which has become a fallback position since Nowak's offices were taken by apostate and Talon forces.

She's in a back room, with only a few tired and wounded Lighthouse operatives to protect her.

Initially, Nowak will claim she doesn't know where the PCs' cores are. In truth, she knows the following:

✦ Nowak received word that the Kimuran outpost orbiting the new planet had gone dark for over two months. She wanted the outpost checked for anything of interest on Opportunity Four. She didn't know the outpost was host to illegal mnemonics research, but being a Purist she ordered it destroyed when she found out.

✦ The PCs were killed during an attempt to take the outpost by force, during which she had ordered them to sabotage the environmental systems.

✦ She was going to ignore the dead PCs. But when one of her aides told her that they had apparently begun wiping much of their own personal data, she feared what they were up to. Of course, it was Chimera wiping the data, but Nowak didn't know this. So she contacted Valare and tasked her to scrub the mission to cover the PCs' association with Nowak.

Failure

The PCs find Nowak in the security post, but it's too late. She's been killed already by the apostates, Talons, or Kestrel (GM's choice).

Shortly after, the PCs get a message over the Extranet. It's from Kestrel, and it just contains the coordinates of the outpost.

PART 4 — OPPORTUNITY FOUR

The outpost is in orbit around a planet designated Opportunity Four by House Kimura. The planet was detected by one of their long-range probes, and the outpost was deployed to act as a research station in hope the planet might provide some useful resources.

Opportunity Four eventually proved of little interest to Kimura. The planet is about twice the size of Earth and has similar temperatures, but the atmosphere lacks oxygen. Moreover, the planet's composition lacks enough rare materials to make it worth the resources expended to collect them.

Kimura has since declared the planet a loss, but left the outpost in orbit at the request of one of its subsidiaries, called Mindscapes, who wanted to use it for top-secret mnemonics research. It was here that the crew was captured and their egos merged into Chimera.

As soon as the outpost detects the crew's ship, it remotely detonates the star system's only comm-buoy. This cuts off everyone in the system from the Extranet and intersystem communications.

Hornets Inbound

The outpost also unleashes two drone piloted Hornet HT-NT-7 short range fighters to intercept. The interceptors will fight until either they disable the PCs' ship or are disabled or destroyed themselves.

Assume the drone pilots have a d8 Skill rating in all necessary Skills to pilot and fight with their craft.

The PCs win the conflict if they can Take Out both drone craft. They can then attempt to enter the station.

If the PCs' ship is Taken Out during the conflict, the drones will leave it dead in the water, floating through space for their owners to later salvage. The PCs will need to find another way to get to the outpost.

Dead in the Water

If the PCs' ship is Taken Out, they can get to the outpost in a few ways.

They might be able to repair the ship while sitting idle and then make a last-minute dash to the outpost. They could try to exit the ship and cross the distance in open space. They might also try to communicate with Chimera and Dr. Nakamura.

Dealing with Chimera, Nakamura, or both could be tricky. The PCs will have to offer something that they want.

Chimera wants to be free, and sees the death of the PCs as an integral part of that. When he learns that the PCs are alive and onboard the station, his immediate response is to order the Raptors to finish them off. Thankfully, Dr. Nakamura overrides that order; he'd rather see what the PCs have to offer.

Chimera will entertain any offer that puts the PCs in a disadvantageous position, so that killing them will be easier.

Dr. Nakamura just wants more time to finish his research. But he'd also like another set of egos to work with, and blowing up the ship could make them unrecoverable.

Chimera and Dr. Nakamura have another problem, though. When the comm-buoy was destroyed, all compilers in the star system stopped working. They won't work without an Extranet connection to authorize users. Without a functional compiler, the outpost will soon lack the resources it needs.

Dr. Nakamura would much prefer to get his hands on the PCs' gear, and the contents of the ship, than blow it all up.

Chimera and Nakamura will accept pretty much any reasonable deal the PCs offer. Of course, they plan to kill the crew as soon as possible, harvest their cores, and take their ship.

Gaining Entry

If the PCs are in the Chickenhawk and they haven't repaired it, they won't be able to make a sealed connection.

In any case, the outer hatch is locked and will only recognize Dr. Haruto Nakamura's CID. The PCs can either hack it with Eminent Domain (Diff: 4) or blow it with explosives.

To blow the hatch, the PCs can to rig a few grenades or a satchel charge, requiring a successful Demolitions test.

Adjust the test's difficulty depending on how much explosive force the PCs can produce. For example, a satchel charge would set the difficulty at 1, while a few rigged grenades might set it at 3.

The PCs can also gain access through a side venting ducts of one of the Epsilon-level habitat modules. The access point is just beside the escape pod ejection port. It's large enough for a person to crawl through and contains an air lock filled with waste gases. A Savant can hack the access point with Eminent Domain (Diff: 2), or it can be bypassed with Hardware Engineering (Diff: 3).

This gas vent leads to an access panel above a shower in the habitat module.

Opposition

The outpost has a fair amount of defense. Dr. Nakamura doesn't trust many people and wants to keep his team very small. At Chimera's urging, though, he has requisitioned a rather large number of security drones.

Chimera will fight, but won't fight to the death. If it looks like he will be defeated, he'll try to get to an escape pod. If he can get to the pod, he will pilot it down to the planet's surface, where he has some gear and the PCs' ship from their first mission.

If he can't get to the pods, he will surrender. He will then beg forgiveness and try to convince the PCs to let him live.

Remember that Chimera's mind is heavily fragmented. He has very little empathy or compassion, and will betray the PCs in an instant if it means he can escape. He also has all their memories, which he will try to use to his advantage.

Nakamura and the other four scientists will not fight. They have no combat training, and they know it. If fighting breaks out, they will take cover or flee.

The drones have orders to shoot trespassers on site. They are driven by Beta-level AIs, and can be controlled directly from the command center.

Trouble Incoming

Once the PCs deal with Chimera— whether by killing him, making a deal with him, or by letting him escape—the outpost's proximity alert sounds.

Another ship has entered the system, en route to the outpost. The ship is a small transport craft, itself not much of a threat. But it's registered to Crimson and Sons, the public face of the Crimson Suns.

Kestrel has been ordered to clean up House Kimura's mess. His orders are to enter the outpost, kill everyone onboard, destroy their cores, wipe all data on the facility, and send it into the system's sun.

Kestrel's ship will attempt to dock with the outpost, after which his team will blow the doors. Their reaper drone will enter first, clearing the way for the rest of the hit squad.

The PCs can try to bargain with Kestrel and his team, but it will be very difficult. These people are very loyal to their House, and understand the necessity of eliminating its indiscretions.
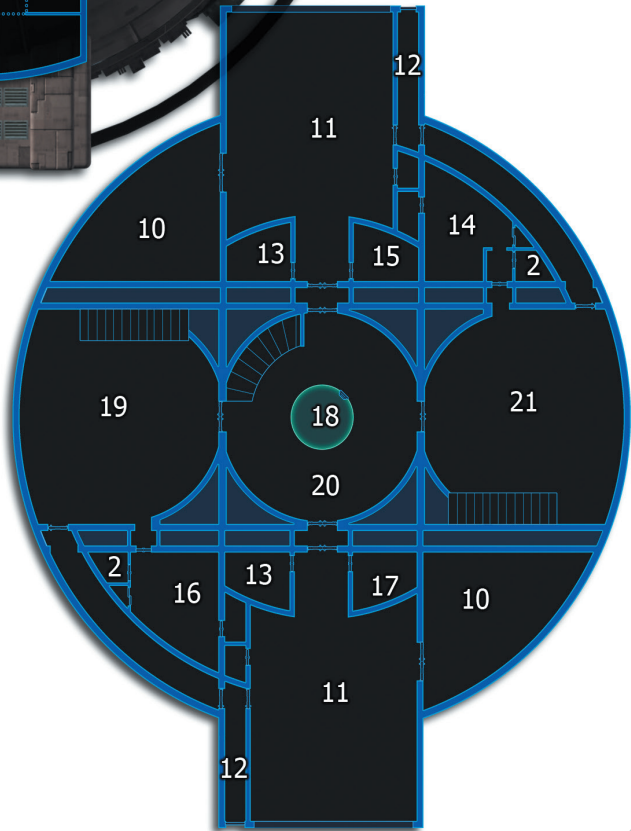
TOP DECK

1. Barracks
2. Restroom
3. Armory
4. Reception/Processing
5. Office
6. Command Balcony
7. Atrium Catwalk
8. Lounge Balcony
9. Detention Center

MAIN DECK

10. Cargo Bay
11. Hangar Bay
12. Gantry/Umbilical
13. General Supplies
14. Kitchen
15. Isolation
16. Surgery
17. Machine Shop
18. Zero-Gravity Shaft
19. Command Center
20. Atrium
21. Lounge

Opportunity Four Outpost

TOP DECK

MAIN DECK

ALPHA

ALPHA, BETA, & DELTA LEVELS

23
2
22 · 18 · 22
2
23

BETA

GAMMA

GAMMA LEVEL

24
18

DELTA

EPSILON LEVEL

23
25 · 18 · 25
2
23

EPSILON

ENGINEERING LEVEL

26
27 · 18
28
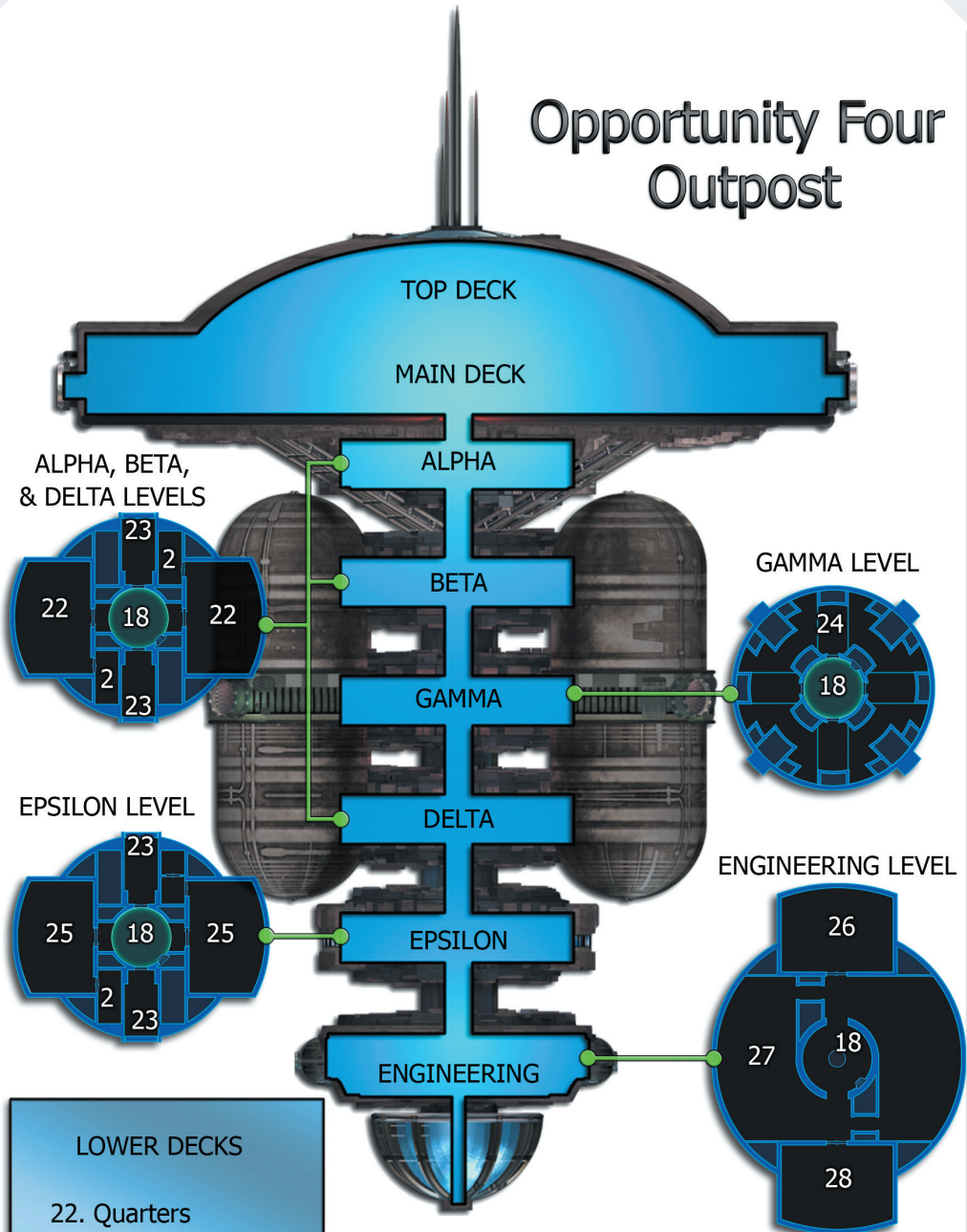
ENGINEERING

LOWER DECKS

22. Quarters
23. Escape Pod
24. Station Systems
25. Lab
26. Gym
27. Main Engineering
28. Conference room

Detailed Maps

For more extensive detail of the *Chickenhawk* (Exeter), Research Outpost (Vanguard) and more, we highly recommend you check out the Future Armada line by Ryan Wolfe from 0 hr: Art and Technology at http://0-hr.com/Future_Armada/

Top Deck

1. Barracks
✦ All the Comforts of Home

2. Restroom
✦ The Only Private Room on the Station

3. Armory
✦ Locked and Off-Limits
✦ Meager Assortment of Weapons and Armor

4. Reception/Processing
✦ Neglected Holographic Workstation

5. Office
✦ Comfy Suspension Chair
✦ VR Interface Ready

6. Command Center Balcony
✦ Tasteful Japanese Adornment
✦ Reserved for Personal Work and Meetings

7. Atrium Catwalk
✦ Three Meters Above the Atrium Floor
✦ Wire-Grated Floor
✦ Weak Gravity Field

8. Lounge Balcony
✦ Great View of the Lounge and the Stars Above

9. Detention Center
✦ Just a Couch and a Chair
✦ Office Supply Storage
✦ Security Doors are Reinforced Steel, and Locked

Inaccessible Areas
✦ Life Support, Communications, and Sensors
✦ No Easy Access

Main Deck

10. Cargo Bay
✦ Freight in Passkey-Secured, Pressurized Crates
✦ Most of the Freight is Raw Materials for Compilers
✦ Ammo for the Station's Onboard Weapons

11. Hangar Bay
✦ Equipped to Service and Refuel
✦ The Bay Can Cycle Atmosphere as Needed

12. Gantry/Umbilical
✦ Extendable Arms Used by Docking Craft
✦ Controls in Command Center and Hangar Bay
✦ Weak Gravity Field

13. General Supplies
✦ Flight Suits and Vacuum Suits
✦ Assorted Sundries

14. Kitchen
✦ Walk-In Freezer
✦ Mostly Dehydrated Rations

15. Isolation

- ✦ Prisoner Storage and Interrogation
- ✦ Former Storage Room
- ✦ Cast-Off Cybersleeves
- ✦ Handcuffs Attached to Bracket on Wall
- ✦ Bloodstained Floor

16. Surgery

- ✦ Medical and First Aid Gear
- ✦ Array Dedicated to Mnemonics Research and Editing
- ✦ Chimera's Birthplace

17. Machine Shop

- ✦ Large Compiler
- ✦ Tools and Raw Materials Needed for Repairs

18. Zero-Grav Shaft

- ✦ Zero-G Shaft for Moving Between Sections
- ✦ Handholds and a Ladder
- ✦ Emergency Bulkheads at Each End

19. Command Center

- ✦ Nerve Center of the Station
- ✦ Great View

20. Atrium

- ✦ Removable Floor Panels to Access Maintenance Shafts
- ✦ Sparse and Open

21. Lounge

- ✦ Music and Video
- ✦ Imitation Wood Tables

Spine

22. Quarters (Alpha)

- ✦ Private Suites Used by Chimera and Nakamura
- ✦ Chimera's Room Is a Mess
- ✦ Chimera's Walls Are Adorned with Pictures of Loved Ones
- ✦ "Nakamura's room is, like all other aspects of his life, neat and orderly."
- ✦ Escape Pods

22. Quarters (Beta)

- ✦ Living Quarters for Technicians and Assistants

22. Quarters (Delta)

- ✦ Living Quarters for Engineers and Security Staff
- ✦ Filled with Bodies Sprayed with Anti-Decomposition Preservatives
- ✦ "And yet... it still smells."

23. Escape Pod

- ✦ Only Room for Three

24 Station Systems

- ✦ External Tank Linkage and Monitoring
- ✦ Tanks Contain Air and Water

25. Lab

- ✦ Resurrection Chamber
- ✦ Mnemonic Research
- ✦ Core Storage
- ✦ General Storage for Bedding and Cleaning Supplies

Engineering Level

26. Gym

- ✦ "Weights, a treadmill, punching bag..."

27. Main Engineering

- ✦ Monitors and Controls the APEX Reactor
- ✦ Redundant Controls for Life Support and Communications
- ✦ Maintenance and Usage of Rail-Cannons
- ✦ Access to Repair Drones

28. Conference Room

- ✦ Expensive Real-Wood Table

Docking Hatch and Power Core

- ✦ Docking Shaft Runs Through Center of APEX Drive

EPILOGUE

Once the PCs defeat Kestrel, they're left to put their lives back in order.

Exiled

If they didn't strike a deal with Nowak, the PCs are probably still branded as traitors. They're effectively apostates and wanted dead or alive.

Until they can clear themselves of the charges, they'll have to avoid Coalition space or get around by using false CIDs.

Their Rep scores will remain frozen until they can stand trial for their crimes. This means they can't use their Rep to acquire goods and cannot use compilers.

The best way they can clear their names is by turning over the research data from the outpost. Of course, this will make them enemies of certain factions within House Kimura, and possibly also House Tsarya if they reveal Isabella Nowak's involvement.

Chimera

Chimera can be a very interesting recurring villain for the PCs to deal with. If he escaped, he will continue seeking avenues that better secure his freedom.

And killing the PCs is still a good way to help ensure this. He knows what and who they know, and he knows how best to strike at them. However, he'll likely choose to lie low for a little while.

After landing on Opportunity Four, he waits for the PCs to leave the system, after which he makes a run for the edge of the planet's gravity well and jumps away.

Chimera's Stats

Most characters that the PCs will likely encounter in this scenario are given stats. Chimera doesn't have stats because he is a combination of the PCs.

Physically, Chimera inhabits a top-of-the-line, custom Paragon sleeve. House Kimura spared little expense in creating and sleeving Chimera.

Chimera's Skills, Stunts, and Savant Programs are derived from those of the Apotheosized PCs he was made from. Each of his skill ratings equals the highest of those from all the contributing PCs. The sole exception is Cohesion, which has a rating of 1.

Chimera also has all of the Stunts that they have, or at least all the Stunts that would make sense for him to inherit. If any PCs from which Chimera was derived are Savants, Chimera knows all of their Savant Programs.

MISSION FRAMEWORKS

The rules for Mission Frameworks can be used when the PCs need to carry out a series of complex actions in order to achieve a specific goal. In regular play, Traits are rolled to overcome or defeat discrete challenges each round.

Frameworks are useful when you want to showcase the PCs' Skills in a quick series of mini-scenes. And they are also useful any time the party needs to split up to achieve a task.

Most regular gameplay takes place in "real time", or a little slower. Conversations between PCs tend to play out pretty much like the conversation taking place at the table, and conflicts generally only take up a few seconds of actual in-character game time.

When using Frameworks, the action is larger scale, and a single Trait roll can determine the outcome of several minutes or even hours of in-game character activity.

Good uses for the Framework rules are when the party needs to sneak into a secured warehouse, pull off a complex heist, engage in a high-speed chase, repairing a spacecraft full of posthuman aberrations, etc.

Framework Setup

Establish the Goal

When running a Framework, the first thing you need to do is clearly define the goal. It should be something you can specify in a single sentence, and the terms for success or failure should be clear.

Set the Time Between Segments

To avoid confusion with regular game time, Frameworks use the term "Segments" instead of "Rounds". But their purpose is the same. Each players gets a chance to act once every Segment.

Where a round is generally just a few seconds, a Segment should be considerably longer, ranging from a few minutes to an hour depending on the activity and the nature of the Framework.

Determine Framework Characteristics

When creating a Framework, take a moment to write down 3-4 facts about the Framework itself. These Characteristics help you define the nature of the Framework and provide guidance and inspiration when new Complications and Advantages are created. See the sample Complications at the end of this section for examples of some good Framework Characteristics.

Determine the Framework Complexity

Every Framework has a Complexity rating, which determines how difficult it is to succeed. A simple Framework will have a Complexity of 4, which assumes 4 characters need only succeed at a single task each to finish the Framework successfully. More Complex Frameworks are more appropriate for more PCs, or require them to succeed at more tasks.

Determine the Framework's Complications

Every Framework starts with a number of Complications equal to its Complexity. These are the people, places, events or things that stand between the PCs and completing the Framework successfully.

Each Complication has its own Difficulty associated with it based on how hard it is to overcome.

Easy	4
Challenging	6
Hard	8
Very Hard	10
Seemingly Impossible	12

Also, some Complications can't be resolved until another has. For example, you wouldn't be able to get gravity back online until Power is restored.

If you were trying to repair a ship while it's being boarded, for example, some sample Complications might be:

✦ The engineering department has been flooded with coolant. (Diff: 4)
   1. Power needs to be restored (Diff: 8)
      A. The gravitics systems are offline. (Diff: 4)
      A. The ship's weapon systems are offline. (Diff: 4)
      A. The ship's AI is offline. (Diff: 6)
      A. The ship's Jump Drive is offline. (Diff: 6)
✦ Pirates are coming in the breach in the med-bay. (Diff: 6)
✦ Hostile security drones are patrolling the cargo hold. (Diff: 8)

Some Complications may be considered "Mission Critical". No matter what, the Framework cannot be completed until all Mission Critical Complications have been resolved.

In the above examples, restoring power would probably be considered Mission Critical.

Success or Failure

Throughout the Framework, the PCs will be called upon to make Skill rolls and/or perform other actions to eliminate Complications. As Complications are eliminated, the Framework's Complexity is reduced.

Once the Framework's Complexity is 0, and all Mission critical Complications have been Overcome, the Framework ends in success and the PC's achieve their goal.

As the PCs work their way through the Framework, they put themselves in danger, potentially make mistakes that make the Framework harder to complete, or otherwise make a mess of things. The Consequences of these actions can culminate in an ultimate failure to complete the Framework.

Running the Framework

During a Framework, the PCs can perform two types of actions. They may attempt to overcome Complications, which gets them closer to succeeding at completing the Framework. Or, they may create Advantages, which makes it easier to overcome certain Complications.

Overcoming Complications

Each turn every participating PC selects the Trait he or she wishes to use and explains how the use of the chosen Trait will help in overcoming one of the Framework's Complications. If the GM agrees that the chosen Trait is relevant, the PC rolls against the Framework's difficulty.

The GM should leverage bonuses and penalties where appropriate. Specifically, if the same PC uses a Trait that could work, but isn't well suited for the task, he or she suffers a -2 penalty. Also, if the PC uses the same Trait two rounds in a row, he or she suffers a -1 penalty.

Success: If the PC succeeds, he checks off the Complication and reduces the Framework's Complexity by 1.

Success with a Raise: If you succeed with a raise, reduce the Framework's Complexity by 2. If the Gm wishes, as a side effect of your tremendous success, you may automatically overcome another Complication that is dependent on the first one (still only reducing the Complexity by 2 however). Or, you may only reduce the Frameworks Complexity by 1, but also create an Advantage (see below).

Failure: If the PC rolls the dice, but fails to overcome the Complication, the Consequences depend on the result of their die roll.

Failure by less than 4: Nothing happens. The situation nether improves, nor gets any worse.

Failure by more than 4: Things go bad, and the situation worsens. The Framework's Complexity is increased by 1.

Critical Failure: Something goes horribly wrong, making the Framework even harder to complete. The Framework's Complexity is increased by 2, and the GM selects (or randomly determines) one of the following options:

- d6 (1-3) - Increase an existing Complication's difficulty by 2.
- d6 (4-6) - Introduce a new Complication with a difficulty equal to the Framework's Complexity at the time it is created.

Create an Advantage

Instead of trying to directly overcome a Complication, you may instead attempt to create an Advantage that can be later exploited to help you overcome a Complication.

To do this, first you need to explain what you intend to do, and what Trait you intend to use. The GM will then determine if the proposal is reasonable, and if so, apply any modifiers based on the nature of the proposal, the trait used, and other factors like what tools you have at your disposal, environmental factors, etc.

These factors shouldn't result in a bonus or penalty beyond +/- 4. Anything more is a good indicator that the either a different trait needs to be selected, or the proposed action needs to be refined.

The GM should think hard before rejecting a proposal, and if he or she must, then they and player should try to work together to come up with a reasonable compromise.

Once the Trait and modifiers have been determined, the PC may roll the dice.

Note, however, that some actions don't necessarily require dice rolls. The GM may determine that particularly clever or convenient attempts to create an Advantage succeed automatically.

Success: If the PC succeeds, he or she creates an Advantage. If they succeed with a Raise, they create a Significant Advantage (see below).

Failure: If the PC rolls the dice, but fails to create the Advantage, the Consequences of attempting it depends on the result of their die roll.

Failure by less than 4: Nothing happens. The Advantage isn't created, but nothing else really happens.

Failure by more than 4: Things go bad, and the situation worsens. The Framework's Complexity is increased by 1.

Critical Failure: Something goes horribly wrong, making the Framework even harder to complete. The GM selects (or randomly determines) one of the following options:

- d6 (1-3) - Increase an existing Complication's difficulty by 1.
- d6 (4-6) - Introduce a new Complication with a difficulty of 4.

Using Advantages

If the PC succeeds, he or she creates an Advantage. The Advantage recorded as a sentence that describes what the PC did, and the player or GM should write it down somewhere.

The Advantage has a Bennie assigned to it. And anyone who tries to overcome a Complication while making use of this Advantage can use this Bennie on their Trait roll to do so.

Significant Advantages get two Bennies!

For example, a character might spend his turn during a segment locating and readying a vacuum suit in the supply room just outside of Engineering.

Later, another PCs might declare that he will use his Athletics Skill to swim in and open the vents to overcome the "The engineering department has been flooded with coolant." Complication. When he does, he may use the "Ready-to-Use Vacuum Suit" Advantage another PC created earlier; and gain its Bennie to use if he fails his Athletics roll.

Dealing with Disadvantages

Some factors aren't Complications themselves, but inflict a penalty on certain attempts to overcome Complications. Usually this is a -2 penalty, but the GM may adjust the penalty depending on the circumstances.

For example, if you don't have any sort of night vision, when sneaking into a dark storage facility, you might suffer a -2 penalty from a "No Light" Disadvantage.

Other examples of Disadvantages are Increased Gravity, which might imposed a penalty on attempts to overcome Complications that require you to move quickly through an area; or Hostage Can't Walk, which inflicts a penalty when you try to get a rescued hostage to safety.

Getting Help

If one or more other characters try to help you overcome a Complication, the person with the highest relevant Skill makes the roll, and gains a +1 bonus for each additional Wild Card participant. Characters who are not Wild Cards grant a +1 bonus, but cannot offer more than that regardless of how many try to help. The maximum bonus you can receive from help in overcoming a Complication is +4.

Framework Failure

If the Framework's Complexity ever increases by 4 or more beyond it's starting Complexity, the operation fails spectacularly and the Framework's goal becomes effectively impossible to achieve.

At this point, the goal may truly be impossible to achieve. In the example above, maybe the ship the PCs are trying to repair gets hijacked, or it is blown up, or maybe they just damage the APEX drives beyond repair. In any case, they aren't going to get it repaired any time soon.

This would play out however the GM feels makes the most sense. Maybe the PCs recover the APEX drive from the pirate's ship. Or maybe they call it a loss and go steal a different ship.

And that could be the start of a new Framework.

Making it your own.

The rules for Sequences provide you with guidance for arranging Segments into a series of events that simplify what could otherwise be a complex series of scenes that require a lot of preparation by the GM, and a lot of time at the game table.

But don't let these guidelines be a straightjacket. No rule system can account for every eventuality. And as the GM, if you need to bend, twist or break these rules for the benefit of your story, do it!

Combat in a Framework

As with all things related to a Framework, combat also shifts to a more large-scale approach. When a Skill like Shoot or Fight is used in a Framework, this takes the place of what might normally be a full combat scene. For example, a single successful Shoot test might result in the PC bringing down an entire hallway full of bad guys.

Complications that represent combative forces, such as pirates, rebels, angry Centurions, ornery alien predators, etc are granted a difficulty rating just like any other.

However, when you use a Skill like Fight or Shoot to try to overcome a Complication that describes combatants, you expose yourself to danger.

In this case, the Complication's difficulty is an abstract representation of how tough the opposition it. It factors in superior numbers, training, armor, positioning, etc; as well as the PC's own capabilities. A patrol of armed thugs might be a challenging (Diff: 6) encounter for fresh recruits, but a walk in the park (Diff: 4) for more seasoned combatants.

To overcome a combative Complication, you attempt a Trait roll against the Complication's difficulty like you would any other Complication.

Success: You take out all of the combatants, or otherwise eliminate the Complication. But there is still the possibility that you got hurt. All participants suffer Xd6 damage, where X equals the difficulty of the Complication -1.

The damage you receive from a combative Complication represents the cumulative bullet impacts, claw swipes, or particle blasts you receive as a result of exposing yourself to harm by attacking them. It also represents how strategic, and/or lucky the participants were.

A PC who suffered a large amount of damage might have suffered a single devastating attack, or perhaps multiple smaller attacks as a result of being out-maneuvered. Or... perhaps they were attacked from behind by a unknown assailant, or their target's backup. The GM should tailor his recounting of events based on the situation and the amount of damage each PC sustained.

Success with a Raise: If you score a Raise, you do not take any damage.

Also, you cannot die from the damage a Complication inflicts on you if you succeed at overcoming it. Instead, you remain at 3 Wounds, must cash in all your Bennies, and suffer a level of Fatigue.

Failure: The Complication is not eliminated. And you suffer Xd6 damage; where X is equal to the Complication's difficulty. However, the Complication's Difficulty is then reduced by 1. This represents the damage you deal to the enemy combatants, or the resources you made them expend, even though you weren't able to fully eliminate them.

So a Complication with a difficulty of 6 would deal 6d6 damage, but then be reduced to 5.

Critical Failure: On a critical failure, the result is the same as a regular failure except the Complication's difficulty is not decreased, and instead of rolling d6's for damage, you roll d8's!

Combative Complication Example

Imagine a Sequence where the goal is to board and take over an enemy ship. A Fight roll might be used to describe a PC's attempt to burst into a room with her mono-edged longsword, laying waste to a batch of security drones.

In this example, the drones are represented by a Complication written as:

Security Drones at the Umbilical Hatch (Diff: 6)

To overcome this Complication, you would make a Fight roll against the Complication's difficulty of 6.

If you succeeded, you'd destroy the drones, overcome the Complication, and take 5d6 damage worth of injuries for your troubles. (Remember, you can't die from this damage if you manage to succeed at overcoming the Complication.)

If you failed, you'd suffer 6d6 damage (from which you can be killed), and the Complication's difficulty would be reduced to 5 to represent the damage you managed to do to the drones, even though you didn't fully eliminate them.

Defensive Advantage: In some cases the PC may clearly have the upper hand, such as when attacking targets at range that only have melee weapons. In this case, you might not suffer damage. You would instead suffer the effect of failing to overcome a regular Complication.

Weapon Bonuses: The GM may also grant a bonus if the PC is wielding an especially powerful weapon. Most conventional weapons, such as pistols, SMG or even assault rifles do not grant a bonus. However, Heavy Weapons, such a Portable Rail-Minigun or Titan Flamer, grant a +2 bonus.

Favors in Framework

Sometimes you can get closer to achieving your Framework's goal by requesting a Favor. For example, if your goal is to discover the identity of a traitor to your House, you may be able to get access to security data by requesting a Favor from someone with access to the local Monitors.

The normal way of dealing with Favors and Reputation is described in Chapter 6 of *Nova Praxis: Savage Worlds Edition*. In a Framework, however, this process is simplified a bit.

Using Favors to Overcome a Complication

To request a Favor, make a test with either your Rep-Rating or Assets (whichever is more appropriate) against the higher of the Complication's difficulty or the Favor's value. This works just like any other Trait roll to overcome a Complication, except as described below:

If you Succeed: You get your Favor, suffer a 1 point Hit to your Rep-Rating or Assets (whichever you used), and successfully overcome the Complication. Success with a Raise creates a Significant Advantage, as described above.

If you Fail: The result is the same as a normal Framework failure, but you also suffer a Hit to your Rep equal to the Difficulty of the Complication you were trying to overcome.

Critical Failure: A critical failure results in a Hit equal to the Difficulty of the Complication you were trying to overcome, +3!

Using Favors to Create an Advantage

To request a Favor in an effort to create an Advantage, roll either your Rep-Rating or Assets (whichever is more appropriate). This roll suffers a penalty equal to the Value of the Favor itself.

This works just like any other Trait roll to create an Advantage, except as described below:

If you Succeed: You get your Favor, suffer a 1 point Hit to your Rep-Rating or Assets (whichever you used), and successfully create the Advantage you set out to create. Success with a Raise creates a Significant Advantage, as described above.

If you Fail: The result is the same as a normal Framework failure, but you also suffer a Hit equal to the Value of the Favor.

Critical Failure: A critical failure result is the same as a normal failure, but also results in a Hit equal to the Difficulty of the Complication you were trying to overcome, +3!

Frameworks, Savants, and the SINC Skill

The SINC Skill itself isn't generally much use in a Framework. However, it can be used to utilize Savant Programs to help reach your goal.

What you can use the SINC Skill to do depends on the Savant Programs you have. For example, Eminent Domain tends to be really handy when it comes to making overcoming Complications related to the environment. Delve can help create Advantages that aid in overcoming Complications tied to specific people.

To use your Savant Programs in a Framework, perform a SINC test like you would with any Skill.

If you Succeed: You overcome Complications or create Advantages as you would with other Skills, but you must be able to describe how your specific Savant Programs are used to do it.

If you Fail: You suffer the normal effects of a Framework failure, but you also suffer a Glitch.

Critical Failure: A critical failure is the same as a regular failure, but you suffer 2 Glitches!

Advanced Frameworks

As the GM, once you get comfortable running Frameworks, you might consider adding the following options for interjecting regular gameplay scenes into your Frameworks.

With these rules, GMs can use the Framework framework to run entire multi-session campaigns!

Interjecting Segment Scenes

The GM may decide that a Complication must be overcome with a Segment Scene instead of a Trait roll. During a Segment Scene, the game reverts to the standard scope and rate of time passage for regular Savage Worlds gameplay.

Next, the GM sets the criteria for success. This is called a Scene Objective, and it must be achieved for the Complication to be overcome.

For example, the Framework might have the following Complication:

Madam Tzolt has the Armory Access Code. (Scene Objective: Get the Access Code)

In this case, when the PCs encounter Madam Tzolt, their encounter plays out like a normal scene would. They need to persuade Madam Tzolt to give them the access code to the Armory. Hopefully they can achieve their objective through diplomacy, but if they need to resort to violence, they still succeed if they get the codes.

When you achieve your Scene Objective, you effectively overcome the Complication, and the Framework's Complexity is decreased by 1.

If you fail to achieve the objective, you fail to overcome the Complication. The Framework's Complexity is increased by 1, and the Complication either remains, or is replaced by a different Complication.

Triggered Segment Scenes

Failure on an attempt to overcome a Complication could result in triggering a Segment Scene. This offers a sort of second chance at overcoming a Complication, and might be a combat scene, a diplomatic debate, or whatever else makes sense as a result of failing to overcome a Complication.

The scene is triggered as a result of a failure. As such, it should start off with the PCs in a predicament. For example, if the PCs attempted to use their Shoot Skill to overcome the "Pirates are coming in the breach in the med-bay." Complication, the Segment Scene it triggers could begin with the PCs pinned down behind cover.

Like any other Segment Scene, the GM should determine a Scene Objective. They've already failed once, so the Scene Objective shouldn't be too easy to achieve. But if they manage it, the PCs are able to overcome the Complication that triggered it.

Sample Frameworks

Infiltrating the Smuggler's Lair

Goal: Locate the hostage and find out what she knows about the Red Sun's activity in Asola.

Complexity: 7   **Segment Time:** 5 min

Characteristics:

- ✦ Warehouse is a Front for Ego Trafficking
- ✦ Standard Density Mesh
- ✦ Local Thugs Hired for Perimeter Security
- ✦ Attached Warehouse used to Store Smuggled Goods

Complications:

- ✦ Amateur Security Detail #1 - Walking the Perimeter (Diff: 4)
- ✦ Amateur Security Detail #2 – On Roof (Diff: 4)
- ✦ Target's Position Unknown (Mission Critical, Diff: 6)
    1. Hostage Held in Reinforced Cell, which must be opened somehow (Diff: 6).
        A. Get the hostage to give up the information (Diff: 4).
- ✦ High-End Physical Anti-Intrusion Tech Locks Down All Doors and Windows (Diff: 6)
- ✦ Repurposed Lonestar Security Drone– Patrols Halls (Diff: 6)

Disadvantages:

- ✦ *Wounded Hostage* - The target is Wounded and Can't Walk (-2 on rolls made while moving the hostage)

Surviving the Jungles of Proch

Goal: Survive a 20km trek through the dangerous jungles of Proch.

Complexity: 12   **Segment Time:** 3 hrs

Characteristics:

- ✦ Hot, Humid and Wet
- ✦ "Survival of the Fittest" is the only Law
- ✦ Unmeshed

Complications:

- ✦ Five km of Progress (Diff: 4, Mission Critical) - Failure means 3 hrs wasted.
    1. A massive predator lies in wait, ready to ambush the PCs if they don't avoid it. (Diff: 6)
- ✦ Five more km of Progress (Diff: 4, Mission Critical)
    1. Discover Abandoned Hunter's Outpost (Diff: 4)
        A. Defeat Bandits at Outpost (Diff: 6) - Success results in an Advantage. The PCs find a *Detailed Map of the Region*.
- ✦ Ravine (Diff: 6, Mission Critical) – A deep ravine that cuts through the area. A river of mud flows through it at the bottom, and it is filled with vicious predators.
- ✦ Five more km of Progress (Diff: 4, Mission Critical)
    1. The PCs become hunted by a pack of fast moving meat eaters. (Diff: 8, Mission Critical)
- ✦ Five more km of Progress (Diff: 4, Mission Critical)
    1. An open field where docile creatures graze. A massive predator attacks the herd, then quickly turns its attention on the PCs. (Diff: 8)

Disadvantages:

- ✦ *Dense Jungle* - Makes it hard to see very far, and very easy to get lost.
- ✦ *Dangerous Ground* - Wet ground leads to mud slides and treacherous footing.

ANTAGONISTS

Rioting Apostate Worker

State: Pure

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d6, Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d4, Piloting d6, Shooting d6, Streetwise d8,

Coh: -0; **Cha:** -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Vengeful (Minor)

Gear: Gravitic Baton (Str+2d6, -2 Notice when Collapsed) or Mono-Edged Dagger (Str+d4+2, AP 2), Might also carry a Light Rail Pistol (Range 10/20/40, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, AP 3, SA, -2 on Notice to Detect, Silent Option)

Motivation: The typical apostate worker isn't generally prone to violence. But if pushed too far, and given a sufficiently charismatic leader to guide him or her, the apostate may be willing to hurt others to gain a their freedom or take a chance on a better life.

As the Talons instigate a revolt the Icarus hub, many apostates are inspired to take up arms to fight for their would-be saviors.

Harvester

These harvester drones were designed for a singular gruesome task, to seek out enemies on the battlefield, sever their heads, and collect their mnemonic cores.

Less than half a meter long, harvesters look much like large flying beetles. They are held aloft with three small gravitic flight pods, and their "faces" are equipped with two scythe-like mandibles.

It is also capable of projecting a line of plasti-rope tipped with a serrated barb. The purpose of the tether is to capture its prey, keeping it from escaping before its head can be severed.

Drone Type: Gamma **Cost:** 10 [Restricted]

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d8, Fighting d12, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d4

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 9; **Toughness:** 7 (2)

Augmentations: Fully Synthetic, Alternative Mobility System (Flight Capable), Tiny Size (Size -1), Sonar Reception Array

Armor/Weaponry: Basic Drone Armor (+2), Barbed Tethers (Range 5/10/20, Damage 2d6, AP 2, RoF 1), Mono-Edge Mandibles (Str+d8, AP 4); Light PAc Pistol (Range 14/28/56, Damage 2d8, RoF 1, Beam, Atmo Dependent)

Special Abilities:

✦ *Head Hunter** – Any character killed by an attack from the Harvester's mandibles is decapitated, their mnemonic core extracted, and stored away in a special armored compartment withing the Harvester.

✦ *Reel-In*** - Targets that suffer a Wound from an attack with the Harvester's Barbed Tethers become hooked by the barbs. At the start of the hooked target's turn, they must win in an opposed Strength roll or be pulled 10ft closer to the Harvester. If pulled within 5ft of the Harvester, the character automatically suffers an attack by the Harvester's mandibles.

* The Harvester's Skills are reduced by 3 ranks in exchange for this special ability.

** The the number of weapon's normally available to a Gamma drone with the Harvester's Skills are reduced by 2 in exchange for this special ability.

✠ Kestrel

Ringleader of Struggling Apostate Community on Asola.

State: Sleeved (Custom Biosleeve)

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d8, Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Computers) d6, Notice d10, Shooting d6, Stealth d8, Streetwise d6

Coh: -1; **Cha:** +4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 14 (8); **Assets:** 7, **Rep-Rating:** 5

Hindrances: Loyal

Edges: Alertness, Charismatic, Dodge, First Strike, Two-Fisted,

Gear: Custom Sharp Suit (Reinforced Clothing), Light Rail Pistol x2 (Range 10/20/40, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, AP 3, SA, -2 on Notice to Detect, Silent Option), Mono-Edged Dagger x2 (Str+d4+2, AP 2, -2 to Notice)

Augmentations: Apotheosis (Cognet Capable, Remote Backup), Cosmetic Customization (Glowing/Glossy Skin), Gene-Fixed, Pheromone Control and Sensitivity, Skinweave Armor (+6), Smuggler's Compartment (Charlatan)

Motivation: Kestrel's primary concern is for himself, though he truly cares for the apostates he represents. He works with them in an effort to afford them better lives. But if he is forced to, Kestrel will choose loyalty to his House over the apostates, or any other allies.

Kraken

The Kraken drone was developed by the Federation, before the Exodus. Typically, deployed to clear buildings and bunkers, the Kraken's sole purpose is to hunt and kill in confined quarters.

The Kraken is a large mass of tentacles surrounding a central sensor covered hub. Each of its twelve tentacles end with three grasping talons surrounding a small PAc emitter.

Drone Type: Epsilon   **Cost:** 13 [Restricted]

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d10, Vigor d12

Skills: Athletics d10, Fighting d8, Intimidation d8+1, Notice d8+2, Shooting d8, Stealth d4

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 12 (4)

Augmentations: Fully Synthetic, Custom Built (Intimidation), Alternative Mobility System (Tentacles work like Spider Legs), Armored, Beholder Sensory Suite

Armor/Weaponry: Light PAc Emitters x 12 (Range 14/28/56, Damage 2d8, RoF 1, Beam, Atmo Dependent), Tentacle Talons x 12 (Str+d6+2, AP 2, Reach 2);

Special Abilities:

✦ *Deadly Assault** – If the Kraken does not make an attack on it's turn, it may instead perform a Deadly Assault. When performing a Deadly Assault, the Kraken automatically attacks any and all hostiles it can see within 50ft with a barrage of PAc blasts and/or lethal slashes from its tentacles.

   Every potential target must make an Agility roll at a -2 penalty or suffer 3d6 damage.

✦ *War Machine*** – The Kraken has three times the number of weapons that is standard for a drone with its Skills.

  * The Kraken's Skills are reduced by 6 ranks in exchange for this special ability.

  ** The Kraken's APs are reduced by 2 in exchange for this special ability.
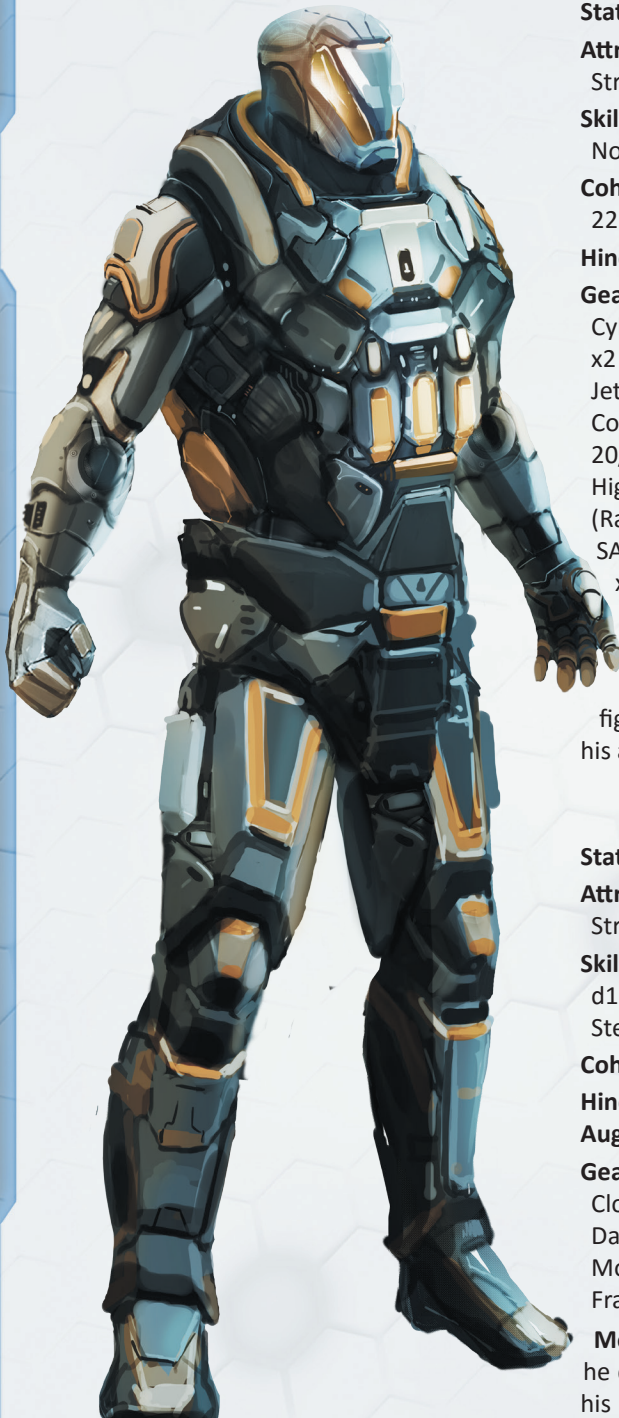
Lighthouse Heavy

State: Pure

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d12, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d8, Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Piloting d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d4

Coh: -0; **Cha:** -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 22 (14)

Hindrances: Mean

Gear: Heavy Powered Assault Armor (Reinforced Cyber-Musculature x2, High-Density Plating x2 (Heavy Armor), Mag-Traction, Zero-G Assist Jets), Gravitic Baton (Str+2d6, -2 Notice when Collapsed), Portable Rail-Minigun (Range 20/40/80, Damage 2d8+1, RoF 4, AP 6, HW, High Capacity, Snapfire), Light Rail-Array (Range 12/24/48, Damage 1-3d8, RoF 1, AP 4, SA, Shotgun, Silent Option), Gooper Grenade x 3, Frag Grenade x 2

Motivation: The Lighthouse Heavy has been outfitted with the best gear because, frankly, he's the best killer. He enjoys fighting and revels in the sense of invincibility his armor gives him.

Lighthouse Officer

State: Pure

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d, Fighting d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d6, Piloting d6, Shooting d10, Stealth d6

Coh: -0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 11 (5)

Hindrances: Loyal

Augmentations: Skinweave Armor

Gear: Lighthouse Uniform (Reinforced Clothing), Heavy Coil PDW (Range 14/28/56, Damage 2d8, RoF 3, AP 4, Auto, Silent Option), Mono-Edged Longsword (Str+d8+2, AP 4), Frag Grenade x2

Motivation: The Lighthouse officer does what he does for the Rep and benefits, and justifies his actions to himself and others are doing what it takes to maintain order.

Red Sun Enforcer

State: Sleeved (Custom Cybersleeve)

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d8, Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Computers) d6, Notice d6, Shooting d8+1, Stealth d6, Streetwise d6

Coh: -3; **Cha:** +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 12 (6)

Hindrances: Vow (Minor—Enforce the Will of the Red Sun)

Edges: Alertness, Dodge, First Strike, Marksman,

Gear: Light Battle Armor (+6), Mono-Edged Short Sword (Str+d6+2, AP 3), PAc Carbine (Range 40/80/160, Damage 2d8+4, RoF 1, Beam, Atmo Dependent).

Augmentations: Apotheosis, Fully Synthetic, Auditory Amp and Filtering Module, Targeting Support System (+1 Shooting)

Talon of Freedom Officer

State: Pure

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d, Fighting d6, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Piloting d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6

Coh: -0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 12 (6)

Edges: Command, Heads Up

Hindrances: Stubborn, Vengeful

Gear: Light Battle Armor, Heavy PAc PDW (Range 25/50/100, Damage 2d10+3, RoF 1, Beam, Atmo Dependent), Mono-Edged Calvary Saber (Str+d8+2, AP 4), Frag Grenade x2

Motivation: The Talon Officer accepts that he likely won't see the fruits of his labor, and may die fighting to make a better tomorrow.

Talon of Freedom Soldier

State: Pure

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d6, Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d4, Piloting d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Streetwise d8, Taunt d6

Coh: -0; **Cha:** -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 9 (2)

Edges: Dodge

Hindrances: Fringe Rat, Vengeful

Gear: Reinforced Clothing (+2), Gravitic Baton (Str+2d6, -2 Notice when Collapsed), Light Coil PDW (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 3, AP 4, Auto, Silent Option) or Heavy Rail Array (Range 14/28/46, Damage 1-3d10, RoF 1, AP 4, SA, Shotgun, Silent Option), Frag Grenade x 2, PPC (Alpha)

Motivation: The Talons see this as an opportunity to both bring down an Icarus Hub and to recruit new Talons.